



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN

1991-2011

adopted



March 1996



This document sets out a county-wide land-use planning strategy for Buckinghamshire well into the next century.

It has been prepared in the context of many pressing international and domestic imperatives.

At the Global level, the Plan addresses increasing concerns about the protection of the environment and the need to husband scarce resources, issues which have attained great prominence since the Rio Summit in 1992.

At the European level, the Plan provides a framework within which new opportunities can be seized within a less restrictive economic environment, but in ways which do not seek to exacerbate the problems of congestion and overheating which threaten the traditional heartlands of the European Community.

At the Regional level, the Plan will see Buckinghamshire playing a full role in accommodating its share of the development which the South East will have to accommodate over the coming years, in line with current Government Guidance. However, a new emphasis on recycling and reuse seeks to minimise the demands for new land, buildings and other resources, and will help reduce the need to find additional capacity for waste disposal.

Finally, at the Local level, the Plan provides for enough homes to meet the equivalent of Buckinghamshire's own indigenous household growth and a framework within which provision can be made for jobs, shops and community facilities, whilst at the same time providing adequate safeguards for the local environment in towns, villages and the countryside.

While this document therefore addresses a wide range of international, national, regional and local concerns, it will in turn provide the strategic context for more detailed District-Wide Local Plans which will be prepared by the District Councils in Buckinghamshire and subject-based Local Plans

for Minerals and Waste which will be prepared by the County Council.

The Plan represents the culmination of a long programme of work which commenced at the end of 1990. During the five and a half years since then, the County Council received a great many comments and suggestions about what it should contain, and how the County Council's emerging ideas could be improved upon, from a wide variety of sources. These ranged from local, regional and national business organisations; Government departments; local authorities both within and outside Buckinghamshire; Parish Councils; amenity societies; voluntary bodies; residents associations; and many hundreds of local people.

To all those who contributed comments and advice during that time, I would extend a big thank you on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council.

I would also like to place on record the County Council's thanks to all the officers who have worked so hard to analyse all the comments received and to put the Plan together, as well as to the Structure and Local Plans Panel and its Chairman Oliver Taylor for the considerable time and skill they have devoted to directing the operation.

Although there will be many difficult issues to be faced over the coming years, many challenges to traditional attitudes and expectations (particularly as regards private car usage), and many competing claims upon our County's resources, I feel confident that we now have, in this document, the best possible strategic framework to guide planning decisions in Buckinghamshire into the next millennium.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Chapple'. The signature is stylized and written over a horizontal line.

Bill Chapple
Chairman, Planning and Transportation Committee

Acknowledgements

The County Council wishes to thank all those individuals and organisations who have contributed to the preparation of this Plan.

In particular, the members of the County Council's Structure and Local Plans Panel have provided invaluable guidance and encouragement at all stages. The current membership of the Panel is as follows:

MR O. G. TAYLOR (CHAIRMAN)

MRS C. M. ASTON

MR W. J. Y. CHAPPLE

MR J. C. GATES

MRS S. J. HOLDRIDGE

MR M. D. HUDDY

MR H. KILKENNY

MRS A. S. MOORE

MRS P. M. SEYMOUR

Professional guidance on the preparation of the plan was provided by officers in the Planning and Transportation Department of the County Council, led by the Head of Planning, Mr Peter Storey, BA, DipSA, MRTPI. The Plan was drafted by Mr Chris Kenneford, BA, MRTPI, FRSA, Principal Planning Officer. Officers within other departments of the County Council have also provided advice as necessary.

Thanks are also due to staff within the Planning Services section of the Planning and Transportation Department who designed and laid out the plan.

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The New Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan PROPOSES:

- * A close correlation between new homes, jobs and community facilities
- * Concentration of most new urban development at Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury Town and in the High Wycombe area
- * A general reduction in trip lengths and the need to travel as a result of the above, both of which will help to counter global warming, save energy and reduce pollution
- * Capitalisation upon existing and currently-planned infrastructure and services - helping to cut the cost of new provision
- * An integrated approach to transport planning, with an increasing shift towards more energy-efficient and environment-friendly modes of transport than private cars
- * 64,000 new homes in Buckinghamshire from 1991-2011, of which:
 - 36,700 will be in Milton Keynes Borough**
 - 15,600 will be in Aylesbury Vale District*
 - 7,200 will be in Wycombe District*
 - 2,100 will be in Chiltern District*
 - 2,400 will be in South Bucks District*
- * An enabling mechanism to help improve the affordability of new homes for local households
- * The maintenance of a buoyant local economy, with new employment-generating development in appropriate locations
- * Policies to safeguard and improve the vitality, viability and diversity of town centres
- * A framework for new sport, recreation and tourism development
- * Positive management of urban fringe areas to improve their environmental and amenity value
- * Continued protection of established planning constraints, such as the Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, other cherished landscapes, high quality farmland, important biological and geological features and the man-made heritage
- * Tight controls on sporadic development in the open countryside, but with sufficient provision for it to become more attractive, economically viable, ecologically diverse and publicly accessible
- * New controls on pollution - in all its forms
- * Encouragement for the re-use and recycling of physical resources
- * Support for energy conservation and for proposals involving the generation of energy from renewable sources

* Milton Keynes Council area from April 1997

1. In conjunction with national planning policies and regional planning guidance issued by Central Government, Structure Plans provide the broad strategic framework for land-use planning in the shire counties of England.

2. This new Structure Plan for Buckinghamshire, which covers the 20-year period from 1991 to 2011, was formally adopted by the County Council on 28 March 1996.

3. It replaces the previous County Structure Plan, which covered the period from 1986 to 2001 and which was originally approved in 1989, and subsequently amended in 1990.

The Form and Status of the Plan

4. In legal terms, a Structure Plan comprises a Written Statement and a Key Diagram. The Written Statement, which is set out at the end of this Plan, is a list of all the adopted policies and proposals. The Key Diagram, which is shown immediately inside the back cover, illustrates the main policies and proposals on a non-Ordnance Survey map base. A Structure Plan may also include an Explanatory Memorandum, which contains illustrative material detailing the reasoning behind the various Policies and Proposals although, in legal terms, it does not form part of the Plan. The Explanatory Memorandum represents the main body of this document, within which the adopted policies are inset.

5. Unless otherwise specified, the policies are of general application throughout Buckinghamshire.

6. In 1991, the status of development plans within the land-use planning system of this country was considerably heightened by an amendment to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This amendment (Section 54A of the Act) requires all development control decisions to accord with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Hence, the adopted policies set out in this Plan provide clear guidance as to the requirements with which development proposals will normally need to comply in Buckinghamshire. Only in special cases, where other material considerations weigh sufficiently heavily in the balance, may development proposals be permitted as an exception to the policies of this Plan.



Relationship with Other Plans

7. The development plan for Buckinghamshire does not solely consist of the County Structure Plan, however. More detailed, policies, fleshing out the broad-brush policies of the Structure Plan, are set out in District-wide Local Plans prepared by District Councils and in Waste and Minerals Local Plans, prepared by the County Council. All of these various documents together comprise the development plan for the county. Accordingly, when consideration is being given to development proposals, reference will not only be made to the policies of this Plan, but also to such other Local Plans as are relevant to the proposal in question at that point in time.

Milton Keynes Unitary Authority

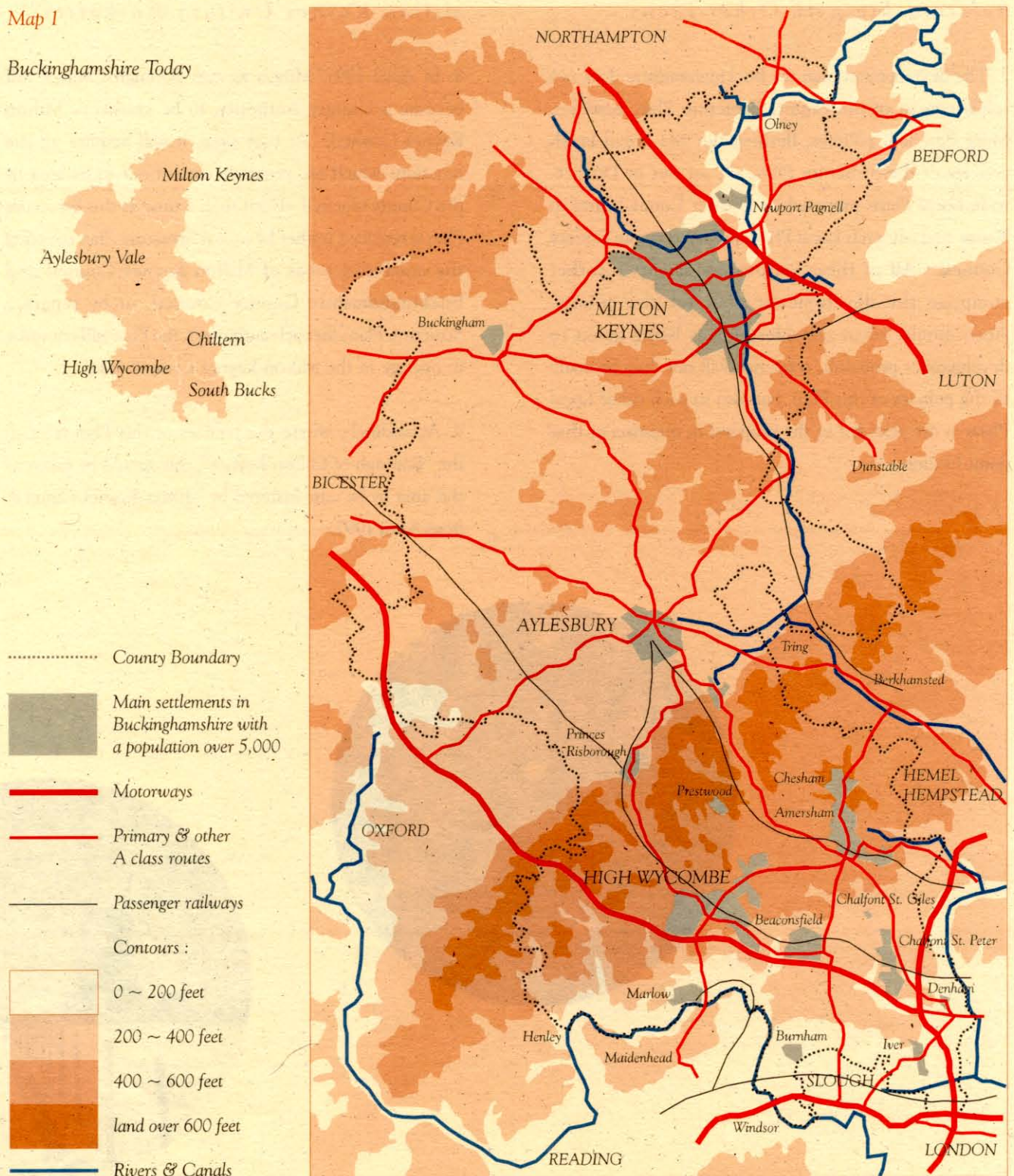
8. In April 1997, Milton Keynes Borough Council will become a Unitary Authority, to be known as Milton Keynes Council. At that time, it will acquire all the functions which are presently carried out in its area by the County Council. Until such a time as this Structure Plan is replaced (either by a joint Structure Plan covering the combined areas of Milton Keynes Council and Buckinghamshire County Council, or by separate Structure Plans for each authority), the Plan will continue to operate in the Milton Keynes Council area.

9. Accordingly, where the policies of this Plan refer to the "Borough of Milton Keynes", this should be taken as the area to be administered by Milton Keynes Council, from April 1997.



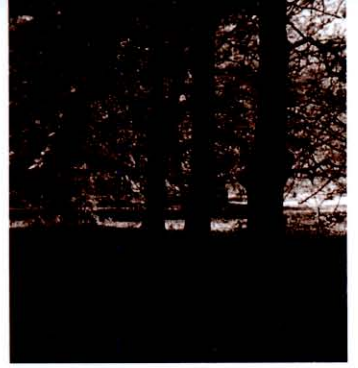
Map 1

Buckinghamshire Today



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TODAY

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



10. Located immediately to the north-west of Greater London, Buckinghamshire is a highly attractive county stretching some 50 miles from north to south, but little more than 20 miles from east to west. See Map 1.

Natural Features

11. In the extreme north are the woodlands and parklands of a sparsely settled limestone plateau at the foot of the dip slope of the Cotswolds. To the south east of this plateau is the valley of the River Ouse, which flows from west of Buckingham into Bedfordshire. South east again lies the large and generally flat clay Vale of Aylesbury, punctuated by the limestone outcrops which underly gently rolling hills from Brill in the west to Wing in the east. Slightly to the north-east of these limestone outcrops are the Brickhills - the western edge of the low greensand ridge which runs across neighbouring Bedfordshire.

12. Contrasting sharply with the Vale of Aylesbury is the steep scarp slope of the chalk-based Chiltern Hills, which traverses the middle of the county and provides it with its most dominant natural feature. South-east from here the dip slope, dissected by valleys and ridges and home to the famous Chilterns Beechwoods, runs down to the River Thames which for the most part forms Buckinghamshire's southern boundary.

Communications

13. The county is well served by the national communication network, having excellent road links with London, other parts of Britain and, via nearby Heathrow, the rest of the world. Three major motorways - the M1,

M4, and M40 - all run for part of their length through Buckinghamshire and converge on a fourth - the M25 London Orbital - in one of that road's most heavily-trafficked sections.

14. The local road network is less well-developed than the motorway system around and through the county. North-South links, particularly, are not presently as satisfactory as they should be. However between Milton Keynes City and Aylesbury, matters should improve considerably if planned improvements to the A418 and the A4146 can be implemented.

15. Rail communications largely radiate from London. The heavily used west coast main line from Euston has an inter-city station at Milton Keynes which, as from the autumn of 1996, will provide a direct connection to mainland Europe via the Channel Tunnel. The Chilterns and Thames lines link south and central Buckinghamshire to London via Marylebone and Paddington stations, while the London Underground (Metropolitan) line also operates well into the southern half of the county, as far as Chesham and Amersham. A major new venture is the proposed Crossrail line, to be developed jointly by London Underground Limited and Railtrack, with private sector funding support. This will link Reading and Aylesbury in the west with Essex in the east via new tunnels running under Central London - providing interchanges with eight Underground lines and with British Rail Services at four London stations, including links with Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports. Current Government proposals are that, following the Jubilee Line extension, Thameslink 2000 and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, services on Crossrail would commence in the early years of the next century.

16. Waterways in Buckinghamshire are currently used

mainly for leisure purposes - two of the most important being the River Thames, in the south, and the Grand Union Canal, which serves Milton Keynes in the north, Aylesbury in the centre and Iver in the south of the county.

Population and Households

17. The 1991 Census showed Buckinghamshire's population to be slightly under 632,500, with a more recent estimate, in mid-1994, putting the figure at 658,400. For many years, the county has had the most rapidly growing population of all counties in the United Kingdom - only very recently being overtaken by Cambridgeshire. The county's proximity to London, its good accessibility, its location in the most prosperous region of the country and the designation, within it, of Milton Keynes City, the last of the post-war New Towns, in 1967 have been the main reasons for this.

18. In all, there were some 56,300 (or 10.0%) more people in Buckinghamshire in 1991 than in 1981. However, only the two northern districts of the county, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale, saw their populations increase - by 48,400 (80%) and 11,800 (20%) respectively. Of the other districts, South Bucks and Chiltern both saw a net decrease in population of 2.1%, while Wycombe's population remained almost static.

19. Other results from the 1991 Census indicated that, in overall terms, the county's population is ageing. Smaller proportions of school-aged children (5 to 15 year olds) and 16-17 year olds contrast with increased proportions of adults of

working age and, particularly, those in the 75+ age group. Within the county, Milton Keynes is very different from the other districts however, having a much younger age-profile, reflecting the City's recent rapid growth and its generally more affordable housing market.

20. So far as Buckinghamshire's households are concerned, perhaps the most striking change since 1981 is the growth in smaller households and the decrease in those of medium and larger size. Small households of 1 or 2 persons represented 56% of all households in 1991 compared to 48% in 1981.

Settlements

21. The largest settlements in Buckinghamshire are:

A Milton Keynes City (population in 1991 : 143,100) - the fastest growing urban area in the United Kingdom and a major centre for business, high technology industries, shopping, leisure and recreation;

B High Wycombe and its urban environs (population in 1991 : 98,200) - an old manufacturing town whose industries were largely based upon furniture and paper-making, but which is now undergoing a period of renewal as its economic base broadens out into business and high technology activities;

C Aylesbury (population in 1991 : 55,700) - the County Town and administrative centre, but no longer an agricultural market town. Expansion, which began in the 1960s, continues and is now coupled with major schemes of regeneration and modernisation.

22. In addition, there are many smaller towns and many



dozens of villages and hamlets - Aylesbury Vale alone having well in excess of one hundred.

Employment

23. Although the County is predominantly rural in appearance, with 70% of its land area used for agriculture and a further 8% covered by trees, over two-thirds of all jobs in Buckinghamshire are within the service sector - banking, insurance, administration and the like. Around one quarter are in manufacturing industries, 4% in construction and only around 1.5% in primary industries such as farming and forestry.

24. For the future, further increases in service employment and losses in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors are likely. Reflecting its position as one of the United Kingdom's most prosperous counties, the unemployment level in May 1996, at 4.3%, was well below the average for the South East of 7.2% (5.8% excluding London) and the UK of 7.7%.

Environment

25. Around 42,000 hectares of Buckinghamshire (or some 22% of its total area) are included within the Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - in formal recognition of their national importance in landscape terms.

26. Much of the Buckinghamshire section of the AONB also forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, which extends over some 50,000 hectares in the south of the county and whose main purpose is to curb the outward sprawl of London.

27. A further 31,000 hectares (16% of the county's total area) are included within 9 different Areas of Attractive Landscape, which range from the Ouse Valley in the north to the Thames Valley in the south. These are of county-wide landscape importance.

28. Buckinghamshire has well over 6,000 buildings which have been officially "listed" by Central Government in recognition of their special architectural or historical importance. Some of these are to be found within designated Conservation Areas, of which there are nearly 200 in the county.

29. And then there are many miles of footpaths, bridleways, rivers, canals and towpaths, many attractive villages and hamlets, commons and open spaces, country parks and picnic sites - all of which contribute so much to the attractive environment for which Buckinghamshire is so well known.

Conclusions

30. The short summary presented above indicates that Buckinghamshire is a prosperous, attractive and accessible county offering a high quality of life for those who live and work here. Inevitably, this means that pressures for new development in the county are intense. Just how much development Buckinghamshire should accommodate over the coming years, and where that development should and should not be located are the special concerns of this plan. Part 2 of the plan addresses the wider context within which these decisions have been taken.

part 2

THE WIDER CONTEXT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



31. The future of Buckinghamshire will not only be shaped by the circumstances which apply within its own boundaries, but increasingly be determined by events in a much wider arena.

The International Context

32. At the international level, the growing prominence of “environmental issues” on the world stage, as evidenced by the Rio summit in 1992; and increased competition within European and global economies as a result of the Single European Market (SEM) and the revised General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) may be identified as likely to have particularly profound implications for the use of land and other resources at the local level.

33. By way of illustration, an EC initiative known as “Europe 2000” and its successor, “Europe 2000+”, which examine the potential effects of the Single European Market on the prospects for land-use and development across its territory, highlight the tensions which could be created between the traditional economic heartlands of the Community, beset by problems of congestion and with higher labour and property costs and the less congested, cheaper (but less accessible) peripheral areas as competition intensifies. Already, a new southerly axis of development has been identified, away from the traditional heartlands - see Map 2.

34. The way in which different countries respond to challenges such as closer integration, increased competition and growing environmental concern will, accordingly, be a considerable determinant of the way in which their territories develop over the coming years.

The National Context

35. So far as they affect land-use planning in this country, our own Government’s responses to these and other issues are mainly to be found in publications such as Circulars, Ministerial Statements and documents called Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

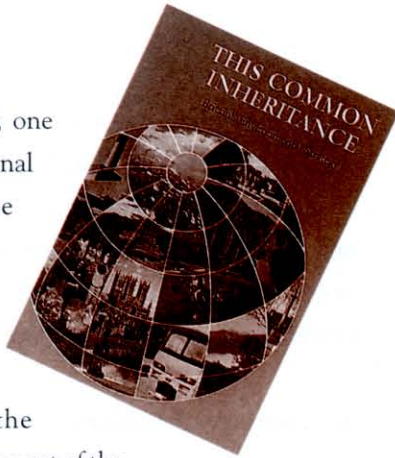
Map 2

The European Growth Axes



36. Much of this material is of general application and deals with particular issues, such as housing, employment, shopping, tourism, recreation and so on - the contents of which are impossible to summarise here, although they have been reflected in the strategic policies which follow.

37. There is, however, one particular area of national policy which the Government expects to be reflected in the formulation of all Development Plan policies. This is the protection and enhancement of the environment, in its very widest context - from the reduction of global warming and pollution to the protection of endangered species. Drawing on proposals originally made in the 1990 White Paper "This Common Inheritance" and subsequently reflected in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy 1994, environmental considerations are to be taken comprehensively and consistently into account during plan preparation, in order that individual planning decisions can subsequently be taken against a background that reflects environmental priorities.



The Regional Context

38. In addition to the policies of national application mentioned above, the Government also prepares guidance for particular parts of the country, which embraces the whole range of planning-related issues and sets them into a regional framework.

39. In March 1994, the Department of the Environment published its Regional Planning Guidance for South East England. Very closely reflecting advice which had been submitted to the Government by SERPLAN (the representative body of local planning authorities in the region), this Guidance established three broad objectives

for the planning of South East England in the period up to 2011. These objectives are:

A ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

To provide a framework for economic growth to maintain and develop the South East's competitive position in Europe and to give employment to its people.

B SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

To provide for development in ways which avoid damage to the global, regional and local environment or help to improve that environment.

C OPPORTUNITY AND CHOICE

To offer the region's people an improved quality of life.

These broad objectives are to be achieved through a set of more specific principles which will govern the future development of the Region. These are:

- * All development should be planned in ways which work towards securing the objectives of sustainable development.
- * As an immediate priority, market-driven development should be provided for so as to facilitate economic recovery.
- * Sufficient housing appropriate in size, quality, type and location should be provided within the Region to meet the needs of population and household growth without putting excessive pressure on adjacent regions.



* The fullest possible use should be made of opportunities for redevelopment and recycling, not only to secure development and urban regeneration, but also to improve the urban environment and reduce the need to take greenfield sites for development.

* Development should respect the Region's valuable environmental features and avoid the wasteful use of land and other natural resources. Firm protection to be given to Green Belts, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, wildlife sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the built heritage and the best and most versatile agricultural land.

* Planning and transport policies are to be co-ordinated to maintain and improve communications with continental Europe and inter-regional movement through the South East; to help reduce congestion in areas of development pressure; to provide a better relationship between homes, workplaces and other activities so as to reduce the need to travel; to encourage the use of energy-efficient modes of transport; and to facilitate environmental improvement.

Sub-Regional Considerations

40. Although the above are the general objectives and principles upon which planning decisions in the South East are to be based, the Regional Guidance acknowledges that different parts of the region will exhibit varying degrees of development opportunity over the coming years. Accordingly, a sub-regional framework is established, the overall intention of which is to secure a change in the balance of development in the Region from the west to the east.

41. In line with its status as a "world city" and the hub of activity in the South East, London's role as a financial, commercial, tourist and cultural centre is to be maintained and developed. Economic growth is to be fostered and encouraged, and as much housing as possible is to be provided, subject to avoiding over-development.

42. Elsewhere, the guidance affirms that in the medium and longer term, environmental constraints and transport congestion will limit the capacity for substantial new growth to the west and south of London - a recognition of the severe problems of "overheating" which this part of the region has suffered for many years.

43. Accordingly, most of the new capacity afforded by the availability of land and new or proposed infrastructure will be in the eastern part of the region, particularly in the major opportunity area known as the Thames Gateway (formerly the East Thames Corridor) - where large-scale environmental enhancement and redevelopment schemes (with the potential to create over 110,000 new homes and many thousands of new jobs), will greatly support and develop London's role and improve our competitive position within Europe.

Buckinghamshire in the South East

44. Buckinghamshire's role in the South East of the future is evidenced from more detailed advice relating to the two sub-regional sectors into which the Regional Guidance places the county - refer Map 3.

45. Southern Buckinghamshire forms part of the Western Sector of the region which, as indicated above, is recognised as being an area of considerable development

pressure. In order to protect the environment of this sector for future generations, a reducing rate of development is seen as appropriate here, as local infrastructure and services catch up with the rapid growth of the recent past. Notwithstanding this, however, necessary economic restructuring is to be supported, as far as possible.

46. North Buckinghamshire (broadly Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes) lies within the Northern Sector of the region. Here, the growth of Milton Keynes City is seen as a continuing major influence on the region's development but one which will cease when its currently planned development is completed in the early years of the next century. Although it is to continue to provide for local development needs thereafter, neighbouring areas of north Buckinghamshire (and in particular

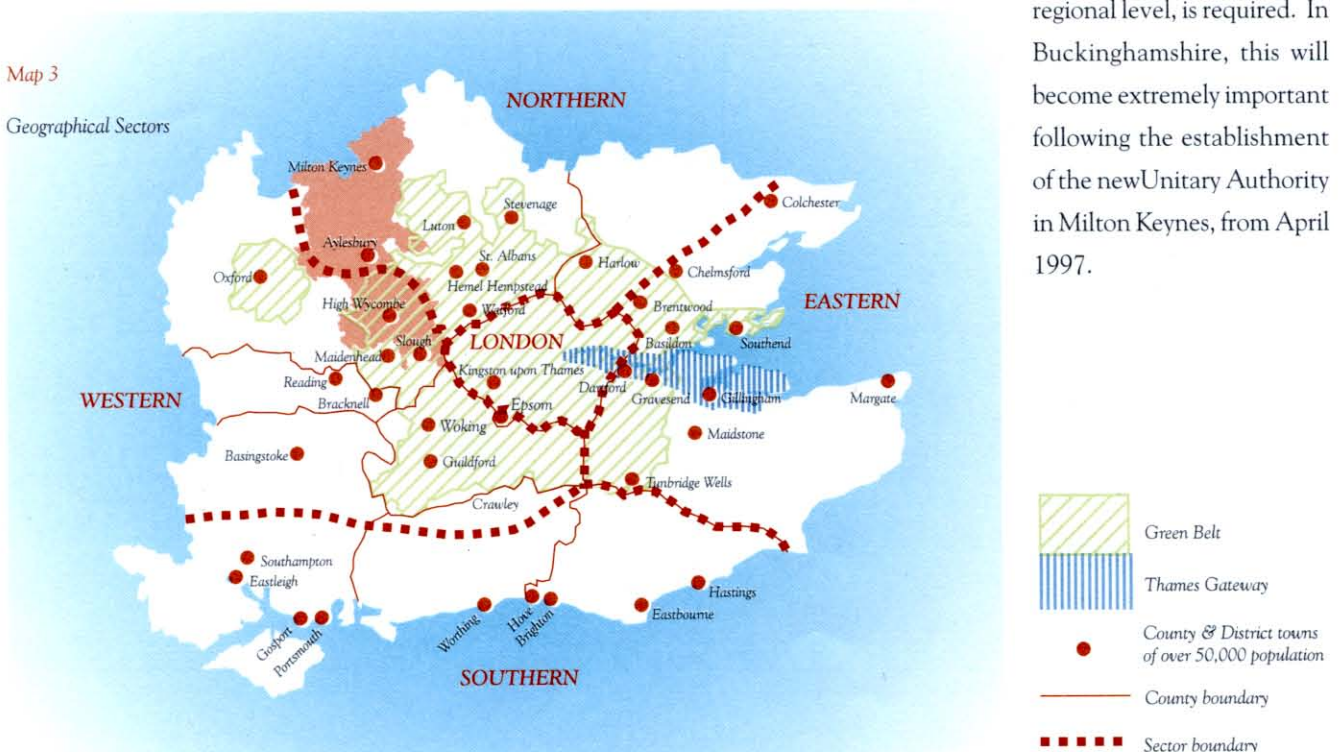
Aylesbury) are also to provide for further growth and development.

The Inter-Regional Dimension

47. A final matter of local relevance about which the Regional Guidance makes specific mention is the dynamic nature of the interface between the South East and areas adjoining the region. The northern periphery of the region, in particular, has been one of the most rapidly developing parts of the country in recent years - a trend which the Guidance notes is likely to continue. With resultant development needing to be very carefully planned, consultation and collaboration between the relevant local planning authorities, to formulate

consistent policies at a sub-regional level, is required. In Buckinghamshire, this will become extremely important following the establishment of the new Unitary Authority in Milton Keynes, from April 1997.

Map 3
Geographical Sectors



part 3

THE NEW PLAN

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



THE BROAD STRATEGY

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



48. Having regard to the national, regional and sub-regional policy guidance provided by Central Government, and to the comments received from a wide range of individuals and organisations during the Consultation and Deposit stages of this Plan, a new Broad Strategy for the future planning of Buckinghamshire is set out below.

49. The strategy is in three sections.

50. The first section comprises a set of general aims which indicate the underlying aspirations of the County Council in preparing the Plan. These are each accompanied by a short description of the way in which they have subsequently been translated into strategic policy.

Aims

BALANCING THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT AND THE NEED TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

51. This encapsulates the “sustainable development” principle which, as defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, is concerned with meeting the needs of the present without undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

52. In this Plan, the overall balance has been struck by reducing the level of development for which provision will be made in Buckinghamshire during the plan period, but not below the level which equates to the county's own indigenous needs. In the first 15 years of the Plan, however, more development than local needs alone would require will be provided - in order to support the

continuing (but reducing) regional growth role of Milton Keynes City until the end of its planned expansion shortly after the turn of the century.

53. The need to balance new development with environmental protection in the very widest context is reflected in the selection of a strategy which seeks to tackle global warming and pollution by reducing the need to travel and by encouraging environment-friendly modes of transport. The concentration, rather than dispersal, of development, and the close correlation of homes, jobs and services are therefore proposed.

54. The philosophy of balancing development with conservation is also reflected in the protection and enhancement of the county's most valuable assets and in the better use of resources (see below).

ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE RESIDENTS AND THE AMENITY VALUE OF THE COUNTY

55. This Plan is more than just about how much new development should be accommodated in Buckinghamshire, and where. The type of new development which should be provided and the kind of towns, villages and countryside we wish to create as a result are of no less importance.

56. Our towns and villages will be improved through the better management of traffic and a switching of the focus of transport policy in favour of more environment-friendly modes. Proposals which would enhance the viability, vitality and diversity of our town centres will be supported and those which would undermine them resisted. Measures which would enhance, and improve public access to the countryside surrounding our towns

will be encouraged, while existing recreational facilities will be protected and new ones provided in appropriate areas.

57. Flexibility for the many new initiatives now available to create a more ecologically diverse, visually interesting and accessible countryside is afforded by the new Plan, while inappropriate development will be resisted. The Green Belt, the Chiltern Hills, other attractive landscape areas, and sites of nature conservation and heritage importance will all receive rigorous protection and will be enhanced, where appropriate.

58. And new controls over pollution will help to ensure high standards of water and air quality and less noise intrusion.

MAINTAINING ECONOMIC BUOYANCY IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AS A SOURCE OF WEALTH AND JOBS

59. The County Council recognises the need to provide adequate and appropriate employment opportunities for local people, to assist national economic recovery, and to enable successful competition within a widening economic arena. Accordingly, measures will be taken both within and outside the land-use planning system to restore and maintain a buoyant local economy.

60. Major new employment land allocations will be permitted in conjunction with the completion and subsequent further growth of Milton Keynes City and, where justified by the need to secure qualitative and/or quantitative improvements in local job opportunities, at Aylesbury Town and in the High Wycombe area. New, but smaller-scale, employment provision, commensurate with local needs, will also be acceptable in other locations

beyond the Green Belt. Measures will be introduced to assist small businesses, including support for the re-use of existing rural buildings, subject to detailed control at the local level. And existing employment areas throughout the county will be protected unless they are no longer required for such purposes.

61. These mechanisms will be supported by initiatives outside the planning system, which will see new partnerships forged between public and private sector business organisations. These will help to promote the local economy in northern Buckinghamshire (particularly at Milton Keynes) and will assist necessary economic restructuring in the more constrained south.

IMPROVING THE ACCESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HOUSEHOLDS TO HOMES WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE TO THEIR NEEDS

62. As well as ensuring a supply of new homes in Buckinghamshire at a level no lower than that which the county's own indigenous household growth would generate, this Plan proposes new measures to help ensure that those homes are appropriate to local needs.

63. Policies are introduced which will seek to obtain a suitable range of types and sizes of accommodation (including special needs housing) in all parts of the county - particularly important in view of the continuing trend towards smaller households. And a new "enabling" policy, to help secure affordable homes for those local households who would otherwise be priced out of the local market, is introduced. Finally, a broad measure of phasing (to be supplemented by detailed Local Plan policies) will help to ensure a continuous supply of homes throughout the Plan period.

MAKING THE BEST USE OF AVAILABLE PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

64. This has been interpreted very widely. The need to curtail energy consumption; to minimise public and private expenditure on new infrastructure and services; to cut demands for the utilisation of new physical resources; and to protect high quality farmland from irreversible development are all acknowledged by the County Council as essential requirements. Accordingly, this has highlighted the need for a strategy which emphasises consolidation, re-use and the better management of existing assets and resources before financially and environmentally expensive new provision.

Concentration & Integration

65. For the reasons outlined above, the chosen strategy is one of concentration and integration, rather than dispersal, with most new development located beyond the Green Belt and the Chiltern Hills in North and Mid Buckinghamshire - in line with the Government's own regional aspirations.

66. The second component of the Broad Strategy therefore translates these general principles into the first three policies of the new Plan, which in turn set the context for the subject-based policies which follow.

BS1 New development will be planned so as to reduce the need for travel, in so far as this is consistent with the protection of areas of designated land-use importance such as the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

To this end, a close correlation will be sought between new homes, jobs, community facilities and supporting infrastructure, with most new urban development concentrated at Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury Town and High Wycombe.

BS2 In order to discourage high levels of commuting, a broad balance will be sought between the growth in local employment and the growth in the economically active population of Buckinghamshire, but having regard to the sub-regional role of Milton Keynes City in curbing the need for longer-distance commuting.

BS3 New transport infrastructure will be integrated with the national and regional transport system. Through the concentration of most new development on existing urban centres and appropriate traffic management measures, particular emphasis will be placed upon improving the viability of more energy-efficient modes of transport than private cars.

Specific Objectives of the New Plan

67. The following set of more detailed objectives represents the third and final component of the Broad Strategy. These flow from the above general aims and policies, providing the framework within which the more specific policies of this Plan have been formulated and the means by which their success (or otherwise) will be measured. The objectives are grouped into three broad categories - some development-orientated, some qualitative in nature and some concerned with the

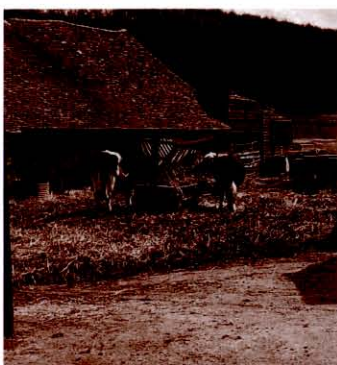
conservation of scarce resources - although they will not necessarily be mutually exclusive in their effects.

68. Next to the objectives are detailed the main policies of the Plan to which they relate - although several other policies will also apply in many cases. By way of illustration, the main policies for the protection of cherished landscapes are numbers LS1-3 (in the Landscape chapter), but policies expressing the requirement for new development to avoid damaging such areas are also set out in various other parts of the Plan (see Housing Policy H3, Employment Policy E8, Transport Policy TR9, Minerals Policy M2 and Waste Management Policy WM6, for example).

Prefixes

The prefixes to the policies listed relate to the following chapters of the plan:

BS	Broad Strategy
E	Economy and Employment
EA	Environmental Assessment
EN	Energy
GB	Green Belt
H	Housing
HE	Man-Made Heritage
IN	Infrastructure
LS	Landscape
M	Minerals
NC	Nature Conservation
OC	Open Countryside
P	Pollution
S	Shopping
SR	Sport and Recreation
TC	Town Centres
TM	Tourism
TR	Transport
UF	Urban Fringes
W	Water
WM	Waste Management



Objectives Group 1: MEETING THE NEEDS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

To support the continuing regional growth function of Milton Keynes City until the early years of the next century.	H1-2
To provide for not less than the number of homes that will be required for the county to meet the equivalent of its own “natural increase” in households during the plan period.	H1
To attempt to ensure that new homes are appropriate to the needs, and within the means, of those for whom they are provided.	H8-10
To ensure an adequate number, range and type of job opportunities in Buckinghamshire, appropriate to the needs of its economically-active residents.	E1-8
To assist necessary economic restructuring in southern Buckinghamshire without stimulating further overheating of the sub-regional economy.	E5
To assist the necessary diversification and continued health of the rural economy.	E3, E7, OC1, GB3
To assist small businesses to set up and prosper.	E7, OC1, GB3
To maintain and improve those parts of the Strategic Highway Network for which the County Council is responsible and to ensure that, so far as possible, long-distance traffic uses this network.	TR7-11
To continue to develop the grid road system at Milton Keynes City in accordance with the Master Plan, and to seek the same high standards at such a time as further development adjoining the city may take place.	TR2
To secure the fullest use of rail and waterways for the carrying of freight.	TR12, TR14, TR15, W4, M6
To make provision for daily, weekly and specialist shopping in ways which allow as many households as possible to enjoy easy access to them without undermining the vitality and viability of existing centres.	S1-5, TC1-3
To encourage the further development of sport, recreation and tourism so far as this is consistent with preserving the character and appearance of the county.	SR1-4, TM1-2
To provide a fair share of minerals for county and regional needs.	M4, M7, M8
To ensure adequate capacity for the disposal of waste arising in Buckinghamshire and to consider making provision for a proportion arising elsewhere.	WM3

Objectives Group 2:

MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING LOCAL AMENITY AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| To ensure that, wherever possible, new development is consistent with the protection of the character and appearance of existing settlements. | H3-5, M2-3, M5, WM6, P1-4 |
| To manage and minimise the impact of traffic on the urban and rural environment. | TR1-22 |
| To improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians, cyclists and those with mobility problems. | TR17-20 |
| To strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres and to encourage their physical enhancement. | TR1, TR4, TC1-3, S1-5 |
| To protect valuable open spaces and recreational areas from development. | SR1 |
| To protect and enhance urban fringe areas. | UF1-2 |
| To maintain, protect and enhance the Metropolitan Green Belt. | GB1-3 |
| To protect the open countryside from sporadic and unrelated development. | OC1 |
| To protect cherished landscapes. | LS1-3, WM5 |
| To protect the man-made heritage. | HE1 |
| To protect areas of urban development from the risk of flooding. | W5, W6 |
| To secure the appropriate restoration and after-use of mineral extraction sites. | M3, M9, WM4 |
| To minimise, reduce to an acceptable level or avoid, pollution of air, water and land. | P1-4 |

Objectives Group 3:

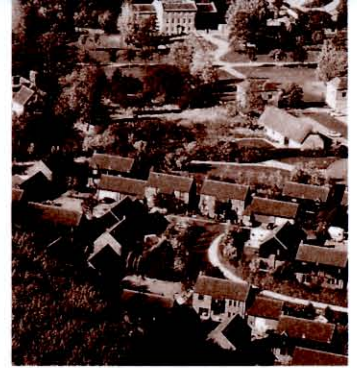
CONSERVATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| To secure a close correlation between homes, jobs, community services and infrastructure so as to reduce the need to travel. | BS1-3, H2-4, H6, E1-4, EN1, IN1 |
| To give priority to the reuse and recycling of physical resources. | H4, H7, E4, OC1, OC3, M10, WM1 |
| To promote the use of more energy-efficient modes of transport as an alternative to the use of private cars | TR12-20 |
| To avoid, wherever possible, the irreversible loss of high grade agricultural land. | OC2 |
| To protect sites and features of biological and/or geological importance. | NC1-3 |
| To encourage the use of renewable energy resources. | EN2 |
| To protect the amount and quality of water resources. | W1-4 |
| To safeguard economically workable minerals deposits. | M1 |
| To minimise the amount of waste requiring disposal, by re-use or recycling, or where this is not practical through its reduction by other appropriate means. | WM1-2 |
| To assess the environmental impact of development proposals in advance of their implementation, in order that adverse effects can be avoided, reduced or corrected. | EA1 |



THE AMOUNT & DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011



69. Over the twenty years from 1971 to 1991, Buckinghamshire's population increased by over 30%, its number of households by over 50% and its dwelling stock by over 60% - making it by far the fastest growing county in South East England.

The Role of Milton Keynes

70. Although Buckinghamshire has many attractions and locational advantages which helped to fuel these very high rates of growth, the single most significant reason for this phenomenon was the designation in 1967 of the major regional growth centre of Milton Keynes New City - the largest of all the post-war New Towns. In the years since then, its population has increased fourfold, to a mid-1996 figure of just over 160,000.

71. But the New City does not have an infinite capacity to absorb massive influxes of population from outside the county. One particular reason for this is that, just as its population has grown because of planned in-migration, so too has it grown because of its own natural increase - the more so because of the City's youthful age-structure. Consequently, with time, more and more of the land currently identified for development within the former Designated Area is needed just to cope with the City's own internal growth. And, by around 2006, it is likely that all of this will have been used up.

72. This declining ability of the City to accommodate external pressures is acknowledged in the Government's Regional Guidance for South East England, March 1994.

To quote:

"2.3 ... Milton Keynes will continue to provide a focal point

for development, although its regional role will reduce as the new town nears completion."

and again,

"7.28 ... The growth of Milton Keynes will continue to the completion of its planned expansion at or beyond the end of the century. Thereafter, it will cease to be a major regional growth centre, and will be expected to generate its own development needs."

The Changing Regional Context

74. Although a major consideration, the City's changing regional growth function is but one of several factors which have been taken into account in determining the amount of growth which Buckinghamshire should accommodate over the coming years.

75. The Government's Regional Guidance for the South East is once again a critical factor here. As outlined earlier (refer chapter headed "The Wider Context"), the new Regional Guidance envisages significant changes in the pattern of development in South East England in the years leading up to and beyond 2011, with a medium to longer term shift in development activity, broadly from west to east, in recognition of the growing problems of congestion, overheating and pressure on constrained land in the former and major opportunities for development linked to environmental enhancement in the latter.

76. Within this broad spatial framework, the Regional Guidance requires that provision be made, within the South East, for some 57,000 new homes per year from 1991-2011 (the same period as covered by this Plan). This figure equates to the region's own generated demand for

housing and represents, contrary to what is sometimes believed, a continuing small net outflow to other parts of the country.

77. The apportionment of this regional requirement between London and the constituent counties of the South East was the subject of lengthy discussions between the strategic planning authorities in these areas both in the context of the intended shift in development activity within the region and a number of other key considerations, including: the incidence of environmental constraints such as the Green Belt and high quality farmland; the location of present and likely future housing demands; the need to maximise London's development capacity; and the overall needs of the economy.

78. The following paragraphs summarise the conclusions that were reached in the context of Buckinghamshire, in respect of the first and second halves of the Plan period.

Housing Provision 1991-2001

79. Since the new Regional Guidance proposed no increase in the total regional housing requirement for the 1991-2001 period, over and above that for which provision was already being made under previous Regional Guidance covering the same period, the County Council saw no need for additional housing to be allocated to Buckinghamshire before 2001.

80. Accordingly, it was decided to base dwelling provision in Buckinghamshire, during the first half of the Plan period, on the number of homes that had already been completed since 1991, together with those which were likely to result from current planning permissions, sites already identified in existing Local Plans, conversions,

changes of use and the development of small, unidentifiable (windfall) sites. All told, this was expected to result in a net addition to the county-wide dwelling stock during the 1991-2001 period of around 33,800 homes.

Housing Provision 2001-2011

81. By virtue of the declining regional role of Milton Keynes; the diminishing supply of unconstrained land in the southern half of the county (together with its position in the overheated western sector of the region); and the medium to longer term prospects for growth on the eastern side of the region in general and in the Thames Gateway in particular, a generally declining rate of development was considered appropriate for Buckinghamshire in the second half of the Plan period.

82. In Aylesbury Vale District, however, it was felt that the reduction of past growth rates should come somewhat later in the period than it would for the other four districts. Indeed, by virtue of its position in the northern sector of the region; the decreasing reliance which could be placed upon Milton Keynes to accommodate externally-generated housing demands; the pent-up nature of demand in the district due to current problems in securing necessary infrastructural improvements; and the fact that the Regional Guidance identifies Aylesbury as having "growth potential", housing development rates in Aylesbury Vale district are actually planned to increase in the 2001-2006 period, before falling back again in the 2006-2011 period.

83. The precise level of provision during this period was the subject of considerable discussion at this Plan's Examination-in-Public in November 1994, as a result of

which provision was increased moderately to a county-wide figure of 30,200 net additional homes. No changes were felt necessary to the level of provision in the preceding, 1991-2001 period.

Housing Provision compared to Locally-Generated Housing Demands

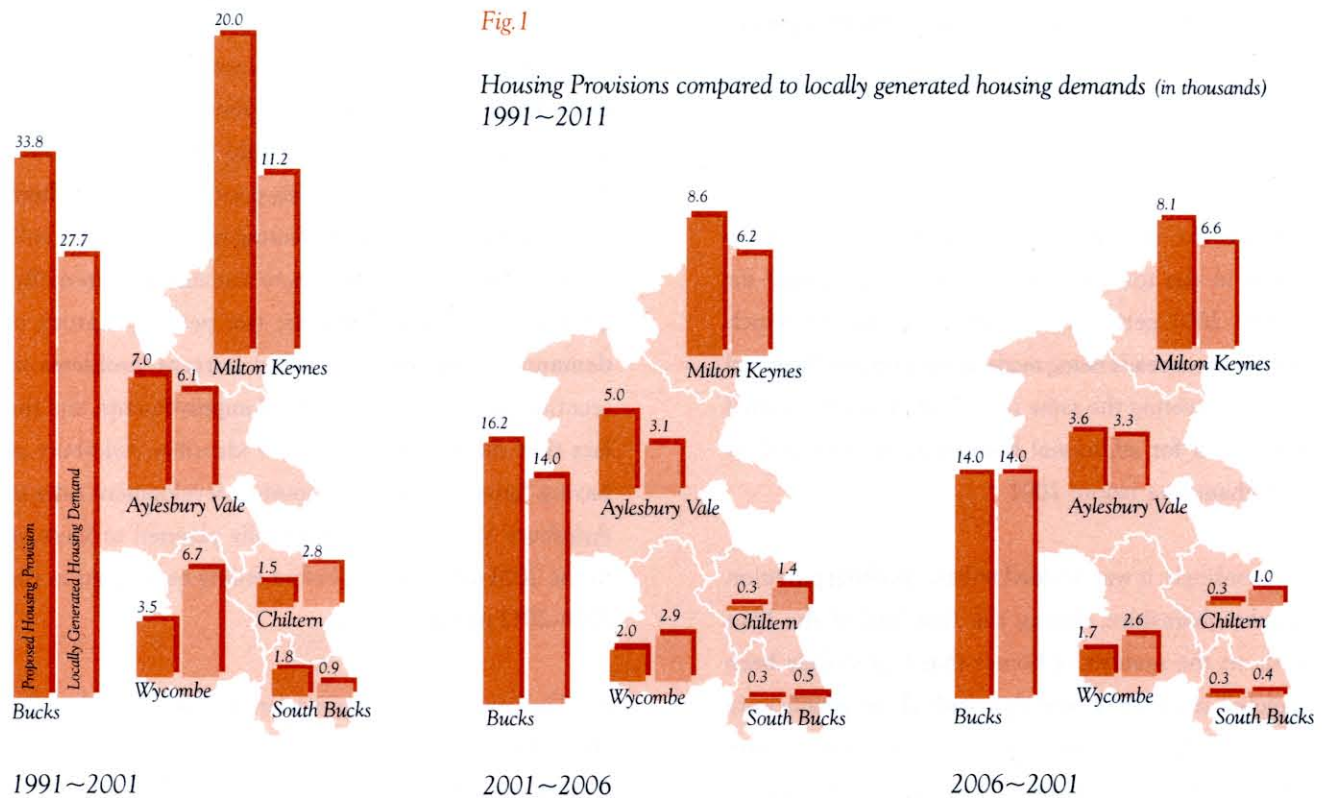
84. Reflecting the continuing regional growth role of Milton Keynes up to and shortly after the turn of the century, the county-wide figure of 33,800 new homes in the 1991-2001 period will considerably exceed the number of homes that would be required to meet the county's own indigenous household growth during that time. In addition to the continuing high levels of in-migration to

Milton Keynes, provision is also made for a modest level of net in-migration to Aylesbury Vale District, in compensation for the more limited opportunities for development to meet locally generated housing demands in the south of the county (Figure 1).

85. In the 2001-2011 period the county-wide figure of 30,200 new homes will be sufficient to provide for a modest, but declining, level of in-migration to Buckinghamshire to the year 2006 but thereafter only the equivalent of the county's indigenous household growth. Net in-migration to Milton Keynes will be at a much reduced rate during the post-2001 period, while Aylesbury Vale District will also see continuing net in-migration, albeit at a reducing level post-2006 (Figure 1).

Fig.1

Housing Provisions compared to locally generated housing demands (in thousands) 1991~2011



Population Change

86. The Plan's housing proposals will provide for an increase in Buckinghamshire's population of some 46,000 in the 1991-2001 period, and a further 25,000 in the 2001-2011 period. Figure 2 illustrates the population changes which will occur in each district during the plan period, indicating the changes which will result from "natural increase" and those which will result from migration.

87. It will be noted that although the population increase is markedly lower in the second half of the plan period, the level of housing provision proposed in that period does not reduce to the same extent. This is a function of the continuing fall in average household size as the young leave home earlier, the elderly live longer and more marriages and other relationships end in separation.

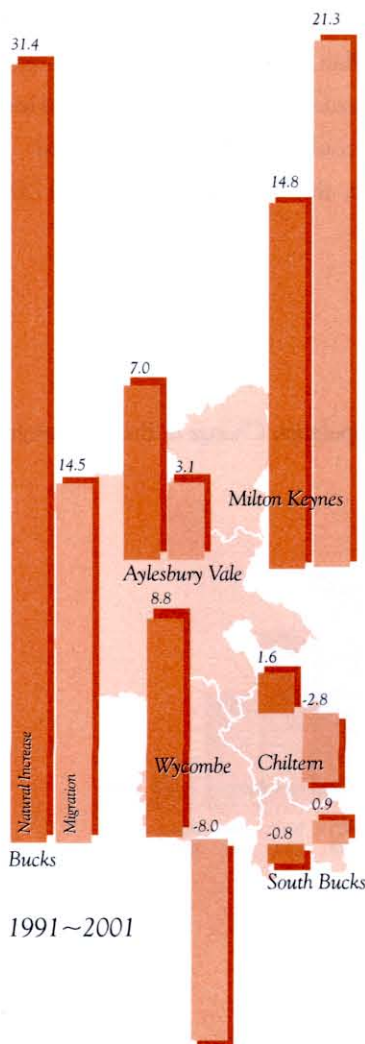
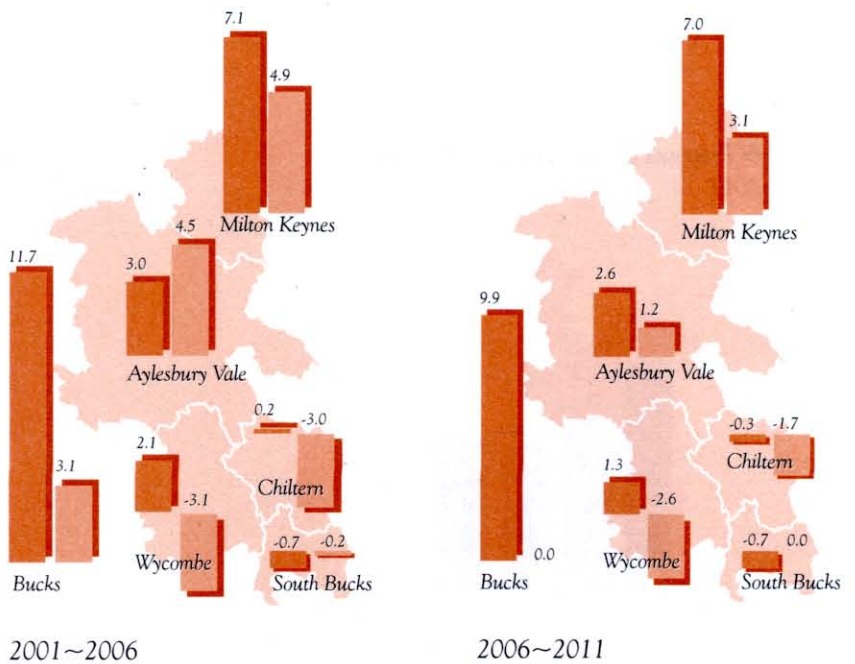


Fig.2

Components of Population Change by District (in thousands) 1991-2011



Past & Future Growth

88. Figure 3 indicates how the levels of new housing provided for in this Plan compare to the growth which occurred in Buckinghamshire during the preceding twenty years. Likewise, Figure 4 indicates the levels and components of population change within Buckinghamshire which occurred from 1971-1991 and how these compare with the changes which will result from the growth proposals in this Plan. As can be seen, the Plan represents the continuation of a downward trend, reflecting the completion of Milton Keynes' regional role; the gradual using up of unconstrained land; and the objective of the Regional Guidance to bring about a more balanced pattern of development in the South East region.

The Location of Development

89. Of the 64,000 new homes to be provided in Buckinghamshire from 1991-2011, nearly three-quarters are likely to come from sources which are already known about or can be predicted in advance. These include the remainder of the currently planned development within the former Designated Area of Milton Keynes New City, and other large housing developments such as Coldharbour Farm and the remainder of Watermead, at Aylesbury, as well as many smaller schemes throughout the county.

90. In preparing this Plan, the County Council therefore had to give careful consideration to how the residual level of additional growth could best be accommodated. In the 2001-2011 period, this amounts to around 17,000 homes.

Fig.3

Actual & Proposed County Dwelling Provision 1971~2011

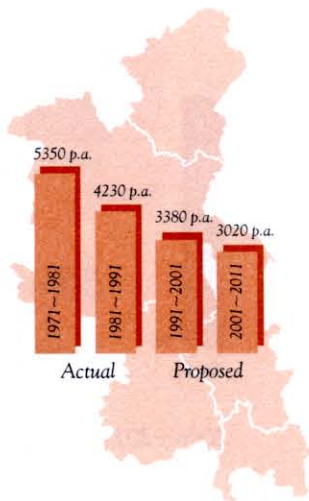
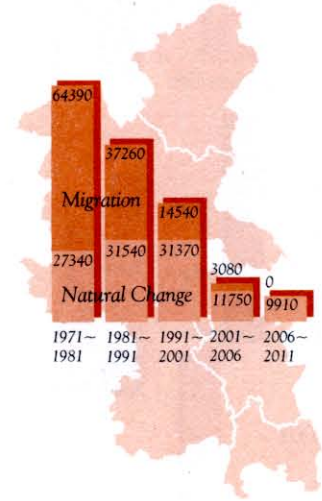


Fig.4

Components of Population Change in Buckinghamshire 1971~2011



91. The following broad locational criteria guided the County Council's deliberations on this matter:

- * the achievement of a close correlation between homes, jobs, community services and important local facilities such as schools and shops;
- * a reduction in the need to travel and distances driven, or the facility to use more energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly transport modes than private cars;
- * the protection of established planning constraints, such as the Green Belt, Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the best and most versatile farmland;
- * the avoidance of settlement coalescence;
- * the need to avoid unacceptable noise and other forms of pollution; and
- * the adequacy of services such as water and sewerage.

92. On the basis of these criteria, the County Council concluded that a strategy which concentrated most new housing and related development at the county's three largest urban centres was the most appropriate way forward.

93. Having reached that conclusion, it was appreciated that there could be different ways of accommodating this development at the selected centres, and that these could have very different environmental implications. Development concentrated at nodal points on the public transport network, for example, could be much more

effective in reducing the need for car-based travel than scattered developments around the periphery of settlements. It was thus considered that, within the broad strategy of concentrated development, adequate flexibility would need to be given to the District Councils to determine the precise location of growth at the local level.

The Strategic Growth Areas

94. The policy framework set out in this Plan therefore reflects these considerations, by identifying the following strategic growth areas, where the majority of new housing, employment and related development will be located:

- * Milton Keynes City: where a minimum of 6000 new homes will be provided within and/or adjoining the former Designated Area, once the currently planned development within the former Designated Area is substantially complete (at present assumed to be by around 2006);
- * Aylesbury Town: where a minimum of 3000 new homes will be provided within and/or adjoining the built-up limits of the settlement, including parts of neighbouring parishes contiguous with that area; and
- * High Wycombe: where between 1500 and 1700 new homes will be provided on land excluded from the Green Belt within and/or adjoining the town and its urban environs.

95. All of these new strategic allocations will come on stream in the post-2001 period and, for the reasons set out above, will be subject to the prior identification of

sites in new Local Plans to be prepared by the relevant local authorities. Because of this, ample opportunities will be available for consultation with the local communities in those areas and any other interested parties before any decisions are taken.

Opportunities Elsewhere

96. Although the identification of the above strategic growth areas is considered to be the most appropriate means of accommodating most of the new development required in Buckinghamshire, there is a number of other locations, beyond the Green Belt, where significant housing and related growth could be accommodated in ways which would also satisfy the environmental criteria specified in this Plan, and where such growth could be desirable from the perspective of particular settlements and their own immediate hinterlands. For this reason, flexibility is given to the relevant local authorities to allocate some growth to such locations, in addition to that which will take place at the three strategic growth areas.

97. Apart from this, however, such new housing and related development as takes place within Buckinghamshire will be small-scale and primarily focussed upon the local needs of the “host” settlements in question.

“Greenfield” Development

98. It should be pointed out that although the new development which is required in Buckinghamshire could be accommodated on “greenfield” sites, it is a priority of this Plan to secure the recycling and reuse of existing resources before the utilisation of new ones. This applies to housing as much as anything else. Consequently, it is a requirement of this Plan that the local authorities will generally turn their first attentions to bringing vacant, derelict and otherwise underused urban land back into productive use before developing entirely new areas - either within or adjoining present settlement limits.

HOUSING

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



The Amount of New Housing

99. As indicated in the previous chapter, provision will be made for about 64,000 new homes in Buckinghamshire over the twenty years from 1991-2011, distributed between the five districts of the county as shown below.

H1 Within the 1991 - 2011 period, about 64,000 net additional dwellings will be provided in Buckinghamshire. These will be distributed and phased in accordance with the following allocations:

	1991 - 2001	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011	1991 - 2011
Milton Keynes Borough	20,000	8,600	8,100	36,700
Aylesbury Vale District	7,000	5,000	3,600	15,600
Wycombe District	3,500	2,000	1,700	7,200
Chiltern District	1,500	300	300	2,100
South Bucks District	1,800	300	300	2,400
Bucks	33,800	16,200	14,000	64,000

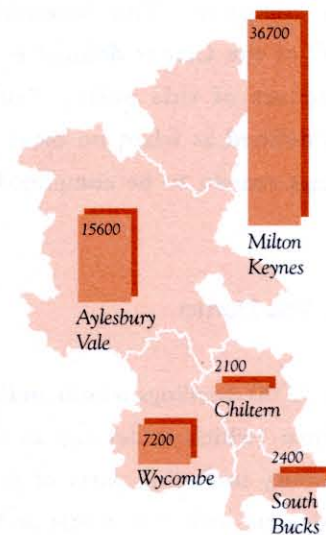
The term 'net additional dwellings' refers to all additions to the dwelling stock (ie. completed dwellings) as at 31 March 1991, from all sources, including those resulting from new construction, conversions and changes of use, less demolitions and any other permanent losses to the dwelling stock. Any dwellings provided within the 'affordable'

category (as defined in Policy H9) will also contribute to the total and individual dwelling requirements.

Of the total provision for the Borough of Milton Keynes, about 18,300 dwellings in the 1991 - 2001 period and about 7,300 dwellings in the 2001 - 2006 period will be provided within the former Designated Area of Milton Keynes City. These dwellings represent the "currently planned development" of the City for the purposes of Policy H2(a).

Fig.5

Proposed Dwelling Provision 1991~2011



The Location of New Housing

STRATEGIC GROWTH AREAS

100. For the reasons set out in the previous chapter, Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury Town and the High Wycombe Area will be the main growth areas in Buckinghamshire over the period of this Plan.

H2 Within the dwelling allocations set out in Policy H1, the following new strategic allocations are proposed for the 2001-2011 period, the location of which will be identified in Local Plans for each area:

a) *Milton Keynes Borough*

Not less than 6,000 dwellings within and/or adjoining the former Designated Area of Milton Keynes.

Planning permissions for the development of additional land adjoining the City will be phased so that housing construction only starts once the “currently planned development” of the City is substantially complete. The “currently planned development” of the City is defined in Policy H1. For the purposes of this policy, “substantially complete” is defined as when no more than about 1,600 dwellings remain to be completed within the City;

b) *Aylesbury Vale District*

Not less than 3,000 dwellings within and/or adjoining Aylesbury Town (which is defined as the built-up area of Aylesbury including parts of neighbouring parishes contiguous with that area); and

c) *Wycombe District*

Between 1,500 and 1,700 dwellings on land excluded from the Green Belt in the High Wycombe Area (which is defined as High Wycombe, Hazlemere, Tylers Green, Downley, Loudwater and Wooburn Green).

OTHER LARGER-SCALE GROWTH AREAS

101. While it is the intention of this Plan to concentrate most new housing and related development on the three strategic growth areas, above, there may still be a need for significant growth at other locations during the course of the plan period - particularly if current assumptions about the provision and timing of infrastructure at the strategic settlements prove to be over-optimistic. Such additional growth, which will predominantly be in the two northern districts of the county, might comprise the expansion of certain existing settlements, or it might take the form of entirely new settlements, perhaps involving the redevelopment of major redundant sites in the open countryside. Whichever is the case, it will be important that any such proposals observe environmental criteria similar to those which have guided the selection of the strategic growth areas. Amongst these will be the need to reduce travel demands and to avoid adverse impacts on the Green Belt, designated landscape areas and other nationally important constraints such as the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land. In view of the scale of development which could be involved, it is also important that proposals should be the subject of full consideration within the Local Plan process at the appropriate time.

H3 In addition to those settlements identified for strategic growth in Policy H2, Local Plans may identify other locations for significant housing growth which would:-

a) establish a close relationship between homes, jobs, community facilities and supporting infrastructure;

b) reduce the need for car journeys and distances driven, or permit the choice of more energy-efficient forms of transport;

c) avoid, and create no significant adverse impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, designated Areas of Attractive Landscape and any other nationally important land use constraints; and

d) avoid the coalescence of settlements.

102. One of the criteria for identifying larger-scale housing areas in the above policy is that the chosen location(s) should minimise the need to travel or facilitate the choice of more energy-efficient modes of transport. In this context, growth focused on public transport corridors in North and Mid Buckinghamshire could (in conjunction with the strategic growth areas of Milton Keynes and Aylesbury) play a considerable role in helping to meet housing requirements arising in more constrained (and relatively less affordable) parts of the county in the most environment-friendly way. And such a facility would assume even more importance should those railway lines in the north of the county which are currently unused for passenger services be brought back into operation.

NEW SETTLEMENTS

103. The option of developing entirely new freestanding settlements as an alternative to the infill or expansion of existing settlements is one that has been explored in recent years in the development plans of other authorities and in a number of private planning applications. As noted

by Central Government, such proposals have almost always been deeply controversial.

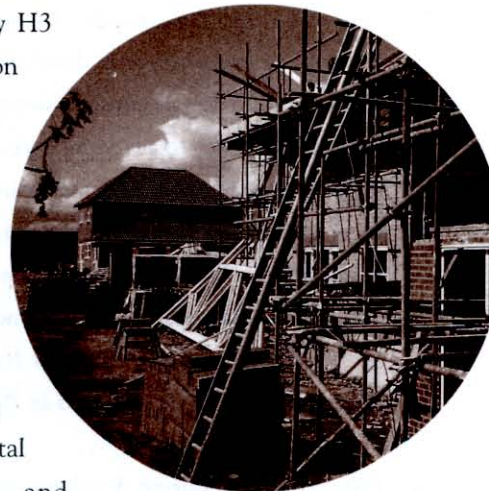
104. In preparing this Plan, the County Council's investigations identified no locations for new settlements in Buckinghamshire which would have offered a better means of accommodating necessary growth than alternative forms of development. Neither would they have been able to satisfy the Government's present requirements for such developments. At the time of writing, current Government guidance seeks to avoid the development of small new settlements (broadly those unlikely to reach 10,000 dwellings within 20 years) especially where they are unlikely to be well-served by public transport and are not designed to be capable of being largely self-contained. Having said that, it is for Local Plans to determine the precise location of new development - and new settlements may be one of the options which they would wish to consider. To cover this eventuality, the County Council, as strategic planning authority, would wish certain criteria to be reflected in any proposals which may so emerge at the Local Plan level.

These include all those which

also apply to Policy H3

(such as the protection of the Green Belt, important landscape areas and the best and most versatile agricultural land)

as well as others to do with securing positive environmental improvements and minimising calls upon public expenditure.



H4 Any proposals for freestanding new settlements which may be proposed in Local Plans must:-

- a) fulfill the requirements of Policy H3;
- b) result in the positive environmental improvement of derelict, damaged or otherwise under-used land;
- c) avoid unacceptable traffic loadings on the existing highway network; and
- d) minimise calls on public expenditure for the provision of infrastructure made necessary by the proposed development.

No proposals for new settlements will be permitted unless specifically supported by appropriate Local Plan policies.

HOUSING IN OTHER AREAS

105. Although the strategy of concentration steers the majority of necessary new development to larger urban settlements, Central Government has advised that it should be possible to accommodate some small-scale new development in rural settlements in order to provide for local housing needs and to help sustain local services and employment. Such new housing development should be determined through the development plan process and be well-related in scale and location to existing development. This is reflected in Policy H5 opposite.

106. So far as housing development away from existing settlements in the open countryside is concerned, however, the Government's advice is that strict control

should still be exercised. Other policies of this plan, notably those in the Open Countryside and Green Belt chapters, provide this firm control.

H5 Except as provided in Policies H2 - H4, OC1 and GB3, any new housing development should be -

- a) small-scale;
- b) located within existing settlements; and
- c) consistent with other relevant policies of this plan.

Phasing

107. Policy H1 provides a very broad indication of the levels of new housing growth to be accommodated within the county and in individual districts over different parts of the plan period. However, advice from Central Government suggests that where infrastructure constraints, or the inadequacy of other services, mean that new development areas should not be released before a particular time, an additional level of phasing can be justified.

108. So too can phasing be justified where there is evidence that market demand could lead to the exhaustion of housing provision in the early years of the plan.

109. It is partly for such reasons that the new strategic allocations proposed in Policy H2 are not to come on stream until the second half of the Plan period.

110. At Milton Keynes, a further major housing allocation

beyond that which is required to complete the currently planned development of the New City (see Policy H1) would be likely to flood the market if released too early, with the possibility that homes would not be built, the Borough's housing allocation would not be met and increased pressure would fall on other parts of the county, whose infrastructure would be less able to cope. This would be in addition to the problems that would be created for the satisfactory and orderly completion of the currently planned development itself.

111. At Aylesbury, the extent to which the town will be able to respond to strategic growth opportunities will be heavily influenced by the likelihood or otherwise of necessary supporting infrastructure being secured. These infrastructure requirements will be detailed in the new Aylesbury Local Plan.

112. In High Wycombe, a number of improvements to the town's traffic situation will be needed before further major growth can take place there. Such improvements (including Park & Ride options) are addressed in the Wycombe Transportation Strategy (which has now received Government package funding approval), but not all are likely to be in place much before the year 2001.

113. Aside from these major growth areas, a broad level of phasing is also needed in southern Buckinghamshire, where the very limited supply of housing land - particularly in the highly-constrained Chiltern and South Bucks Districts - might otherwise be exhausted by market pressures in the early years of the Plan period.

114. A more detailed interpretation of the Structure Plan's phasing bands will be provided at the Local Plan stage, where it will be possible to address the kinds of concerns outlined above in rather more specific terms.

This will be particularly important in Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Districts - each of which has substantial new housing allocations to make through its Local Plan. It will be more difficult for the Chiltern and South Bucks Districts to introduce similarly rigorous phasing controls because of their heavy reliance on existing commitments and unidentified site allowances to meet their housing requirements.

H6 Where practicable, Local Plans should introduce policies to control the release of new housing sites:-

- a) in order to secure an orderly and co-ordinated pattern of development; and/or
- b) where infrastructural or other service constraints indicate that particular sites cannot be released before a certain date; and/or
- c) where there is evidence that market demand would otherwise exhaust the total housing provision for the area within the early years of the plan.

Re-using Urban Land

115. Public opposition to new house building often arises when green fields are developed at a time when there appears to be land available within urban areas which could have been used instead. This is particularly the case when the land in question is vacant, derelict or otherwise under-used. While there may be good reasons why some of the land within our towns and villages should not be built on (the protection of valuable open spaces for example), it is clear that there may be occasions where

redevelopment can both improve the environmental quality and appearance of the land in question and reduce demands on the surrounding countryside. In line with the Government's aim to ensure that half of all new housing takes place on recycled urban land, the following policy therefore seeks to encourage the development of such sites for housing before the release of green field land.

H7 Subject to there being no conflict with any other policies of this plan and there being no other significant planning objections, the local planning authorities will give priority, in preparing Local Plans, to the re-use of vacant, derelict or otherwise under-used urban land for housing and related development before the release of new "green field" sites.

Current Government policy encourages local authorities to consider the demand for park homes (ie residential mobile homes). These can play a particular role in meeting the need for low-cost accommodation for small households.

H8 New housing developments should, in conjunction with other existing and proposed developments, provide for a mix of housing types and sizes within each District which is appropriate to the needs of the local community. In circumstances where such a need can be demonstrated, the local planning authorities should seek to negotiate for the inclusion of an element of housing which is suitable for, or could readily be adapted to meet the requirements of, those with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.

The Type of New Housing

VARIETY

116. Housing provision is, of course, rather more than just questions of "how much?" and "where?". It is also important to ensure that the housing is appropriate to the needs of those for whom it is built, and different people will have different requirements. For example, the housing needs of one-person households (a group projected to increase by almost 90% in Buckinghamshire over the next 20 years) are unlikely to be the same as those of large family households. Similarly, some people, such as the elderly and the disabled, may have special needs for which general market housing is unsuitable. Neither is it necessarily the case that new homes should be of conventional 'bricks and mortar' construction.

AFFORDABILITY

117. Despite periodic slumps in the housing market and interest rate changes which may make housing relatively more affordable at certain times than others, it is clear that a considerable proportion of households in Buckinghamshire will always be unable to buy or rent a local home appropriate to their needs on the open market.

118. Although the Government accepts that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which may be taken into account during the Development Plan process, it has indicated that the major responsibility for securing affordable housing lies with the District Councils, rather than at the strategic level. Nevertheless, the overall scale and

distribution of housing set by Structure Plans will obviously influence the size of the “affordable element” which individual District Councils may subsequently be able to secure.

119. In this context, the relatively low level of housing provision proposed for the southern half of the County, when measured against its total projected locally-generated housing demand (see Figure 1, in the preceding Chapter), make it extremely unlikely that the full extent of affordable housing needs arising in this part of Buckinghamshire will be met *in situ*.

120. Against this, however, the level of housing proposed for the northern half of the county is in excess of the number that would be required to meet the equivalent of its locally-generated housing demand. This should mean that a proportion of any lower cost open market homes provided in the relatively cheaper housing markets here will be available to some of the households which could not afford homes further south.

121. But, in recognition of the fact that for some households (from wherever in the county they may originate) even the cheapest open market homes will be too expensive, the following policy also supports the provision of subsidised housing, in ways to be determined through the Local Plan process reflecting the local housing strategies prepared by the District Councils. Such provision may be secured on allocated (ie ‘Plan’) sites or, in the case of rural villages (where the scope for cross-subsidy may be more restricted) on sites which may be permitted as an exception to normal planning policies.



H9 The local planning authorities will assess the need for, and bring forward proposals to secure, an appropriate element of affordable housing in the context of policy H1, for those local households whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase or rent homes on the open market as a result of the local relationship between incomes and market prices. Such housing will be subject to arrangements which will ensure its availability to local households at sub-market prices or rents in perpetuity.

Gypsy Sites

122. In the 20 years following 1974 the County Council attempted to make provision, under requirements within the Caravan Sites Act 1968 (now repealed), for acknowledged gypsy families “residing in or resorting to its area”. Although ten local authority sites were provided under this legislation, and a number of private sites have also received planning permission, there remains an acknowledged shortfall in such accommodation, notably in Wycombe District and Milton Keynes Borough.

123. There is no longer any legal requirement on the County Council to provide gypsy sites, even where there is an acknowledged need for such accommodation, and whilst the County Council hopes to maintain the existing sites under its control it has no current proposals to develop any further gypsy caravan sites. Current government advice presumes that proposals for such development will emanate from the private sector, notably the gypsies themselves, who should be able to obtain guidance on appropriate locations etc. from the detailed

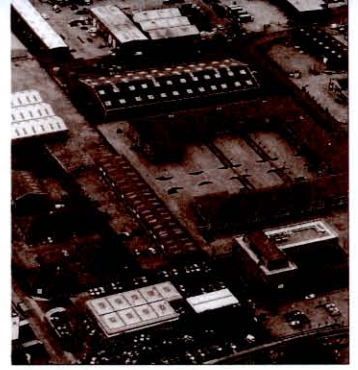
policies contained in Local Plans. It is imperative therefore that Local Plan policies contain clear guidance on this, acknowledging the need for such accommodation where it exists. To this end advice given in DOE Circular 1/94 (which, inter alia, indicates that such sites will generally be inappropriate in AONBs, SSSIs, Green Belts and other protected areas) should be followed closely. So too should any subsequent Government advice on this subject.

124. It is not possible at this time to forecast likely changes in the need for such accommodation before the end of the Plan period, as these will be affected by variable factors such as in- and out-migration on which insufficient information is available. The County Council will therefore continue to monitor the need for additional sites for occupation by gypsy families and will formally review the position at five-yearly intervals, advising the District Councils accordingly.

H10 Local Plans will make provision for such further gypsy accommodation as may be needed, either by identifying appropriate sites or, where this is not possible, by the introduction of criteria-based policies against which planning applications will be considered. Applications for the development of new sites will be considered on the basis of their suitability for gypsies, their impact on the local environment and neighbouring land-uses and in accordance with current Government advice.

ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



125. A healthy local economy is essential for many different reasons. Most immediately, of course, to create employment opportunities for local people but also, at the wider level, to contribute to regional and national economic prosperity and increasingly, to enhance this country's competitive position within Europe and beyond.

126. Buckinghamshire is well-placed to take advantage of the economic opportunities which will arise during the period covered by this Plan.

127. Major communication networks such as the M1, M4, M25 and M40 motorways link the county to other important centres within and beyond the region, links which will be considerably reinforced if Crossrail goes ahead as currently anticipated. With the major international airports of Heathrow and Luton in close proximity, a new rail service from Milton Keynes to mainland Europe from the summer of 1996, an attractive rural environment, a highly skilled workforce, a well-developed educational and training network, high rates of economic activity and an already strong and diversified local employment base, it is clear that Buckinghamshire, which had the fastest rate of job growth in the South East region during the 1980s, provides an ideal basis on which to build further economic success.

Balanced Economic Development

128. The County Council recognises the importance of enabling future economic opportunities to be seized, not only for the reasons advanced above, but also because many of the proposals made in this Plan will depend on a buoyant local economy for their successful implementation. However, economic growth must be

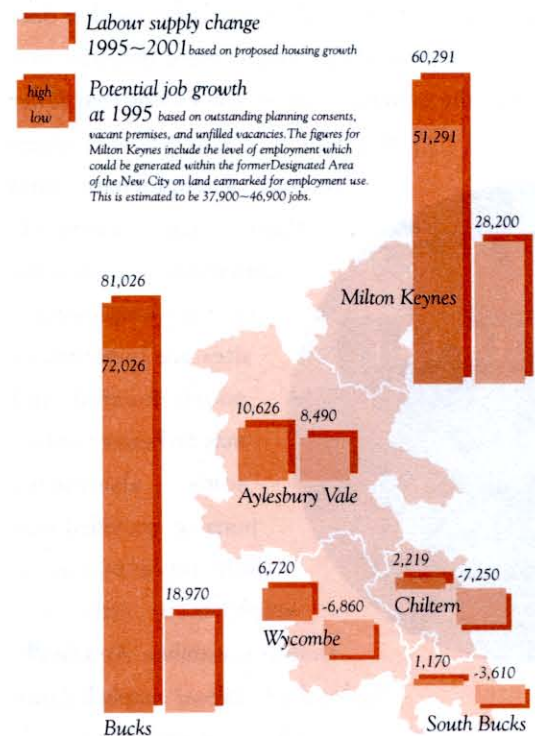
pursued in ways which do not run counter to wider environmental concerns.

129. Amongst these environmental concerns, the need to reduce energy consumption and pollution, the need to respect established land-use constraints such as the Green Belt and the need to avoid further "overheating" in certain parts of the sub-region (in line with Government guidance) are considered to be particularly important.

130. As indicated earlier, the first of these will be addressed mainly by reducing the need to travel, in so far as this can be achieved without prejudicing other important interests.

Fig.6

Labour Supply & Potential Job Growth 1995~2011



131. In this context, an examination of the overall balance between potential new jobs in the county and the projected local labour supply shows that, if all existing, permitted or identified employment sites and premises in Buckinghamshire were to be used to their full capacity, the potential jobs could outnumber local workers by a very considerable margin during the 20 years of this Plan, with resultant implications for the level of commuting. Figure 6 illustrates the position as at November 1995.

132. Bearing this in mind, there might appear to be no prima facie case for releases of new employment land in Buckinghamshire before 2011.

133. However, it is accepted that the arguments are more complex than such a generalised analysis would suggest. Firstly, the simple jobs/labour supply balance says little about the appropriateness of the potential jobs to the skills and abilities of the local labour force. Neither does it reflect the possibility that employment densities may change over the coming years, to the extent that fewer

jobs might be created from a given amount of employment land than are currently anticipated. Again, some existing employment sites are outworn, or poorly located, and may be better used for some alternative purpose, provided that their replacement as employment sites is a realistic possibility. And finally,

the local jobs/labour supply balance fails to acknowledge the significant environmental role played by Milton Keynes City, within its sub-region, in

curbing the need for longer-distance commuting to places such as Birmingham and London.

Further Economic Development

134. In recognition of these finer arguments, the County Council acknowledges that further economic development will be needed in Buckinghamshire within the period covered by this Plan.

135. This will require approaches both within and outside the land-use planning system.

136. Outside the land-use planning system, although many of the factors which will dictate the health of the local economy lie beyond its direct control, the County Council will continue to take an active role in encouraging re-investment from established firms in the area and attracting and maintaining new investment in Buckinghamshire. This will involve working closely on employment matters with the District Councils, the Training & Enterprise Councils (TECs), the local Chambers of Commerce and the local business community. Similarly, the County Council will give high priority to education and training, while assisting local businesses through the provision of industrial and commercial information, supporting the continued economic promotion of Milton Keynes City, embarking on the active promotion of Aylesbury and assisting the economic restructuring of south Buckinghamshire.

137. The proposed strategic planning framework is set out in the policies below. This proposes most new economic development in the northern half of the county, with a greater emphasis on restraint in the constrained south. At Milton Keynes, new employment development



will be necessary in order to ensure the orderly and balanced growth of the City itself, while at Aylesbury further major growth will also be acceptable in order to provide a full range of local employment opportunities and attract currently under-represented industries. Elsewhere in north and mid Buckinghamshire, new development appropriate to local employment needs will be allowed, but having regard to the constraints which apply in different areas and the need to avoid undermining the plan's central concentration strategy. In southern Buckinghamshire, inevitably the opportunities will be fewer, but even here it will be important to support the processes of economic restructuring as the country emerges from recession. Existing sites will therefore be protected, where still needed and, on non-policy-constrained land in the High Wycombe area, new or replacement provision will be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

138. This combination of planning and non-planning measures should, accordingly, greatly assist the restoration and maintenance of a healthy local economy, while at the same time paying due regard to the wider environmental and regional concerns.

139. In the policy framework set out below it should be noted that where the word "employment" is used, this refers to those uses which fall within Part B of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended.

Major Employment Areas

140. In line with the Broad Strategy of this Plan, Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury Town and the High Wycombe Area will be the county's main employment growth centres.

141. The case for further large-scale employment growth at Milton Keynes has been outlined above. However, in order to maximise the chances of success, a private/public sector organisation called the Milton Keynes Economic Partnership (on which the County Council is represented) exists to promote the New City. This has assumed increasing importance since the demise of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation and will continue to be very important in the years ahead when further major housing growth will still require balanced employment provision.

142. Aylesbury and High Wycombe may also require new, or replacement, provision on a significant scale in order to secure a more diversified employment base, to attract industries which are currently under-represented or to allow the redevelopment for other purposes of outworn sites. As with Milton Keynes, a public/private sector organisation known as the Thames Valley Economic Partnership exists (again with County Council involvement) to respond to the various economic issues which need to be addressed both in these towns and in the rest of southern Buckinghamshire.

E 1 Major new employment areas will only be permitted at the following locations and in the circumstances specified:-

a) Milton Keynes City, in order to achieve a balance between housing and employment provision, both within the former Designated Area and in the subsequent further growth of the City in accordance with Policies H1 and H2;

b) Aylesbury Town, in order to secure necessary

economic restructuring and to meet shortfalls in employment opportunities for the existing and future economically-active residents of the town; and

c) High Wycombe Area (as defined in policy H2), in order to secure necessary economic restructuring, provided that any new employment land is only provided in substitution for an equivalent area of existing employment land within Wycombe District which is to be redeveloped for non-employment use(s).

Any major new employment areas will firstly be identified in Local Plans, should be well-related to the public transport network without significantly adding to traffic congestion and should be consistent with other relevant policies of this plan.

Other Significant Employment Areas

143. Although the county's three largest towns will be the main growth areas within Buckinghamshire, other locations beyond the Green Belt may also be identified in Local Plans for significant housing growth (refer Policy H3). In order that such areas should not serve only as commuter dormitories, and in recognition of the fact that they may also serve as local centres for surrounding villages, commensurate employment-generating developments will also be acceptable, provided that this would not undermine the central concentration strategy embodied by



Policy E1.

E2 Within or adjoining the built-up limits of any settlement beyond the Green Belt expanded under the terms of Policy H3, new employment-generating development appropriate to the needs of:

a) the settlement itself; and

b) adjoining areas for which the settlement acts as a local centre, but having regard to the availability of employment in nearby major employment centres

will generally be permitted provided that any new employment sites beyond the existing built-up limits of those settlements are firstly identified in Local Plans.

Employment in Other Rural Settlements

144. The Government's Rural White Paper, which was published in 1995, draws attention to the growing number of industries that can be successfully located in rural areas. This can offer benefits to the firms in question and their staff, can provide new employment opportunities for local people, and can bring new life and activity to rural communities. The re-use of rural buildings has an important role in this respect, and is provided for elsewhere in this Plan - refer Policies OC1 (Open Countryside) and GB3 (Green Belt) later. Similarly, Policy E2, above, will allow commensurate new employment-generating development in rural growth locations beyond the Green Belt. In other rural settlements beyond the Green Belt, only sensitive, small-scale employment-generating development appropriate to the local needs of the settlement itself will be acceptable.

E3 Within the built-up limits of rural settlements beyond the Green Belt and not otherwise identified for expansion under the terms of Policy H3, small-scale employment generating developments appropriate to the local needs of the individual settlement will be permitted where they would not cause significant environmental, infrastructural or highway problems. Where a suitable site cannot be found within the built-up limits of the settlement, a location immediately adjoining the settlement will be permitted provided that there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan and subject to the site's prior identification in a Local Plan.

Major Redundant Rural Sites

145. During the period covered by this Plan, several major sites in the open countryside may (if they have not done so already) become surplus to their original requirements. Clearly, it would be in no-one's interest that such sites should lie vacant and derelict. The Open Countryside chapter of this Plan mentions some of these sites and provides a framework for their re-use (refer Policy OC3).

Where such re-use involves a residential component, it may be consistent with the environmental aims of this Plan to allow some commensurate employment-generating development too - again, subject to the central concentration strategy not being

undermined.



E4 Where major existing developed sites in the open countryside beyond the Green Belt are proposed for redevelopment under the terms of Policy OC3 and the new use would be predominantly residential, provision for commensurate employment - generating development within the existing site boundary may also be acceptable in so far as there would be no conflict with Policy E1.

Southern Buckinghamshire

146. As indicated in the early part of this Plan, it is a fundamental aim of the Government's Regional Guidance for South East England to secure a redirection of growth pressures, broadly from the "overheated" western sector towards the eastern side of the region, and more particularly to the Thames Gateway. So too is it the Government's aim to give continued protection to the Metropolitan Green Belt and to specially-protected landscape areas. For these reasons, the main thrust of policy in the southern half of the county will be primarily on the re-structuring of the local economy, supported by the initiatives of the Thames Valley Economic Partnership.

147. Accordingly, in order to allow for this re-structuring, the general approach in the three southern districts of the county comprises the following strands. Firstly, protection will be given to existing employment areas (particularly those which provide jobs in traditional manufacturing, distribution or storage industries) in recognition of the difficulties of replacing lost employment sites in a highly constrained part of the county. Secondly, in order to provide sites for small businesses, and a range of premises in various locations, the approach will allow

new small businesses to set up in existing rural buildings (subject to Local Plan control). Other than this, however, no new sites for employment-generating development will be permitted.

148. Notwithstanding this general approach, however, new employment areas may, in certain circumstances, be permitted on non-constrained land in the High Wycombe Area (see Policy E1) and, in differing circumstances, and on a smaller scale, at a limited number of locations beyond the Green Belt (see Policies E2 & E3).

E5 Within Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe Districts:

a) no new sites for employment-generating development will be permitted, other than in accordance with Policies E1 - E3 respectively;

b) unless otherwise provided for in a Local Plan, the re-use of existing employment sites for uses outside Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended (or their equivalent Classes in any future revision of the Order) will not be permitted.

Maintaining Diversity

149. In the interests of maintaining a diverse and balanced local economy, with opportunities for people with differing levels of skills and abilities, the County Council wishes to ensure an adequate representation of manufacturing, distribution and storage industries. Such opportunities

have declined in recent years as sites used for these kinds of activities have increasingly been redeveloped for more profitable retail, office or high technology uses. The following policy therefore seeks to facilitate new provision for these traditional types of industry - although without in any way seeking to discourage other types of employment provision. Indeed, there may be some circumstances where (for environmental or marketing reasons) only higher-order activities would be appropriate. Again, the policy seeks to cover this contingency.

E6 In considering proposals for the redevelopment of existing employment areas or the development of new employment areas in accordance with Policy E1, the local planning authorities will, subject to there being no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan or any other significant local planning objections, particularly encourage provision for Classes B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended (or their equivalent Classes in any future revision of the Order).

Small Businesses

150. Small businesses are very important for Buckinghamshire. In 1989, companies employing under 25 persons represented some 88% of all firms operating in the county and generated one third of all the jobs.

151. The importance of small businesses to the national economy is also recognised by Central Government, and one of the main themes of its employment policy is to help such businesses set up and grow. The principal contribution which the planning system can make to this

process is to facilitate the provision of suitable start-up space. Although there is considerable potential for the establishment and growth of new firms generally in the local economy, small units of accommodation are currently in short supply because of high rental and land values. The following policy accordingly seeks to help facilitate such new provision - although without, in any way, seeking to discourage larger businesses in appropriate locations.

E7 Subject to there being no conflict with any other policies of this plan, and in order to assist small businesses, the local planning authorities will give favourable consideration to proposals which would provide for:

- a) the conversion and/or change of use of appropriate buildings to provide suitable space for small businesses;
- b) smaller units in major redevelopment schemes; and
- c) small starter units of 100 sq metres or less.

Distribution Parks

152. In view of the growing importance of distribution industries to the national economy, particularly since the arrival of the Single European Market, there are increasing demands for dedicated facilities where such industries can locate. Such "Distribution Parks" are, however, quite locationally specific in their needs. Generally, they require flat, unconstrained sites of at least 60 acres; lying within 2-3 miles of a motorway junction;

having good visibility from national and sub-regional traffic routes; and with access to both public transport and a skilled labour pool. All of these requirements mean that such facilities inevitably have a significance of strategic dimensions. In order to safeguard other important strategic interests, the following policy accordingly sets out criteria with which any such proposals would need to comply. These include the protection of the Green Belt, important landscape areas, and other key constraints such as the best and most versatile agricultural land; the creation of no unacceptable environmental conditions; and, in line with this Plan's wider aim of securing a modal shift in transport usage, direct access to rail.

153. It should be noted, however, that the inclusion of the policy does not in any sense imply acceptance by the County Council that Buckinghamshire would be an appropriate location for such facilities. This is a matter to be addressed at the Local Plan stage, when more detailed criteria will, if necessary, be introduced.

E8 Any proposals for new sub-regional Dedicated Distribution Parks which may be included in Local Plans must:-

- a) avoid and create no significant adverse impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Colne Valley Park, designated Areas of Attractive Landscape and any other nationally or locally important land-use constraints;
- b) cause no unacceptable congestion, pollution or disturbance in any neighbouring built-up areas;

- c) have or provide direct access to rail;
- d) have good access to the motorway and trunk road network;
- e) be capable of being laid out exclusively for uses within Class B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended; and
- f) provide for extensive and comprehensive landscaping.

TRANSPORT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



Introduction

154. Government forecasts at the national level indicate that the volume of road traffic could double by the year 2025.

155. In Buckinghamshire, the rate could be even higher as a result of development growth more rapid than the national average.

156. Over the period covered by this Plan, the forecasts suggest that the number of cars in Buckinghamshire could grow by 150,000 or more - an increase of over 50% on 1991 levels.

157. The County Council considers that such overall rates of growth in county-wide road traffic can be neither accommodated or sustained. Many of the existing inter-urban roads in the county already operate above their practical capacity, and forecasts show that this situation will significantly worsen by 2011 - even allowing for currently planned road investment. So far as urban roads are concerned, again all the available evidence and experience suggests that these too will be unable to cope.

158. Added to the practical difficulties of providing additional capacity, there are environmental considerations to take into account. Traffic pollutes the atmosphere; it is a major cause of global warming; it accounts for a significant number of personal injuries; it creates noise; and it both damages and detracts from the character of towns, villages and the countryside. New road infrastructure can also have a serious impact on the environment.

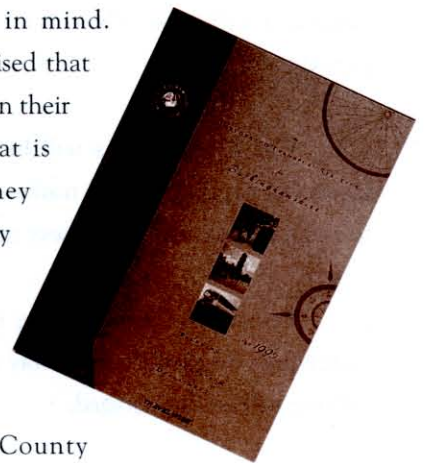
159. Mindful of such considerations, current national and regional advice from Central Government urges local authorities to plan land use and transport policies together so as to reduce the need for vehicle movements and to restrain private car usage while promoting more environmentally-friendly modes of travel such as buses, trains, cycling and walking.

The Integrated Transport Strategy

160. The County Council accordingly takes the view that a new approach is called for, which both emphasises the need to control and manage the transport system in an integrated manner and which looks at that system as a whole. The policies of this plan have been designed with this in mind.

However, it is recognised that the policies will not, on their own, achieve all that is desired and that they must be backed up by a number of comprehensive and practical measures to give them effect.

In July 1995, the County Council therefore adopted an Integrated Transport Strategy for Buckinghamshire, to develop the policies of the new Structure Plan in more detail and to set out the ways in which those policies will be put into effect. The main elements of the Integrated Transport Strategy may be summarised as follows:



A Future land uses and transport provision will be planned together, so as to achieve maximum co-ordination;

B New development will be located as part of, or near to, major centres of population and/or on convenient public transport routes to minimise the need for car movement and to remove the need for some journeys to be made at all:

C Transport systems for all means of travel will be integrated to allow for easier changes between them and greater co-ordination of journeys;

D Demand for vehicular movement will be managed and the County Council will not seek to meet that demand in full, especially within towns and during peak periods;

E Car use in towns will be managed by greater control of car parking and traffic management measures to reduce unnecessary journeys into town centres;

F Priority for car parking in town centres will increasingly be given to short-stay users whilst commuter parking will be discouraged;

G Greater investment will be made in public transport and other initiatives to increase the use of buses and trains;

H Measures will be taken to promote more walking and cycling by improving facilities for the non-car user;

I Initiatives will be taken to reduce environmental and safety problems resulting from traffic in residential areas;

J Publicity campaigns will be introduced to influence travel behaviour;

K Employers and others will be encouraged to consider their working arrangements, to see whether opportunities exist for more flexible working patterns in order to avoid congestion particularly in the peak periods;

L Limited highway investment will be directed to completing a cross-country network to accommodate freight traffic not diverted to rail, and to providing essential bypasses; and

M Movement of goods by rail and water will be encouraged wherever practicable.

161. The first two elements of the Integrated Transport Strategy reflect the broad strategy of this Plan, under which most of the proposed new housing and economic development will be concentrated at a limited number of existing urban areas well-served by public transport modes, with the expansion of small villages, or the development of new villages unrelated to the public transport network, to be resisted.

162. The other elements of the Integrated Transport Strategy reflect and develop the transport policies which are set out below.

163. It should be recognised, however, that the successful implementation of the new approach will be heavily dependent upon the decisions of many different bodies - such as the County Council (as the Highways Authority), the new rail companies, the bus operators and a range of other public and private organisations. Above all, the investment decisions and the financial framework set by Central Government will be crucial. In this context, the

new package approach for the planning and funding of urban transport initiatives will give local authorities greater flexibility to switch resources between different forms of transport provision. This gives rise to greater confidence that the new integrated approach to transport can succeed.

Traffic in Towns and Villages

164. The reduction of congestion, pollution, danger and the general intrusion of traffic in our towns and villages will contribute much to improving the quality of life which they can provide.

165. Recognising, however, that the provision of more and more road space will not offer a long-term and environmentally-acceptable solution to such problems, a system of "traffic demand management" is proposed, which will seek to match demand to capacity, rather than the other way around. Such restraints on private car usage, together with the progressive reduction of long-stay parking (see later), will also have the effect of creating more favourable conditions for public transport services to operate in towns, further helping to bring about the necessary modal transport shift.

TR1A In seeking to restrain future levels of traffic growth in the county, and to promote more environmentally sustainable travel, the County Council will implement measures to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys; encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact than the private car; and

reduce reliance on the private car. The measures to be implemented will include:

In towns:

a) the restraint of traffic in town centres and residential areas through the introduction of demand management and traffic calming measures and the provision of additional traffic-free areas, together with footpaths and cycleways into town centres and across towns;

b) the implementation of an integrated policy for town centre on-street and off-street parking throughout the County;

c) the improvement of public transport access through towns and into town centres, particularly through bus priority measures, park and ride schemes, and passenger information systems, but also by reducing road congestion;

In towns and villages:

d) the management of heavy goods vehicle traffic and parking, to minimise environmental damage;

e) essential junction and road improvement schemes;

f) the reduction of traffic speed to a level commensurate with the type of road, safety requirements, and the local environment by the implementation of traffic calming principles;

g) development control policies to be advised by the District Councils in Local Plans following the principles set out in the appendix to this Plan.

Targets







166. As indicated above, the policies of this Plan are supported by a range of specific measures, set out in the Integrated Transport Strategy, designed to ensure that the twin aims of a reduction in travel demands and a shift in favour of more environmentally-friendly modes of travel have the best possible chance of succeeding. The degree to which such aims may be realised, however, will need to be closely monitored, in order to assess whether any changes to the approach, or any further measures, are necessary in the future. To this end, the Integrated Transport Strategy sets out a number of county-wide “targets”, reproduced in Figure 7 opposite, against which this monitoring will take place. In time, these may well be augmented by other targets, including some of a more local nature, to be devised in consultation with the relevant District Councils.

TR1B The County Council in seeking to develop and implement its integrated transport policies, will set relevant targets. These will be identified within the Council’s Integrated Transport Strategy. The District Councils will be encouraged to include similar targets within their Local Plans. The County Council will monitor progress towards its targets within detailed Policy Statements such as the Transport Policies and Programme (TPP).



Fig.7

Countywide Transport Targets

- 
A reduction in the proportion of residents travelling to work by car to 60% by 2011
- 
An increase to 15% in the proportion of residents travelling to work by public transport by 2011
- 
A reduction of accident casualty rates to 66% of the 1981~1985 average level by 2000
- 
A doubling to 5% of the 1991 proportion of residents travelling to work by cycle by 2011
- 
A 70% reduction in fatal and severe casualties from the 1981~1985 average level by 2011
- 
An increase to 15% in the proportion of residents travelling to work on foot by 2011

Source : BCC Integrated Transport Strategy, July 1995

Milton Keynes

167. The County Council remains committed to the successful completion of the New City of Milton Keynes in accordance with its Master Plan. But the City’s growth will not cease once that time has come. Substantial further development within and/or adjoining the former Designated Area will take place during the latter part of the Plan period. It will be important to ensure that the high standards of transport provision within the City are reflected in any areas of new development on the periphery. Likewise, the objective will be to maintain existing standards of mobility within the City although, within a strategy which seeks to effect a shift away from private car use, the achievement of this objective will imply the adoption of measures to encourage the greater use of public transport.

TR2 The County Council will continue to develop the Milton Keynes City road network in accordance with the Master Plan, and will seek the early completion of these roads. The local planning authorities will require the same standard of road network, together with appropriate landscaping, at such a time as development beyond the former Designated Area may take place and will press for such improvements to the transport system as may be necessary to maintain the same standards of mobility within the former Designated Area.

Other Towns

168. As indicated in Policy TR1, various measures will be introduced so as to restrain traffic in towns. But urban traffic may also be reduced by other means - such as through the introduction of flexible working hours, home working, car-sharing, job-sharing and changes to school hours. Should real progress be made on this, the need for currently approved urban road schemes will be reviewed. In the meantime, however, their lines will remain protected.

TR3 The County Council will review the need to construct previously approved (but not yet implemented) urban highway schemes during the early years of the plan in the light of progress made with the management of demand, in accordance with Policy TR1, in those towns. In the meantime, the routes of approved schemes will be protected from development likely to prejudice their construction.

Parking in Towns

169. Controls over car parking in towns are the nub of the new integrated approach to transport.

170. Unless the supply of long-stay and private non-residential parking spaces within towns is curtailed, there is little prospect of securing a reduction in private car use and greater use of public transport, cycling and walking.

171. In future, the objective will therefore be to match the scale and type of parking provision in towns to their physical and environmental capacity. Within this broad approach, priority will be given to the needs of those who only need to park for short periods of time - such as shoppers.

172. So far as long-stay commuter parking (both public and private) is concerned, this Plan envisages a progressive reduction in provision in central areas and a gradual re-location to Park & Ride Sites on the outskirts of major towns, as and where appropriate.

173. These objectives will be effected through controls over both on-street and off-street parking and the operation of development control policies. A framework for extending the County Council's direct powers to control on-street parking is provided by the Road Traffic Act 1991. So far as off-street public parking is concerned, it is hoped that a co-ordinated approach between local authorities and car park operators will yield the desired results. And, where possible, further growth in the number of car parking spaces provided by employers with town centres will be restrained.



TR4 The County Council in conjunction with the District Councils, will selectively use parking controls to influence car use in towns and manage the demand to travel by car. Parking will be managed by controlling the number of spaces, drawing a distinction between long and short-stay parking, and differential charging both in car parks and on the highway. It is the policy of the local authorities that both off street (public and private) and on street parking provision will be considered together to ensure that provision is complementary.

The total number of spaces provided within town centres and their operation will be determined and managed so as to:

- a) restrain overall demand for access to urban areas and town centres by the private motor car to levels commensurate with environmental capacity;
- b) reduce traffic congestion, especially on important urban traffic and bus routes;
- c) assist in increasing demand for public transport services;
- d) reinforce other policies intended to increase the integration of transport provision in towns;
- e) minimise accident potential and improve safety;
- f) improve, where possible, amenity for those living within predominantly residential areas.

Within town centres the local authorities will seek

priority for the provision of short-stay car parking in order to support shopping, commercial and leisure activities. With the exception of parking provision for rail users, the supply of long-stay commuter parking in towns will be progressively reduced and on-street parking charges and other measures will be introduced to deter long-stay parking. Where appropriate the County Council will seek to develop Park and Ride facilities near the periphery of urban areas for long-stay parking.

To achieve adequate enforcement of on-street waiting restrictions the County Council will seek to implement, where appropriate, the powers to manage (including charging for) on-street parking under the Road Traffic Act 1991, when these are extended to highway authorities outside London.

The Local Authorities will determine and manage the provision of off-street (public and private) parking space taking into account traffic management arrangements, public transport provision, and the capacity of the roads and junctions in the vicinity. In order to reduce Private Non-Residential parking (PNR) in town centres the County Council will encourage the District Councils to examine the practicability of relating their parking standards for PNR parking to operational need and to reflect this in local plan policies.

Parking in Residential Areas

174. With increased controls over town centre parking (see above), it will be necessary to ensure that car parking

displaced from such areas does not simply relocate to adjacent and fringe residential areas. Residents' parking schemes in appropriate areas and other on-street parking restrictions will play their part in this.

175. In some residential areas, overnight lorry parking is a particular problem. The following policy therefore supports the provision of dedicated lorry parks sited away from residential areas, in addition to regulatory measures.

TR5 The local authorities will reduce the intrusion and danger in urban residential areas from on-street non-residential car parking and lorry parking by:

- a) supporting the introduction of on-street residents' parking schemes in appropriate areas; and
- b) implementing parking controls to minimise lorry parking in residential streets whilst supporting the provision of lorry parks in suitable non-residential locations.

Ameliorating the Impact of New Roads

176. A key part of the rationale for the modal shift which this Plan seeks to effect is the damage which new roads can cause to the environment. However, the degree to which capacity constraints will limit traffic growth, and the scope for developing more environmentally friendly modes of travel, will vary in different parts of the County. There will therefore be a few locations where new road-building will still be appropriate, largely where restraint measures are unlikely to create acceptable conditions

within small settlements on major routes, or to relieve minor rural roads from high volume inter-urban traffic (refer also to the following section). This being the case, it is important that, where new roads are needed, such damage is reduced as far as possible by careful design, location and landscaping. So far as major road schemes, such as motorways and trunk roads, are concerned, a formal Environmental Assessment is required for the consideration of proposals. For other significant schemes, the County Council will still undertake, or require, an appraisal of their environmental implications and will provide, or seek the provision of, any appropriate amelioration measures prior to construction.

TR6 New road proposals will be designed to minimise the effect on nearby development of traffic noise and air pollution and to integrate the road into its surroundings with hard and soft landscape features. In addition to those schemes for which a formal Environmental Assessment is required under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the County Council will undertake an appraisal of the environmental effects of other significant highway proposals in its construction programme, in accordance with policy EA1.

The Strategic Highway Network (SHN)

177. Although the new integrated approach seeks to minimise the need for travel and to bring about a shift in transport behaviour in favour of more energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly modes, it has to be accepted that many essential journeys will still need to be made,

and that the inter-urban highway network will remain a very important (and in many cases the only) means of travelling from one town to another - for public as well as private transport.

178. In order to encourage such traffic to use certain routes within Buckinghamshire in preference to other, less appropriate, routes, the County Council has defined a Strategic Highway Network (SHN), the purposes of which are:

- * to carry most of the inter-urban and regional traffic movements within the county;
- * to provide links of adequate capacity and safety between major urban centres within and outside Buckinghamshire, and between these centres and the trunk and motorway network;
- * to provide efficient routes for the movement of goods and people, assist the economic recovery and promote the economic prosperity of the urban centres in the county; and
- * to bypass congested towns and villages, where possible.

179. The SHN will play an important role within the new integrated approach. It will attract traffic away from unsuitable roads; it will provide relief to some towns and villages through the construction of essential bypasses to remove through traffic; and it will assist the national and regional economies by minimising the costs of congestion in the carriage of goods by road. It is, however, **not** the intention to increase the capacity of the entire SHN so

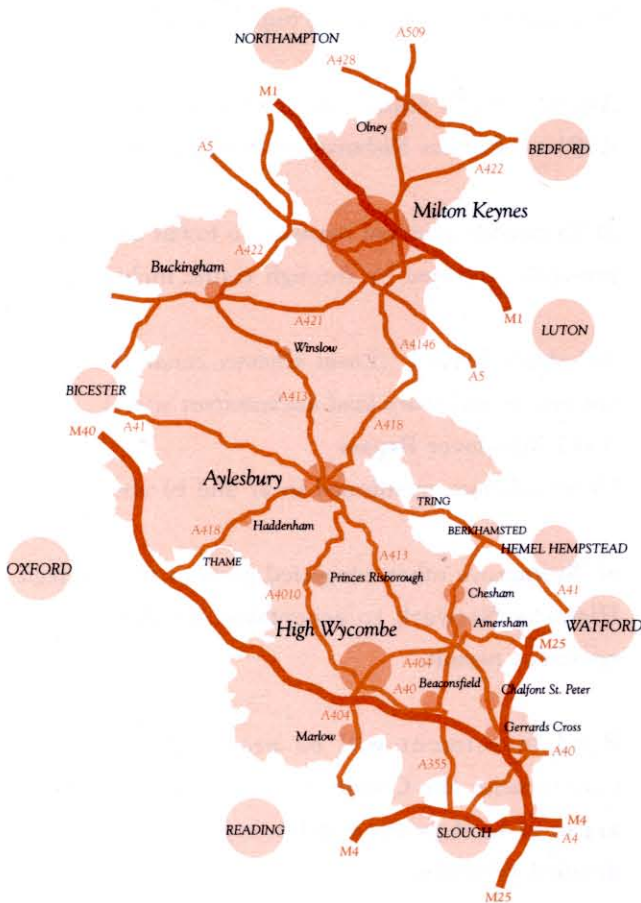
as to accommodate all currently forecast traffic growth. In some parts of the County, improvements will be appropriate as they will help to ensure that traffic follows the most suitable routes. In others, they would encourage traffic growth and detract from initiatives to promote environmentally-friendly modes of transport.

TR7 The County Council has defined a Strategic Highway Network, which is shown on the Key Diagram, comprising the following inter-urban routes:

- a) Motorways (Government Responsibility): M1, M4, M25, M40;
- b) Trunk Roads (Government Responsibility): A5(T), A41(T), A428(T), A404T (south of M40);
- c) Primary Routes (County Council Responsibility): A40 (east of Tatling End), A355 (north of M40), A413 (south of Aylesbury), A418 (east of Aylesbury), A421, A509, A4010, A4146 (north of Linslade).
- d) Other Strategic Roads (County Council Responsibility): A40, A355, A404, A412, A413, A416, A418 (west of Aylesbury), A422.

The Council will improve and maintain those parts of the Strategic Highway Network for which it is responsible, to a high standard, and will seek to ensure that longer distance traffic uses these roads through the use of design, signing, management and regulation.

Fig.8 The Strategic Highway Network



180. Since future resources for transport investment are likely to remain limited throughout the Plan period, and there will in any event be competing claims for such resources as there are, uniform improvement of the SHN will not be possible by 2011. In any event, and for the reasons explained above, improvement of some parts of the SHN would not be consistent with the aims of Policy TR1A.

181. The schemes set out in the following policy, which form part of the SHN, are part of the Government's most recent motorway and trunk road strategy, as defined in

its "Trunk Roads in England 1994 Review" together with the further changes announced in November 1995. It is noted with regret that the A428 Lavendon bypass has been withdrawn from the trunk roads programme. The County Council will therefore press Government to carry out traffic management measures to ameliorate as far as possible traffic conditions in Lavendon. The County Council will also press the Government to include an A41 Waddesdon Bypass within the national programme.

TR8A Proposals for trunk roads and motorways in Buckinghamshire, as determined by Central Government, are as follows:

- a) **Design, Build, Finance & Operate (DBFO)**
 - M40 Junction 1A-3 widening
- b) **Main Programme**
 - M25 Junction 15-16 widening
 - A41 Aston Clinton Bypass
- c) **To be reviewed as potential smaller scale improvements**
 - M1 Junction 10-15 widening
 - M4 Junction 4B-8/9 widening
 - M25 Junction 16-19 widening
- d) **Longer Term**
 - M40 Junction 3-4 widening and Junction 4 improvement

Footnote to Policy TR8A:- "Design, Build, Finance & Operate" (DBFO) arrangements are those under which a single contractor finances and constructs road improvements, and maintains and operates them for a 30 year period, receiving revenue from the Department of Transport as "shadow tolls" in proportion to the traffic carried.



182. Together with the national motorway and trunk road schemes detailed above, the following policy sets out a list of proposed improvements to the Strategic Highway Network for which the County Council will be responsible.

TR8B The County Council's objectives for new highway investment in Buckinghamshire to 2011 (not in order of priority) will be:-

a) To provide high standard links between Aylesbury and the motorway/trunk road network, and to improve links between Milton Keynes and Aylesbury, including:-

- A418 Wing Bypass
- A4146 Linslade Western Bypass
- A4146 Stoke Hammond Bypass

b) To complete other inter-urban connections to Milton Keynes, including:-

- A421 Buckingham to M1, Junction 13
- A421 Tingewick Bypass
- A509 Olney Bypass
- A509 Newport Pagnell Bypass, Junction Improvements
- A509 Newport Pagnell Bypass to M1, Junction 14-Dualling

c) To improve links between Aylesbury and the High Wycombe area, embracing improvements to:-

- A4010 Stoke Mandeville to Princes Risborough
- A4010 Princes Risborough to High Wycombe

d) To provide essential bypasses to towns and villages presently damaged by through traffic including:-

Aylesbury Bypass (*Local scheme; conditional upon outcome of Aylesbury land-use/transport study*)

A413 Wendover Bypass

Other schemes mentioned in a) and b) above.

e) To improve other congested parts of the Strategic Highway Network to acceptable standards when resources permit.

Road investment will be provided by Central Government, the County Council and other bodies as part of development and this, in part, will determine detailed priorities.

Detailed programmes will be set out in the County Council's Transport Policies and Programmes, which will be determined in accordance with the availability of resources and analysis of specific problems at the time.

Roadside Facilities

183. Once vehicles are using the Strategic Highway Network, it is important that they are encouraged to stay

on it by the provision of service areas at appropriate intervals. Without these, there is the likelihood of unacceptable loadings on unsuitable rural roads, and increased congestion in nearby towns, as drivers search for facilities elsewhere.

Motorway Service Areas (MSAs)

184. Although necessary, for the reasons outlined above, Motorway Service Areas are frequently amongst the most contentious of planning proposals - as the series of applications along the M40 in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, culminating in the permission for a new facility at Wheatley in Oxfordshire, clearly testified.

185. It is thus necessary to have a very clear policy framework to guide the location of such facilities. The following policy provides such a framework, according a high degree of protection to constraints such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Green Belt and the Colne Valley Park. The policy also cross-refers to other relevant parts of the Plan, which will have a bearing on any decisions, such as the need to safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land, for example.

TR9 Any proposals for new Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) will be considered on the basis of current Government advice and will:

a) not be within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty unless in the national interest and no alternative site is available elsewhere;

b) not be in the Colne Valley Park or the Green Belt;

c) be well located in relation to existing settlements or areas allocated for development in local plans;

d) be sensitively related to existing settlement patterns; to the historic, wildlife and landscape resources and quality of the area; and be unobtrusive in the landscape;

e) allow for a high level of design and associated landscaping and screening from surrounding areas; and

f) create no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

Other Roadside Service Areas

186. In addition to MSAs, the County Council considers that there will be a need for similar (though more modest) facilities for other parts of the Strategic Highway Network. Although there are no standard rules on the spacing of such facilities, existing Government guidelines indicate that half an hour's driving time (or 25 miles) should be regarded as the maximum which a driver should have to travel without the availability of fuel, refreshment, toilet and parking facilities, including parking for heavy goods vehicles. This general guideline will be taken into account, alongside the other criteria set out in the following policy, when the need for any new provision is considered at the Local Plan stage.

TR10 In order to meet the needs of users of the Strategic Highway Network (SHN) a limited number of roadside service facilities, in appropriate locations, should be provided in association with:

- a) the construction of any major new inter-urban road;
- b) a significant increase in the capacity of an existing interurban road comprising part of the SHN;
- c) an identified existing deficiency in the provision of roadside services along the SHN.

These service areas will be more modest in scale than MSAs but will be expected to conform to the same locational requirements as set out in Policy TR9(a) to (f). To this end, the District Councils, when preparing local plans, should identify suitable locations for roadside service areas in accordance with these criteria.

Freight Movement

187. Government forecasts anticipate considerable growth in road freight traffic between 1988 and 2025. In this period, traffic generated by light goods vehicles is forecast to increase by 101%-215% while the corresponding increase for heavy goods traffic is 67%-141%.

188. The County Council recognises that the safe and efficient movement of goods is important for the health

of the local economy, but seeks to reduce the negative impacts of this as far as possible. In line with the new approach, this Plan therefore encourages the greater use of other transport modes for the movement of freight - see Policy TR12. Having said this, it is recognised that for the foreseeable future most freight will continue to be carried on the highway network. The following policy accordingly seeks to minimise the problems which this may cause for local residents and the environment.

TR11 The County Council will mitigate, wherever possible, the environmental problems caused in towns and villages by the movement of heavy commercial vehicles. Through the introduction of traffic management measures, highway design, signing and development control, the Council will seek to achieve the following:

- a) the attraction of freight traffic on to the Strategic Highway Network;
- b) where alternative routes are available, the diversion of freight traffic from residential streets and other environmentally sensitive areas including rural lanes;
- c) the avoidance of development which does not have immediate access to the principal road network and which will give rise to heavy commercial vehicular traffic in environmentally sensitive areas, including rural lanes;
- d) the promotion of loading and unloading restrictions where necessary (and the provision of improved loading facilities where they are required).

189. The County Council does not believe that the current, and increasing, dominance of road-borne freight is sustainable in the long-term - not only because of the environmental implications, but also because the necessary road capacity will not be provided. Greater movement of freight by alternative means is therefore something which should be given encouragement. This Plan seeks to provide this encouragement by giving favourable consideration to the provision of facilities which would allow for the increased movement of freight by rail or water.

TR12 The local planning authorities will seek to secure the fullest use of rail and waterways for the carrying of freight by:

a) giving favourable consideration to proposals for the siting of suitable new industries in growth areas next to railway lines to which sidings could connect, or to appropriate waterways;

b) giving favourable consideration to the establishment and development of rail and water freight depots, including those for handling aggregates for the construction industries;

c) favouring developments which would maximise the use of rail or waterway access, rather than those which would seek to use nearby road access insofar as there would be no significant conflict with any other relevant policies in the Plan.

Public Transport

190. There is now widespread recognition that public transport services will have to improve very significantly if the problems which are otherwise likely to result from the predicted growth in road traffic are to be confronted. The improvement of public transport services will also be very important from the perspective of those households without access, or with restricted access, to other means of travel (the 1991 Census revealed that one fifth of all Buckinghamshire households had no car or van) and, from an economic perspective, in assisting the efficient operation of local labour markets.

191. The concentration and integration philosophy of this Plan provides a strategic framework which the County Council believes to be compatible with enhanced public transport provision, but much will also depend on the precise layout and density of new development proposed at the local level. Accordingly, this Plan provides the District Councils with sufficient flexibility to decide the most appropriate patterns of development for their areas, through their Local Plans.

192. The following policies (TR13-TR16) provide a more specific framework to encourage a substantial shift in favour of public transport. In summary, the proposed traffic demand measures set out earlier will be accompanied by a system of "positive discrimination" in favour of public transport, in order to allow buses and trains to attract new users from the car.

193. These policies will be supplemented by measures outside the land use planning system. Since Central Government funding arrangements now give local authorities more flexibility in determining relative



priorities for transport investment, the County Council will therefore extend its role from the traditional subsidisation of uneconomic public transport services to a much more proactive stance, which actively encourages a range of new initiatives.

194. In 1994, the County Council published a Public Transport Policy Statement, which considers some of the new initiatives which could be taken to alter the balance between highways and public transport investment. Together with the Integrated Transport Strategy, this will be used as a basis for decisions on the allocation of transport resources by the County Council.

Bus Services

195. Buses provide the majority of public transport journeys (outnumbering train journeys by about 4 to 1). But the growth in private car usage and low investment in bus services has led to a decline in bus patronage.

196. The following policy summarises the County Council's general approach to the provision of new and enhanced bus services.

TR13 The County Council wishes to see the balance of transport resources increasingly shifted towards public transport. It will promote the use of bus services and will use its planning, highway, and public transport powers to:

a) maintain and improve existing bus services within urban areas, between towns and in rural areas, where a need for such services can be demonstrated;

b) promote measures in towns which will give advantage to bus services including bus priority schemes, bus lanes, park-and-ride facilities and access for buses to service pedestrian priority areas;

c) encourage new development to locate where it can be supported by and will strengthen existing public transport services;

d) ensure the early provision of local bus services to meet the needs of new residential and industrial development throughout the County;

e) secure adequate bus services to feed the main railway stations and will work with bus and train operators to co-ordinate arrival and departure times at railway stations.

Rail Services

197. Rail has significant environmental advantages over road transport in terms of energy consumption, pollution and safety. There is also considerable potential for rail to make a much bigger contribution to work journeys when congestion problems affect other modes of transport.

198. Buckinghamshire benefits from a good network of rail services on the direct routes to and from London, most of which have been improved in recent years through new rolling stock and faster journey times. The Chiltern line is a particularly notable example of what can be achieved, with ridership having increased very significantly as a result.

199. The County Council is anxious that rail services should be improved still further, not only because of the pressing environmental imperatives, but also to support the major new growth proposals set out in this Plan.

200. The implementation of policies to restrain the use of cars in town centres, together with the provision of better facilities (eg convenient long-stay car and cycle parking, and interconnecting bus services) at local railway stations will all encourage the greater use of the local rail network.

201. In addition, the policy set out below identifies a new County Rail Network, upon which it is hoped that new rail investment will be concentrated.

202. The first three components of the network (sub-paragraphs a - c of the following policy) identify the existing principal and branch line routes in Buckinghamshire.

203. Routes with potential for restoration (sub-paragraph d), are those on which the formation and track remain in existence either as operational freight routes or as mothballed assets and are, therefore, routes where restoration of services would be relatively straightforward.

204. Routes to be safeguarded for possible rail service provision (sub-paragraph e) comprise former railway trackbeds, along which some development has taken place at various sites and where protection from significant further development is to be given to the remainder of the route. Not all of the discussed trackbeds in the County are included in this section. Those that have been selected were chosen on the basis of there having been some realistic interest expressed in the possibilities for restoration of rail services. The routes

excluded are those where there are significant developments on the alignment and/or where considerable doubts exist as to the potential economic viability of restoration.

TR14 The County Council has identified a County Rail Network, which is shown on the Key Diagram, comprising the following routes:-

a) Principal European and InterCity Routes:

London to Birmingham, North West, and Scotland
London to South Wales and the West Country

b) Other Principal Routes:

London to Northampton and Birmingham
London to Banbury and Birmingham
London to Aylesbury via Amersham
London to Aylesbury via High Wycombe

c) Branch Line Routes:

Bletchley to Bedford
Chalfont and Latimer to Chesham
Maidenhead to Bourne End and Marlow

d) Routes with Potential for Restoration:

Aylesbury to Claydon Junction
Bletchley to Claydon Junction
Bicester to Claydon Junction
Grendon Underwood Junction to Ashendon Junction

e) Routes to be Safeguarded for Possible Rail Service Provision:

Claydon Junction to County Boundary
(trackbed of former Great Central line)
Princes Risborough - Thame - Cowley
High Wycombe - Bourne End (part)
West Drayton - Poyle

f) Tourist and Community Railway:

Princes Risborough to Chinnor.

The County Council will support investment decisions by Railtrack, or others, which will improve the County Rail Network and encourage the provision of enhanced quality rail services by the railway operators. In addition, the Council will consider making funding available in support of specific projects, such as the construction of new stations or the modification of tracks to facilitate relevant new services, if there is significant benefit to existing and potential rail users within the County from such schemes.

205. Part of the new County Rail Network comprises a number of lines which have either fallen into disuse or are no longer used for both passenger and freight services. In order not to prejudice their possible re-opening, or the restoration of passenger and/ or freight rail services, where appropriate, the County Council will resist any developments which would prevent this. In the meantime, it may be possible to use disused trackbeds for other environmentally-friendly transport or

recreational schemes - such as footpaths, cycleways, bridleways or other forms of public transport provision. Again, the following policy seeks to encourage such initiatives.

206. Where restoration to rail services is not considered appropriate, other forms of public transport provision may be a longer-term option to be considered.

207. The following policy will apply to the relevant categories of routes specified in Policy TR14, above. However, in the case of one of these routes - that from Bourne End to High Wycombe - only part is to be safeguarded for possible rail service provision. This is supported by the findings of a consultant's study, which indicate that the restoration of rail services on the northern section of this route (from the London Road to High Wycombe) would not be a viable proposition.

TR15 In furtherance of the County Rail Network identified in Policy TR14, the County Council will press Railtrack, or others to:

a) Re-open, for passenger and freight rail services, the Oxford-Bletchley and Aylesbury-Bletchley railway lines;

b) Where appropriate, restore for passenger and/or freight rail services those disused railway trackbeds identified in Policy TR14 as routes to be safeguarded for possible rail service provision.

The County Council will oppose any developments which would prejudice either of these objectives. In the interim, the use of disused railway trackbeds for

walking, cycling, riding or for alternative forms of public transport provision, will be supported, provided that there are no overriding local planning objections and their potential restoration for rail services in the longer-term is not compromised.

District Councils will be encouraged to include similar policies within their Local Plans.

Neighbouring local authorities will be encouraged to take similar action in adjoining areas where it would assist in the implementation of this policy.

Integrated Public Transport

208. As mentioned above, integration will be the keynote for transport planning in future - and this applies no less to the provision of public transport services. The improvements to bus and rail services which this Plan seeks to facilitate and encourage may be expected to produce still more benefits if the two forms of provision can be planned in a mutually supportive way.

TR16 The County Council will support the development of integrated bus services (including park and ride facilities) to provide the maximum diversion from road to rail-borne commuting at all railway stations where this is appropriate and feasible, and in particular in conjunction with the improved CrossRail route to provide a focus for public transport movement (especially Central London commuting).

Pedestrians and Riders

209. With constraints on private vehicle usage in towns, it will be increasingly necessary to develop walking as a healthy and non-polluting alternative, particularly for short trips to work, school and the shops.

Good, safe, pedestrian areas, routes and facilities, accessible to both able-bodied and disabled people, will therefore be essential for this. So too will the location and design of development in ways which will both facilitate and encourage more journeys to be made on foot. It is especially important that pedestrian routes are made as direct as possible, both within developments and on the footway and footpath networks as a whole.

210. Riding, too, is an important activity for large numbers of people in the county. In this context, the County Council's commitment to have all of our Rights of Way open by the turn of the century, and its continuing programme of walks and rides, will benefit those on foot and on horseback alike.



TR17 The Local Authorities will seek the development and provision of safe and convenient pedestrian routes and bridleways in order to encourage walking and riding as non-polluting and healthy forms of transport and recreation. In particular the County Council will:-

a) Implement measures to give a greater priority to pedestrians over the private car, especially in towns;

- b) Promote the development and provision of safe and convenient pedestrian routes within towns and villages, into town centres, and across towns;
- c) Make better provision for pedestrians in shopping and residential areas through town centre enhancements, traffic calming schemes, and by ensuring high standards are adopted for commercial developments;
- d) Maintain footways in the county to a high standard; and
- e) Give full consideration to the needs of pedestrians when designing new highways and highway improvement schemes.

Cycling

211. Like walking, cycling is also a healthy and non-polluting form of travel. And, in urban areas, it also offers comparable speed and flexibility to the car over short journeys, while creating much less congestion.

212. The greatest contribution which cycling can make in terms of energy conservation and emission control is to play a more important role in journeys to work and school.

213. For these reasons, cycle routes will be installed whenever possible to complement the main radial routes leading in to towns; measures will be introduced to enhance the safety of cyclists; greater integration with other modes of transport will be sought; and the supply

of cycle parking spaces in towns will be increased, paying adequate regard to security considerations.

TR18 The County Council, in conjunction with the District Councils, will seek to provide facilities which assist the movement and parking of bicycles and encourage the development of cycling as a safe, convenient, healthy and non-polluting method of transport for journeys to work, school, shopping, and for recreation.

214. Every year, about 1,000 cyclists are reported injured or killed in accidents in Buckinghamshire - half of them children. Safety will therefore be a principal consideration in improving conditions for cycling, with a general need to lessen conflicts between cyclists and motor traffic. For this reason, new networks of strategic cycle routes will be identified, which will use existing streets, shared facilities with pedestrians or, in some cases, be cycle-only, dependent on need, opportunity and safety considerations. Such networks have received the endorsement of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution in its report on Transport and the Environment.



TR19 The Local Authorities will identify strategic cycle routes, particularly in Local Plans, and will promote their implementation. These will use existing streets, shared facilities with pedestrians, or be cycle only, depending upon need and safety considerations.



Road Safety

215. Current Government policy (in the Accident 2000 initiative) seeks a reduction of all road casualties to two-thirds of the level experienced in the early 1980s by the year 2000.

216. While the number of fatal and serious casualties on Buckinghamshire roads has already reduced by 60% since the early 1980s (although some 400 were still recorded in 1994), less serious casualties have actually increased by some 38% over the same period - totalling well over 3,000 in 1994.

217. A variety of measures will therefore be introduced to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. These are described more fully in the County Council's Road Safety Plan, which supports the Government's Accident 2000 initiative.

TR20 In order to reduce the number and severity of road accidents, the danger which motor vehicles pose to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, and the effects of inappropriate traffic behaviour upon amenity, the County Council will:

- a) Support the introduction of appropriate safety measures, including traffic calming, in new or existing developments with particular emphasis on shopping and residential areas, where appropriate;
- b) Encourage and introduce measures to assist cyclists and pedestrians;
- c) Support and provide measures which minimise

the impact of traffic on the environment in both urban and rural areas;

- d) Maintain and monitor a continuing programme of accident casualty reduction measures.

Airports and Air Traffic

218. Extensive areas of Buckinghamshire are affected by the major international airports of Heathrow and Luton. Whilst Heathrow, in particular, has been a significant stimulus to economic activity in the county, there have been several undesirable consequences of continued growth in passenger throughput. Amongst these have been increased surface traffic, development pressure in the Green Belt areas of south Buckinghamshire and aircraft-related noise.

219. Accordingly, the relative benefits and disadvantages of any further airport, or airport-related, developments affecting Buckinghamshire will have to be very carefully considered as and when such proposals are made.

TR21 The County Council will consider any airport and related development proposals which would have an effect upon Buckinghamshire measured against the following criteria:

- a) any economic benefits to the residents and businesses of the county;

b) implications for the transport infrastructure within the county;

c) additional development pressures on the open countryside within and beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt; and

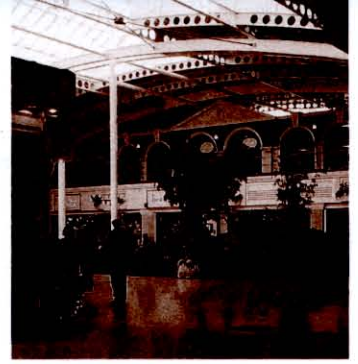
d) implications for pollution, including aircraft noise.

220. In order to contain the spread of airport-related developments (such as offices, warehouses and the like), and to protect the surrounding countryside from encroachment, it is important to ensure that these facilities are located within the boundaries of the airport itself.

TR22 The Local Planning Authorities will resist airport-related developments outside airport boundaries which could be more appropriately located within them.

SHOPPING

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



221. In addition to their most obvious function as a source of the commodities which we all require in our daily lives, our local shops provide over 10% of Buckinghamshire's total employment, and bring vitality to our urban and rural communities.

Trends

222. A major expansion of retailing activity during the 1980s, which saw the development of many new local shopping areas, has been accompanied by noticeable changes in the pattern of provision in the county.

223. Although retailing remains an activity which predominantly takes place in or on the edge of town centres, the gradual decentralisation of shopping facilities to non-central locations has become increasingly apparent in recent years. Reinforced by growing levels of personal mobility, worsening traffic problems in towns and the widespread ownership of fridges and freezers, the development of new outlets selling convenience (food) and comparison (durable) goods in peripheral locations has escalated.

224. A cause for some concern in this connection is the possible impact of out-of-centre retailing developments on the vitality and viability of existing town centres which, as the following chapter indicates, are of central importance to many of this Plan's wider objectives. Similarly, village shops can also be adversely affected by such developments - a matter which Local Plans may well wish to address.

225. In response to concerns such as these, Central Government is now asking local planning authorities to

adopt a "sequential approach" to new retail development in which first preference is to be for town centre sites, followed by edge-of-centre sites and only then by out-of-centre sites, in locations that are, or can be made, accessible by a choice of means of transport. The policies set out in this chapter are consistent with this approach.

Indicators of Future Need

226. Many factors will influence the extent to which new shopping provision is required during the Plan period. Amongst these will be the future scale of population growth, the level of growth in consumer spending and the adequacy or otherwise of existing shopping facilities.

227. As part of the background research for this Plan, the County Council commissioned consultants to examine the implications of factors such as these and to assess the possible need for different types of retail floorspace over the 15 years to 2006. The consultants' findings, published in 1993, are reproduced in Figure 9, which compares potential needs in each District with the provision already made or permitted since 1991.

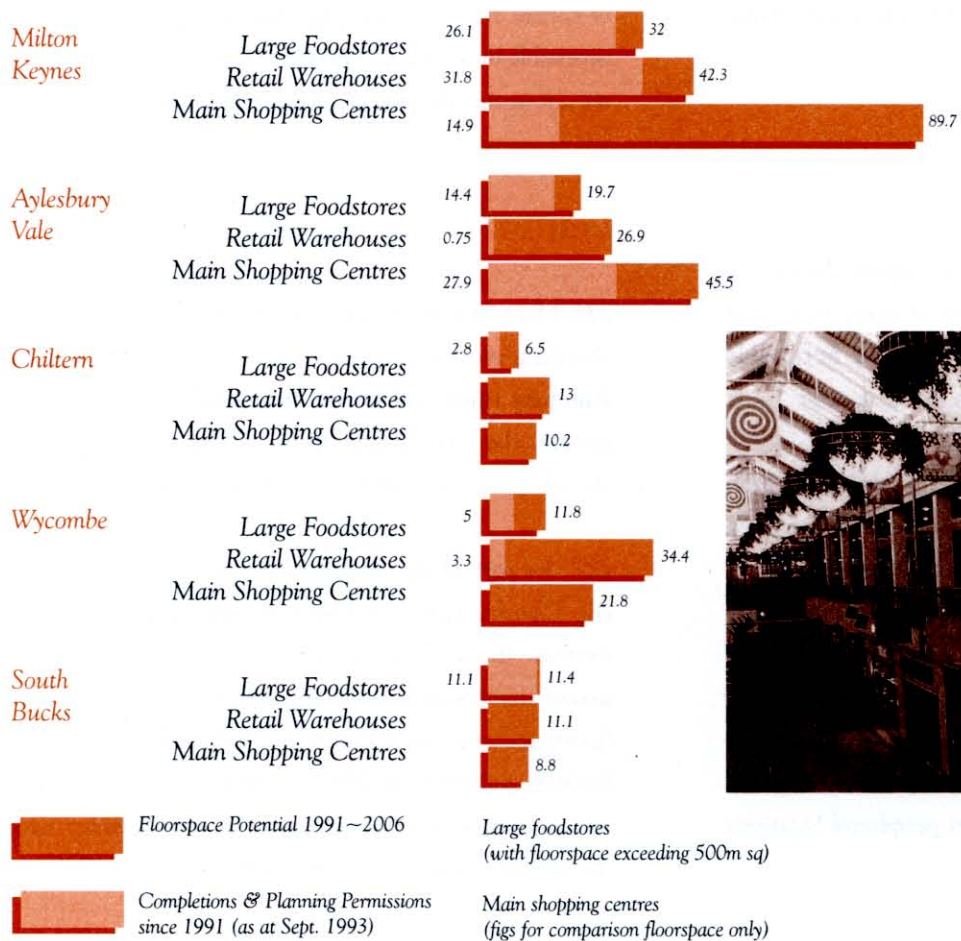
Planning Considerations

228. It should be noted, however, that the data in Fig.9 only provides a very broad indication of the amount and type of additional shopping facilities which could be required to serve Buckinghamshire's needs over the coming years, if certain assumptions were to be borne out.

It does not, in any sense, represent targets for new provision.

Fig.9

The Potential Need for New Retail Floorspace in Buckinghamshire 1991~2006 gross floorspace in thousands sq m



229. Furthermore, estimates of need will represent but one of several considerations to be taken into account in determining whether (and where) any new provision should be made.

230. The continuing need to protect the Green Belt and the Chilterns AONB in the south of the county will, inevitably, limit the extent to which new facilities can be located there. Similarly, the integration principle of this Plan, wherein close physical linkages between homes, jobs,

transport services and community facilities (like shops) are sought, will tend to favour certain patterns of retailing activity over others. And neither will forms of retailing be permitted which would undermine the position of existing, traditional shopping areas. As indicated above, the Government's new "sequential approach" requires first priority to be given to town centre sites for new retailing provision - and this will be a considerable influence on the future location of shopping facilities in Buckinghamshire.

S1 Subject to there being no conflict with any of the other relevant policies of this plan, the local planning authorities will encourage an amount, nature and distribution of shopping which:

- a) meets the needs of customers, both those with private cars and those reliant on other forms of transport including cyclists and pedestrians;
- b) facilitates a combination of trip purposes; and
- c) accommodates new forms of retailing whilst maintaining the vitality and viability of existing centres as a whole.

The Hierarchy of Centres

231. Different shopping centres in the county perform different retailing functions, related to their size and the type and variety of goods sold there.

232. Central Milton Keynes has an importance which extends well beyond Buckinghamshire. By far the largest centre in the county, with over one million square feet gross of shopping floorspace, several major department stores, a high degree of accessibility and space for considerable expansion yet, this centre is increasingly fulfilling a regionally important shopping role.

233. The shopping centres of Aylesbury and High Wycombe, both having experienced major improvements in recent years, also serve wide catchment areas - albeit not to the same degree as Milton Keynes.

234. Below these three, the county has many other centres in its smaller towns and larger villages - exhibiting great variety in size, status and importance.

235. The County Council attaches great importance to maintaining this hierarchy of centres. So too does it see as important the fact that new retail investment can help to bring about real improvements to the environmental quality of such centres - as has been so well demonstrated in certain parts of the county in recent years. The attractive, safe, well-lit and all-weather shopping centre at Friars Square in Aylesbury is one notable example of what can be achieved in this respect.

S2 The local planning authorities will seek to maintain and enhance the identified roles of the various retailing centres in the following hierarchy:

EMERGING REGIONAL CENTRE :

Milton Keynes City Centre

SUB-REGIONAL CENTRES :

Aylesbury

High Wycombe

DISTRICT CENTRES :

Amersham on the Hill

Beaconsfield

Bletchley

Buckingham

Chalfont St Peter

Chesham
Gerrards Cross
Marlow
Newport Pagnell
Olney
Princes Risborough
Stony Stratford
Wolverton
Kingston, East Milton Keynes
Westcroft, West Milton Keynes (Proposed)

MINOR CENTRES :

To be identified in local plans

In the consideration of retail proposals in these centres, particular attention will be given to the improvement of comparison shopping and other complementary uses which are sympathetic with their scale and function. In all centres, new retail proposals will be judged in the context of their contribution to the improvement of the local environment.

Strategic Centres

CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES

236. In recent years, new shopping provision here has been provided in accordance with the Retail Strategy of the former Milton Keynes Development Corporation. Although the Corporation has now gone, the County Council remains committed to the further strengthening and enhancement of the Central Shopping Area.

S3 The local planning authorities will support the future expansion of Milton Keynes Central Shopping Area to serve a growing local population and to maintain its service to a wider area in line with its emerging regional status in the hierarchy of centres in the county.

AYLESBURY & HIGH WYCOMBE

237. While many improvements have been made to both of these centres in recent years, additional provision will be necessary if their current high net outflows of consumer expenditure on comparison goods are to be clawed back from neighbouring centres such as Oxford, Reading and Slough.

S4 The local planning authorities will encourage the expansion and improvement of Aylesbury and High Wycombe town centres for both comparison and convenience shopping in line with their sub-regional status in the hierarchy of centres.

Local Shopping

238. As well as setting out more detailed policies for the strategically important shopping centres mentioned above, the District Councils will play a key role in decisions affecting the District Centres identified in the retail hierarchy. Local Plans will devise appropriate policies for each centre, including the need for specific action such as environmental enhancement works to be



pursued simultaneously with new shopping provision. Similarly, Local Plans will also provide policies for minor centres (in villages, for example), as well as for other forms of retail outlet such as farm shops.

Out of Centre Shopping

239. Out-of-centre retailing activity has grown rapidly since the early 1980s. And while it would be foolish to ignore the advantages offered by out-of-centre shopping, the potential impact of these facilities on traditional shopping areas; on the vitality and viability of town centres; on people with mobility problems and, in the case of out-of-town developments, on the open countryside cannot be ignored either.

The first priority of this Plan is to steer new shopping facilities to existing town centres, provided that suitable sites are available. However, it is recognised that such sites may not always be available and that, in these circumstances, alternative locations may need to be found to accommodate necessary provision. In this context the District Councils may wish to consider providing an indication of the need for such shopping facilities in their Local Plans. The following policy accordingly sets out criteria which will guide new retailing development in out-of-centre locations.

55 Out of centre shopping developments, including superstores, supermarkets, retail warehouses, factory outlet centres and warehouse clubs will be permitted only where they would:

a) meet an identified quantitative and qualitative

need which cannot be met satisfactorily either within, or on the edge of the town centre;

b) create an overall pattern of provision within a major built-up area which is well related to the resident population so as to minimise the need for travel;

c) not, either on their own or in conjunction with other such developments and associated facilities, seriously affect the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre as a whole in the County or similar centres in neighbouring counties;

d) provide a high degree of accessibility by both public and private transport, including cyclists and pedestrians; and

e) create no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

In furtherance of this policy, the local planning authorities may impose conditions on planning permissions to restrict the range of goods which can be sold at specific shops.

Definitions

241. Superstores are defined as single-level, self-service stores selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually with at least 2,500 square metres gross trading floorspace and with dedicated car parks at surface level.

242. Supermarkets are defined as single-level, self-

service stores selling mainly food, with a gross trading floorspace of between 500 and 2,500 square metres, often with their own car parks.

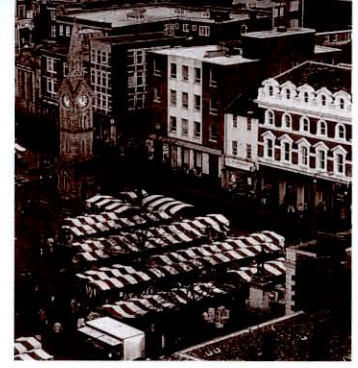
243. Retail Warehouses are defined as large, single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods) and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers.

244. Factory outlet centres are defined as groups of shops, usually away from the town centre, specialising in selling seconds and end-of-line goods at discounted prices.

245. Warehouse Clubs are defined as out-of-centre businesses specialising in bulk sales of reduced priced goods in unsophisticated buildings with large car parks. The operator may limit access to businesses, organisations or classes of individual, and may agree to limit the number of lines sold.

TOWN CENTRES

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



246. Town Centres play a major role in the social and economic well-being of urban areas. While their retailing function is perhaps the one for which they are best known, many other activities can be found in the most successful centres. Different business enterprises, entertainment and leisure facilities, residential areas, parks, gardens and open spaces all interrelate with the primary shopping function to provide vitality and viability, foster civic pride and confer a sense of community.

247. In a broader context, this Plan also sees the health, prosperity and diversity of our towns in general, and our town centres in particular, as being important in curbing the forces of dispersal which run counter to its wider environmental objectives. By ensuring that towns are a pleasure to live, work and spend time in, less pressure for development elsewhere may result and, in consequence, a reduced overall need to travel. In this connection, town centres also have a valuable role to play as foci for development related to public transport networks - a fact acknowledged in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy and underpinned by a number of key proposals for better public transport access to town centres in the new Integrated Transport Strategy for Buckinghamshire.

Current and Future Action

248. In recent years, many initiatives have been taken by local authorities in Buckinghamshire, in partnership with other bodies, which have resulted in substantial improvements to town centres throughout the county.

249. Old shopping areas have been upgraded and new ones built, less threatening car parks and pedestrian underpasses have been provided, traffic management

schemes have been introduced, and there has been a growing emphasis on attractive landscaping and street furniture.

249. It is an invidious exercise to single out particular examples, but just looking at the County Town, Aylesbury, the results have been profound. The market has returned to the environmentally-enhanced Market Square, the old Friars Square has been completely transformed into a prestigious covered Shopping Centre attracting major retailers; and the multi-storey Station Car Park has been totally refurbished, with regular patrols by security staff.

250. While much has, accordingly, been achieved there is still work to be done. More emphasis on the "mixing" of different activities and land-uses in town centres will help keep them alive and dynamic in the evenings as well as in the daytime. The encouragement of residential uses will be an important step in this respect - to be achieved, perhaps, through the utilisation of vacant space over shops or the conversion of surplus office space - provided this can be done without harming existing town centre interests.

TC1 The local planning authorities will seek to maintain and strengthen the vitality and viability of each town centre in the County. Favourable consideration will be given to the diversification of town centre functions to embrace a variety of appropriate activities, including the introduction of new residential accommodation, where this would not result in the loss of viable retail uses.

251. New development proposals in town centres will also need to be considered in such a way that their cumulative

impact on a wide range of different interests is taken into account. The existing shopping hierarchy, transport infrastructure, environmental quality and the need to ensure public safety and deter crime will all be amongst these considerations.

TC2 Major development proposals in town centres will be assessed in relation to their impact on the centre as a whole. This assessment will include:-

- a) the likely effect of the development upon the surrounding highway network;
- b) the likely contribution which the development will make towards the diversification of town centre functions;
- c) the likely contribution which the proposals would make to the physical enhancement of town centres or to the improvement of their amenity value;
- d) the degree to which accessibility will be improved through the encouragement of public transport usage; and
- e) the likely effect upon the vitality and viability of the centre.

create problems in some cases. The Shopping chapter of this Plan provides a policy framework for the consideration of out-of-centre retailing proposals (see Policy S5), but retailing developments are not the only possible sources of concern in this respect. Major leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities, for example, could also have undesirable consequences for town centres.

TC3 Major non-retailing developments outside town centres will not be permitted where they would, either on their own or in conjunction with other such developments, seriously affect the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre.

Other Approaches

253. Finally, the importance of approaches outside the land-use planning system must be emphasised, since not all the problems of town centres are capable of resolution in planning terms. Some authorities in Buckinghamshire have already established "town centre forums" or working parties in which different interests come together to consider the needs of their areas and to respond accordingly. Joint action between the public and private sectors on specific projects, and the promotion of town centre management to develop clear standards of service and improve quality for town centre users, are other examples of what can be and is being done in this respect.

Out-of-Centre Developments

252. It is not only major development proposals within town centres which can have adverse implications for their vitality and viability. Proposals elsewhere can also

URBAN FRINGES

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



Competing Land Uses

254. It is in the meeting place between town and country that some of the most difficult planning problems are experienced, as different land uses compete with each other for limited space.

255. While agriculture may be the predominant land use outside most settlements, urban fringes are frequently characterised by concentrations of “unneighbourly” uses such as sewage treatment works and waste disposal facilities which need to be located conveniently to, but away from, the people they serve.

256. Again, as in parts of Buckinghamshire, urban fringe areas may also coincide with areas of valuable mineral deposits, which may be needed to provide the country with necessary aggregates for the construction industry. Long periods of extraction and disruption can, however, ensue before restoration of the land can take place.

257. And regrettably, problems of trespass, vandalism, litter and fly-tipping are all too common in some fringe areas.

258. The result of all this activity is that the quality of the environment in such areas is often much lower than than it should be.

The Need for Positive Management

259. However, the land immediately beyond our towns and villages is the nearest piece of open countryside which most people know - even though they may not have access to it. Because of this special importance, such land

deserves particular attention in planning terms. It requires a positive approach, aimed at securing environmental improvement, increased (but controlled) public access and a greater recreational and amenity value for the residents of the adjoining areas.

260. This kind of approach is already being taken in Buckinghamshire through a variety of countryside management initiatives administered by different local authorities in the county. It is also reflected in the work of numerous voluntary organisations - like the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers - who devote many hundreds of man-hours to the kind of small-scale improvements which make so much difference to the quality of urban fringe land.

261. Encouragement for such initiatives at the strategic planning level can only serve to assist further valuable work of this kind.

UF1 The local planning authorities will, in so far as there is no conflict with other relevant policies of this Plan, encourage initiatives leading to the environmental improvement and enhanced amenity and/or nature conservation value of land immediately beyond the existing or planned built-up urban areas in the County.

The Colne Valley Park

262. The Colne Valley Regional Park (see Key Diagram) is part of the urban fringe of Greater London, where the kind of problems mentioned above have been at their

most acute. The whole area, which covers around 40 square miles on the inner edge of the Metropolitan Green Belt, is one of intense development pressure - traversed as it is by sections of the M4, M25 and M40 motorways and with Heathrow Airport just outside its south-eastern boundary. While the area has generally been safeguarded from further urbanisation by the Green Belt, a continuing need for mineral working and the legacy of past development have demanded special measures to improve the quality of the Park's environment for both residents and visitors.



263. Over the past twenty years much has already been achieved in this respect. Tree planting, improvements to footpaths, bridleways and the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal, and new Country Parks are all examples of what has been done so far - culminating in the opening of a new Colne Valley Park Visitors Centre in March 1992.



264. However there is still much to be done. In order to guide this work, The Colne Valley Park Standing Conference (a consortium of all the local authorities having parts of their administrative areas in the Park) has recently published a new strategy for the area to provide the impetus and framework for future action through a co-ordinated and planned programme of improvements over a period of five years. The following policy reflects the four key aims of this new strategy. In the context of sub-

paragraph d), below, attention is drawn to the definition of "countryside recreation" set out in Policy SR2 in the Sport and Recreation chapter.

UF2 Within the Colne Valley Park, the local planning authorities will promote the following key aims:-

- a) to maintain and enhance the landscape (including settlements) and waterscape of the Park in terms of its scenic and conservation value and its overall amenity;
- b) to resist urbanisation of the Park and to safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development;
- c) to conserve the nature conservation resources of the Park through the protection and management of its diverse plant and animal species, habitats and geological features; and
- d) to provide accessible facilities and opportunities for countryside recreation which do not compromise the above.

THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011



Agricultural Change

265. As is well known, the whole of rural England is undergoing a period of profound change. Nowhere is this more the case than in the agricultural industry - by far the largest user of land in the open countryside and, in these terms at least, still the industry most associated with it.

266. Overproduction, surpluses, depressed world markets, the high direct costs to consumers and taxpayers, the similarly high indirect costs to poorer countries beyond the European Community, the environmental consequences of modern farming techniques and falling farm incomes have all led to a need for fundamental changes.

267. On 21st May 1993, the first major reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in its 30 year history was agreed by the member states of the EC, the result of which is that farmers will now be paid compensation for reducing their output of food and for reduced prices.

268. Notwithstanding the compensation payments, the implications of this reform package are likely to include higher levels of agricultural unemployment; increased pressures on some farmers to sell off part or all of their land, leading either to the amalgamation or fragmentation of existing farm units; and an increase in part-time farming, as farmers seek to supplement their incomes through other activities.

Action for the Countryside

269. However, the changing circumstances of farming do

not inevitably mean that the entire countryside is under threat. Indeed, there are now many opportunities to secure a more attractive, ecologically diverse and accessible countryside. Various initiatives introduced by the Government, carrying forward the principles of the Environment White Paper, seek to do just this. Amongst these are:

A An "Agri-Environment" package which provides for the creation and improvement of wildlife habitats, for the provision of new public access areas on Set-Aside land and for organic farming;

B "Countryside Stewardship", which encourages the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes;

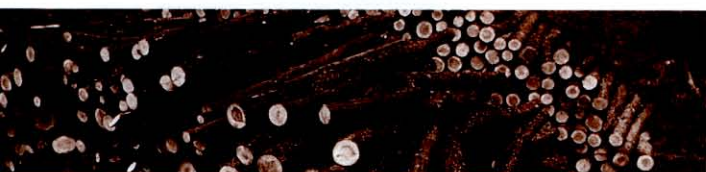
C A "Wildlife Enhancement Scheme", which promotes positive management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

D "Rural Action for the Environment" - practical support and financial assistance for community groups to tackle environmental problems and opportunities at the local level (Buckinghamshire has its own local network);

E The "Parish Paths Partnership", which seeks to assist in improving the Rights of Way network;

F Increased incentives under the existing "Farm Woodland Premium Scheme", to encourage the planting of trees on agricultural land; and

G A supplement to the Forestry Commission's "Woodland Grants Scheme", to encourage the creation of publicly-accessible Community Woodlands.



New Objectives for Forestry

270. The last two of these fit into the Government's wider forestry objectives, which seek to restore tree cover in our countryside (which is well below the European average) and improve the management of existing woodland for a range of social, economic and environmental reasons.

271. The County Council has published the first part of a new Indicative Forestry Strategy, which identifies areas of the county where new Community Woodlands (see above) should be planted. The remainder of the Strategy, together with woodland management and marketing guidelines and new policies for the Chilterns woodlands, will be incorporated into a revision of the County Council's existing Forestry Strategy (published in 1989), which is in preparation by the Buckinghamshire Woodland Forum.

New Development

272. Notwithstanding all this encouraging activity, some development of rural land will continue to be needed, in order to accommodate the various proposals set out in this Plan.

273. However, the loss of such land will be reduced and its impact minimised as far as possible. Lower rates of growth by comparison with what has happened hitherto and an increased priority attached to the redevelopment of urban land before the release of "green field" sites are the main ways in which this objective will be pursued. Most of the new development which does involve the use of rural land will take place on the periphery of the County's large urban areas. But even here, measures

proposed in this Plan (see Policy OC 2 below) will seek to ensure that the best and most versatile farmland is protected as a long-term resource for future farming needs.

274. In the open countryside (ie beyond the existing or planned limits of built-up areas), even more firm controls will apply, with only a very limited range of developments permissible. As detailed in the following policy, these will be broadly confined to the needs of primary industries such as agriculture and forestry; the re-use of existing buildings; the provision of essential infrastructure; and the provision of appropriate facilities for sport, recreation and tourism.

275. One final word should be added here about the Green Belt. Although most of the Green Belt in Southern Buckinghamshire lies within the open countryside, additional planning considerations apply here which do not apply to the non-Green Belt countryside. Reference should therefore be made to the following chapter of this Plan for details of these.

OC1 In the open countryside outside the Green Belt and beyond the existing or planned limits of built-up areas, only the following types of development will be permitted:

- a) development which is reasonably required for agriculture or forestry;
- b) reuse or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in Local Plans, in accordance with Policy OC3;

- c) reuse of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction which are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
- d) limited extension, replacement or alteration of existing dwellings;
- e) development for transport, in accordance with policies TR6-20;
- f) development for sport and recreation in accordance with policies SR2 and SR3;
- g) development for tourism in accordance with policies TM1 and TM2;
- h) development which would provide for the conservation of energy or for the generation of energy from renewable sources, in accordance with policy EN2;
- i) extraction, dressing and treatment of minerals and subsequent restoration of land, in accordance with policies M1-M10; and
- j) waste management operations, in accordance with policies WM1-WM6.

The scale and location of any development will have regard to the amenity value of the countryside and to other relevant policies of this plan, particularly those relating to the protection of the landscape, nature conservation, the man-made heritage and natural resources.

The Protection of High Quality Farmland

276. Despite the continuing need to accommodate new development both on the edges of existing settlements and in the open countryside, the productive capability of rural land in the long term has to be assured. Even though much of it may not currently be needed for agricultural purposes, there is no guarantee that it would not be needed in future if existing circumstances were to change. Consequently, where new uses are proposed, the potential for reversion of the best and most versatile farmland to agriculture should be ensured, so far as possible.

OC2 Any proposals for new development should, wherever possible, avoid the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. In circumstances where this is not possible and where there is a choice between the loss of land graded 1, 2 or 3a, development should be directed towards land of the lowest possible classification.

Major Existing Developed Sites in the Open Countryside

277. In some parts of Buckinghamshire, principally in Aylesbury Vale District, there is a small number of very large sites (together with their associated buildings) in the open countryside which have become, or are likely to become, surplus to their original requirements. The cement works at Pitstone, the brickworks at Newton Longville and Calvert and the Royal Ordnance Site at Westcott are all very well-known locally.

278. When such premises close, restoration to green fields may not always be a practical proposition. However, vacancy and dereliction are undesirable alternatives. In such circumstances, the reuse or redevelopment of the sites and buildings for other purposes can, if properly handled, be a more beneficial solution, offering net gains in environmental quality and amenity value. Furthermore, this may reduce the demands for new development on green field sites elsewhere.

OC3 The re-use or redevelopment of major existing developed sites in the open countryside will generally be permitted, provided that:

- a) the site has been identified in an adopted Local Plan;
- b) the impact of any conversion or re-development on the countryside is no greater, and preferably less, than the existing use;
- c) any new buildings are well integrated with their surroundings;
- d) the amenity and nature conservation value of the site as a whole is enhanced;
- e) the new use would not lead to unacceptable loadings on the existing highway networks.
- f) no additional expenditure by the public sector on the provision of infrastructure made necessary by the development is required; and

g) there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

Outside the Planning System

279. In conjunction with the above policy framework, the County Council will be taking a variety of other measures to ensure the future prosperity, diversity and attractiveness of our countryside. Strategies for nature conservation and rights of way already set out numerous proposals and action points for improving these features of the countryside, shortly to be augmented by a new county-wide landscape strategy. And an over-arching Integrated Rural Strategy for Buckinghamshire is now in preparation, following recommendations contained in the Rural White Paper. To be produced jointly with the Buckinghamshire Council for Voluntary Service (the Rural Community Council), the District Councils and a range of local rural organisations, this will both co-ordinate the existing topic-based strategies and address a wide range of community issues such as housing, transport and service delivery in rural areas.

The Rural White Paper

280. In October 1995, the Government published a new White Paper, entitled "Rural England: A Nation Committed to a Living Countryside". The key objective of the White Paper is to foster a living and working countryside, but in ways which are environmentally sustainable in the long-term and which ensure that the intrinsic character of the countryside is preserved.

281. Amongst a great many action points and initiatives aimed at realising these objectives, there are several which are of direct relevance to the land use planning system.

282. Some are concerned with creating the right conditions for a healthy rural economy; some with ensuring a high quality of life for those who live in rural areas; and some with protecting and enhancing the natural assets of the countryside, such as its diversity of landscapes, flora and fauna.

283. Although the policies set out in this Plan pre-date the publication of the Rural White Paper they reflect its proposals in very large measure.

284. The broad strategy of the Plan (Policies BS1-3), as underpinned by its key housing and employment proposals (Policies H2 & E1), aims to concentrate the majority of new homes and jobs on the larger urban areas of the county, partly in order to protect the countryside from sporadic and unrelated development. Likewise, the identification and improvement of the Strategic Highway Network (Policy TR7), the encouragement given to the movement of freight by rail and water (Policy TR12) and the general support for public transport (Policies TR13-16) will all help to reduce the impact of traffic on rural roads and villages. Again, the identification of a retail hierarchy and firm controls on new out-of-town shopping developments (Policies S1-5) may help to keep small rural shops viable.

285. Having said this, the Plan does allow some growth in smaller towns and villages, where this would fulfil certain environmental criteria (such as the reduction of travel

demands, and the protection of established constraints), in order to provide local homes and jobs and to support the service function which some settlements perform for surrounding rural communities (Policies H3, H5, E2 & E3).

286. And, as indicated above, some limited new development will be allowed in the open countryside, for example, where it will help to support our agricultural and forestry industries, or where it enables new uses to be found for existing buildings, both of which are key concerns of the Rural White Paper.

THE GREEN BELT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



The Purposes of Green Belts

287. The term “Green Belt” is one which is often misunderstood. It does not refer to any piece of open countryside outside the built-up limits of every town and village. Rather, Green Belts are instruments of planning policy which are designed to achieve specific purposes in particular areas. These purposes are laid down by Central Government and, for the avoidance of doubt, are included in the following policy.

GB1 It is the policy of the local planning authorities to maintain a Green Belt in southern Buckinghamshire, the purposes of which are:-

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land.

The Metropolitan Green Belt in Buckinghamshire

288. Around 50,000 hectares of the county (27% of its total area) are included in the Metropolitan Green Belt,

the Buckinghamshire section of which broadly extends from the boundary with Greater London to the base of the Chilterns ridge, but dropping down to the River Thames in the south western corner of the county.

289. Within the area now covered by the Green Belt, there are many dozens of settlements - most of the smallest being “washed over” by Green Belt designation, while the larger villages and towns, although surrounded by the Green Belt, are excluded from it. However, with the one exception of High Wycombe (which has reserves of undeveloped land in a number of “Areas of Special Restraint” around the town), the situation has now been reached where virtually all of the land outside existing settlement boundaries is covered by the Green Belt.

290. A major question which the County Council, therefore, had to face during the preparation of this Plan was whether any land should be removed from the Green Belt in order for the southern districts of the county to meet a greater proportion of their development needs than would otherwise be possible.

291. In this context, it was guided by long-standing Central Government advice which, inter alia: emphasises the permanence of Green Belts; requires that their protection be maintained as far as can be seen ahead; and expects their boundaries to be altered only in exceptional circumstances.

292. It was also guided by two particular strands of the Government’s regional planning guidance for South East England. The first advocates a general reduction in the role of development in the western sector of the South East (which includes southern Buckinghamshire), in recognition of the increasing stress which has been placed on its infrastructure as a result of past growth. The

second recognises that as land between urban areas and the Green Belt boundary is used up, the scope for further development in Green Belt towns will increasingly be limited to that which can be accommodated through redevelopment and renewal.

293. Lastly, the County Council had regard to the fact that the Secretaries of State for the Environment had approved three previous editions of the Structure Plan which, like this one, did not seek to meet the full extent of southern Buckinghamshire's local housing needs *in situ*, but made compensating provision elsewhere.

294. In the light of these arguments, the County Council saw no reason to make any strategic releases of land from the Metropolitan Green Belt to meet local development requirements. The broad extent of the Green Belt therefore remains unaltered.

GB2 The outer north-western and western boundaries of the Green Belt will broadly follow the base of the Chilterns escarpment from the county boundary with Bedfordshire to Saunderton (but excluding the towns of Wendover and Princes Risborough) and then via Stokenchurch and Lane End (but excluding both villages) to the River Thames between Marlow and Medmenham. The following built-up areas are excluded from, but enclosed by, the Green Belt:

In Chiltern District:

Amersham/Chesham Bois	Heath End
Chalfont St Giles	Holmer Green
Chalfont St Peter	Knotty Green

Chesham	Little Chalfont
Great Missenden/Prestwood	Seer Green
Hazlemere/Tylers Green (fringes)	

In South Bucks District:

Beaconsfield	Iver
Burnham/Lent Rise	Iver Heath
Denham Green	Richings Park
New Denham & Willowbank	Stoke Poges
Farnham Common	Farnham Royal
Gerrards Cross	
Iver (Ridgeway Estate, Bison Concrete)	

In Wycombe District:

Bourne End/Wooburn	Marlow
Flackwell Heath	Marlow Bottom
Naphill & Walters Ash	Great Kingshill
High Wycombe/Downley/Hazlemere/Tylers Green/ Loudwater/Wooburn Green	

The precise boundaries of the Green Belt will be defined in District-Wide Local Plans.

The Control of Development in the Green Belt

295. Current Government advice on Green Belts states that policies controlling development in the open countryside (refer previous chapter) should apply with equal force in the Green Belt, but that there is an additional presumption against inappropriate development within them.

296. Accordingly, inside a Green Belt, permission is not to be given (except in very special circumstances) for the construction of new buildings or for the change of use of existing buildings for purposes other than as set out in a very limited number of specified categories. These categories are reflected in the policy below.

297. Neither Structure nor Local Plans are allowed to make any reference to the possibility of other types of development being allowed in the Green Belt. Hence, although some other developments may have to be considered in such areas - transport infrastructure, for example - these are to be appraised in terms of whether or not they represent very special circumstances justifying an exception to the normal policy of restraint.

GB3 There is a general presumption against development in the Green Belt, with the following exceptions:

- a) development which is reasonably required for agriculture or forestry;
- b) essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, but not including large-scale spectator facilities;
- c) cemeteries;
- d) limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- e) limited infilling in villages covered by Green Belt designation;

f) limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans provided that the impact of new development on the Green Belt is no greater than that of existing development;

g) re-use of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction which are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction provided that the form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings;

h) mineral extraction and subsequent restoration of land provided that high environmental standards are maintained and the site is well restored;

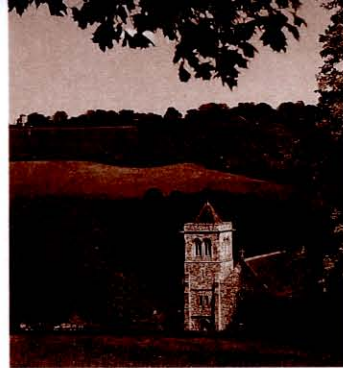
i) such other uses of land as would satisfy the general requirement below, together with any essential facilities related thereto.

Any development in the Green Belt should preserve its openness and should not conflict with the purposes of designation as set out in Policy GB1.

The scale and location of any development will also have regard to the amenity value of the Green Belt and other relevant policies of this plan, particularly those relating to the protection of the landscape, nature conservation, the man-made heritage and natural resources.

LANDSCAPE

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



298. In common with many other counties, Buckinghamshire has a variety of different landscapes, each reflecting its own particular patterns of geology and land use. The county is well known for the beauty of the Chilterns scarp, which separates the clay Vale and the gently rolling limestone hills of the north from the more wooded valleys of the south. Again, it is also richly endowed with historic landscapes, some of which - like Stowe, Waddesdon, Hughenden and Cliveden - are of national importance. While there may be no extensive wild or open semi-natural landscapes of the kind that can be found in more remote counties, there are many opportunities to enjoy tranquil and attractive surroundings in Buckinghamshire.

The Importance of Landscape Protection

299. While the landscape is, of course, important for the simple pleasures it affords for those who merely enjoy "an attractive view", it has a significance which extends some way beyond this. It is also a reflection of past and present social and cultural systems, it provides local character, it has its own distinctive ecological resources and it confers a sense of place and purpose. Protection of the landscape thus implies a respect for the past as well as for the immediate pleasures of today.

The Means of Protection

300. In the past, concern for the landscape has tended to focus almost exclusively on protecting the visual appearance of the most attractive parts of the countryside - like National Parks and Areas of

Outstanding Natural Beauty - largely through planning controls.

301. Although it is still important to regulate the impact of new development through planning controls, it has become increasingly apparent that this kind of approach is not without its limitations. For one reason, visual appearance is an inadequate reflection of environmental quality. Similarly, because of the widespread decline in the health, structure and appearance of much of our countryside, resulting from a range of both natural and man-made causes, the need now is as much to restore degraded environments as to protect the finest areas. Again, planning powers have little effect on rural land management regimes, despite the fact that these can radically alter the landscape. Lastly, the "traditional approach" of focusing attention only on the "key" landscape areas, carries with it the danger that the remaining countryside will suffer by default - a point also made in the Government's Rural White Paper.

The Buckinghamshire Landscape Strategy

302. The County Council is strongly committed to the kind of "comprehensive approach" throughout the countryside which is now required to address these issues. Accordingly, its forthcoming Buckinghamshire Landscape Strategy, which is due to be published in late 1996, will take them as its central concerns, providing a county-wide framework for landscape renewal; the protection, development and interpretation of historic landscapes; landscape enhancement; the promotion of public awareness; education; the co-ordination of policies and the allocation of resources.

303. However, this new approach will not diminish the need for adequate planning controls at both County and District levels. Rather, they should be seen as complementary to the more action-orientated, practical measures which will be proposed in the new Landscape Strategy.

304. Policies already detailed elsewhere in this Plan will help to ensure that Buckinghamshire's countryside is protected from inappropriate development. But even when development is acceptable, it will be important to ensure that its effects upon the landscape are no greater than they need be - while in some circumstances it may be possible to link development to positive environmental improvement.

LS1 Any development in the open countryside should be so located and designed as to minimise adverse effects on its scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value, and should, in appropriate circumstances, provide for the improvement of damaged landscapes.

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

305. Undoubtedly the "jewel in the crown" of the Buckinghamshire (and adjoining) countryside, the Chiltern Hills are recognised as being of national landscape importance, having been designated in 1965 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

306. Although the primary purpose of designation is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty (which includes flora and fauna as well as physiographical features), account also has to be taken of the economic and social needs of rural communities within AONBs. Similarly, recreational demands should be met, in so far as this does not conflict with the purpose of designation or the needs of other rural interests.

307. While AONB designation does not, therefore, impose a total ban on development, the national importance of such areas does mean that special attention must be given to controlling forms of development which might be acceptable in other parts of the countryside. In particular, and as stated by the Countryside Commission, major development (whether this be minerals, industrial, commercial or residential development) in the AONB would be inconsistent with the aims of designation, except where proven to be in the national interest and there being no alternative site available elsewhere.

LS2 Special attention will be paid to the protection and enhancement of the scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Major development will not be permitted unless it is in the national interest and no alternative site is available elsewhere.

308. For information, a new Management Plan for the Chilterns AONB was published in October 1994 by the Chilterns Standing Conference (a consortium of those local authorities whose administrative areas lie wholly or

partly within the AONB, plus other organisations having rural interests). This advisory document seeks to co-ordinate and direct management activity towards the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns landscape and the promotion of appropriate social and economic development.

Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs)

309. Several parts of the county have been designated as Areas of Attractive Landscape in recognition of their county-wide landscape value. These are widely distributed, reflecting the diversity of landscapes which Buckinghamshire has to offer, from the Ouse Valley in the north to parts of the Thames Valley in the south - their general location is shown on the Key Diagram of this Plan. Second only to the Chilterns AONB in importance in Buckinghamshire, the AALs too demand special protection. However, in line with current Government policy, the degree of protection is not quite so great as it is in the nationally-important AONB - as demonstrated by more rigorous controls over major development in the latter.



LS3 Special attention will be paid to the protection and enhancement of the scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value of the following Areas of Attractive Landscape, whose precise boundaries will be defined in Local Plans:

- a) the Ouse Valley downstream from Newport Pagnell;
- b) an area centred on Stowe, including the landscaped park;
- c) the Brickhills between Woburn Sands and Leighton Buzzard;
- d) the low hills between Quainton and Wing;
- e) the Brill - Winchendon Hills and the Thame Valley downstream from Aylesbury;
- f) parts of the Thames Valley east and west of Marlow, at Cliveden and around Dorney;
- g) part of the Wye Valley between Wooburn Green and Bourne End;
- h) part of the gravel plateau between Taplow and Gerrards Cross including Burnham Beeches;
- i) the area around Black and Langley Parks, Wexham; and
- j) small areas of the lower escarpment of the Chiltern Hills between Edlesborough and Pitstone and at Halton and Wendover.

Local Landscape Areas

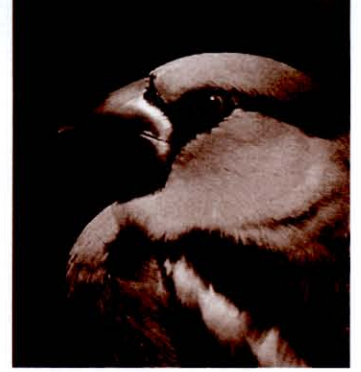
310. The areas designated as of national or county-wide landscape importance (AONBs & AALs) relate to distinct and extensive tracts of open countryside. However, less extensive areas of countryside can have landscape value too. In recognition of this, many of our District Councils have now designated Local Landscape Areas in their Local Plans. Reference should therefore be made to those documents for details of such areas and any special policies applying therein.

Landscaping in New Development Areas

311. Landscape protection and enhancement should not be an activity solely confined to a limited number of specially designated areas. Neither is it only necessary in the open countryside. Attractive landscaping can also help to improve the appearance of our towns and villages which are, after all, where the majority of people spend most of their time. In this context, reference should again be made to Local Plans for any detailed policies relating to the landscaping of new development in built-up areas.

NATURE CONSERVATION

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



The Importance of Nature Conservation

312. Over the past twenty years, there has been increasing public concern for the conservation of the wildlife heritage of our country. The loss and fragmentation of large areas of semi-natural habitat which previously supported diverse communities of plants and animals has been brought about by a wide range of activities and land uses from modern farming and forestry practices to the demands of new development. By way of illustration, Britain has lost some 95% of its species-rich grassland, 80% of its chalk downland and 40% of its lowland heaths during the last 50 years.

313. Buckinghamshire has not been exempt from the kind of pressures which have been experienced nationally. Today, the above-mentioned habitat types together comprise less than half of 1% of the county's total area.

A Framework for the Future

314. Central Government now accepts that the country's wildlife cannot solely be sustained by the protection of "key" nature conservation sites, but is dependent upon the wise management of the nation's land resources as a whole. Only if this happens can the full variety of life (biodiversity) be maintained.

315. A package of new schemes introduced in the wake of the Environmental White Paper gives grounds for considerable optimism that nature conservation can be a major beneficiary from the changes taking place in the countryside.

316. Similarly, the more sustainable approach to

development embodied in this Plan may be expected to bring numerous environmental rewards in towns, villages and the countryside alike.

The Key Sites

317. Notwithstanding the more comprehensive approach now being introduced, it is recognised that certain nature conservation areas are of particular importance, demanding special measures to ensure their protection.

318. The most important of these have been designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and represent a wide range of different habitat types, geological and physiographical features. As at mid-1996, Buckinghamshire had 66 SSSIs.

319. Although some 6% of England's total land area has SSSI status, the corresponding figure for Buckinghamshire is much lower, at only 1.5%.

320. While all SSSIs are of national importance, some are also of international importance. These include Ramsar Sites, which are listed under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance; Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds; and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under the EC Directive on Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive). While Buckinghamshire has no Ramsar Sites or SPAs, it has one candidate SAC in the Chiltern Beechwoods, which comprises a number of separate SSSIs.

321. Again, some SSSIs are also National Nature

Reserves, designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In Buckinghamshire, National Nature Reserves can be found at Aston Rowant (which is mainly in Oxfordshire), Kings and Bakers Woods (which is mainly in Bedfordshire) and Burnham Beeches.

322. Also of significant importance (the more so in Buckinghamshire due to the relative paucity of nationally and internationally important sites) are Local Nature Reserves, again designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. As at mid-1996, there were 10 of these in Buckinghamshire. Examples include Black Park Country Park in the south of the county; Whiteleaf Hill at Princes Risborough; and Blue Lagoon at Bletchley.

323. In addition to the statutorily designated sites, there are numerous other sites of local importance for nature conservation. These include non-statutory local nature reserves established and/or managed by a variety of bodies - such as the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalists' Trust (BBONT) - and over 1600 other sites included in the

Buckinghamshire Biological and Geological Notification Maps. These Maps, which are held in the County Museum, also include all of the statutorily designated sites referred to above. Some of the sites shown on these maps are likely, following detailed surveys, to be designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), in common with other areas of the country.

324. Because of the relatively limited area represented by "key sites" in Buckinghamshire, and because of their

fragmentary nature, this Plan affords them a very firm degree of protection against damaging developments. Other important nature conservation sites will be protected by policies introduced at the Local Plan stage.

NC1 Permission will not be given for any development likely to have a significant adverse impact on any of the following nature conservation sites:

- a) Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- b) Other nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites;
- c) Local Nature Reserves.

Local Plans will also include policies for the firm protection of other sites of substantive importance for nature conservation.

325. Although planning legislation generally requires decisions on planning applications to be taken in accordance with development plan policies, it nonetheless allows for developments to proceed against such policies in circumstances where other material considerations weigh sufficiently heavily in the balance. In making such judgments, these "other material considerations" will need to weigh particularly heavily in the balance where developments would damage nature conservation sites of national and/or international importance - categories (a) and (b) in the above policy. Proposals likely to affect SSSIs will therefore be subject to special scrutiny. Proposals likely to affect existing or potential European sites (i.e. those which are the subject



NATURE CONSERVATION

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



of EC Directives) will be subject to the most rigorous examination and decisions will comply with the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 and current Government Guidance.

Limiting Damage

326. Where damaging developments have to be permitted (for example in the kind of situation referred to above), the local planning authorities will seek to ensure that such damage is as limited as possible. This will be the case regardless of whether a “designated” site is involved, since important nature conservation interests are not solely confined to such areas.

NC2 Where development proposals would adversely affect nature conservation interests, the local planning authorities may attach conditions to any permissions, or seek planning obligations, in order to prevent or limit those adverse effects.

Managing & Improving the Resource

327. Although it is highly important to protect sites and features of nature conservation value from damage, it is no less important to ensure that such sites and features retain, and if possible, increase that value. This is recognised by the EC Habitats Directive which specially requires member states to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna. The Directive particularly mentions those which, because of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping

stones, are essential for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange. Examples cited are rivers and their banks; traditional field boundary systems (such as hedgerows); ponds and small woods. The management of such features and the creation of new ones are accordingly encouraged by this Plan.

NC3 The local planning authorities will generally support initiatives leading to the management and enhancement of the nature conservation value of urban and rural areas through Buckinghamshire. Particular encouragement will be given to the creation and management of new sites of importance for nature conservation, including linear habitats.

“Nature Conservation”

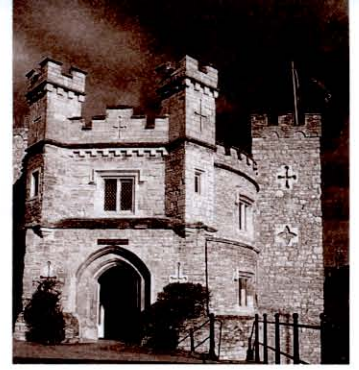
328. For the avoidance of doubt, the term “nature conservation”, as used in Policies NC1-NC3, refers to the conservation of sites and features of biological and/or geological interest.

The Buckinghamshire Nature Conservation Strategy

329. It has been possible to provide only the very briefest of details of nature conservation in Buckinghamshire in the above text. Much fuller information, together with a wide range of practical initiatives, is set out in the Buckinghamshire Nature Conservation Strategy - available from the County Council or, for inspection, in local libraries.

THE MAN MADE HERITAGE

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



330. Buckinghamshire provides a great deal of evidence of past human endeavour.

Listed Buildings

331. Buildings of special historic or architectural importance, from the magnificent stately homes of Stowe, Cliveden and Waddesdon to the smallest country churches and farm buildings, are so numerous that well over 6,000 of the most important have been "listed" in recognition of this fact by the Secretary of State for National Heritage under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Buckinghamshire Historic Buildings Trust, set up by the County Council in 1983, helps to preserve some of these buildings by carrying out much-needed repairs and restoration works.

332. A particular planning issue concerns the re-use of old agricultural buildings which are no longer required for their original purpose. While the Government is keen to encourage new uses of these, in line with its proposals in the Rural White Paper, many such buildings are listed and great care is needed to safeguard their special character. Local Plans may therefore set out detailed policies to address this issue.



Historic Parks and Gardens

333. Some of the larger historic houses in Buckinghamshire also have associated Parks or Gardens, which may include examples of the finest 18th century landscaping by names as famous as Brown, Repton and Kent, or may be from a later era such as the Victorian Gardens at Waddesdon Manor. English Heritage (the Government's advisor on historic buildings and monuments) has a statutory obligation to compile a register of historic landscapes such as these, for which special protection is also merited.

Ancient Monuments and other Important Archaeological Sites

334. Archaeological and other historical remains too are quite common throughout the county, ranging from round barrows, deserted medieval villages, fish ponds and monastic sites, Iron Age hillforts and the mottes of Norman castles to linear features such as Grim's Ditch. Under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983), the Secretary of State for National Heritage is required to compile and maintain a schedule of the most important ancient monuments (of which there are currently around 160 in Buckinghamshire), which then receive statutory protection. Other important archaeological sites in the county are included on documents known as Archaeological Notification Maps which are held by the County Museum and by the District Councils.

335. Although the policy set out at the end of this chapter is designed to secure the preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains, on certain very limited occasions

other material planning considerations may weigh so heavily in the balance that damaging development proposals may have to be permitted in spite of the policy. In these cases the prior excavation and recording of sites (or “preservation by record”) will be required. Local Plans will set out more detailed policies to cover this contingency.

Conservation Areas

336. The man-made heritage of the county does not only take the form of individual features of historical or architectural interest. In many cases, the collective character and appearance of groups of features can assume an importance of its own. In recognition of this, local authorities are required by the

337. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to conduct periodic reviews in order to determine whether there are any parts of their areas which possess such attributes and which accordingly merit special protection from potentially damaging developments. There are almost 200 such Conservation Areas in Buckinghamshire at the present time.

338. All of the above important features are part of the rich legacy of the County which must be preserved for existing and future generations.

HE1 Permission will not be given for any development which would endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character or appearance and/or setting of any of the following:

- a) Listed Buildings;
- b) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites;
- c) Historic Parks or Gardens.
- d) Conservation Areas.

Proposals which would lead to the enhancement of any of these features will generally be encouraged provided that there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.



SPORT & RECREATION

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



339. Recent advice from Central Government highlights the importance of sport and recreation for its contribution to many aspects of civilised life - from the improvement of the individual's health to the promotion of sporting excellence and the fostering of civic and national pride. Government policy is therefore to develop sport and recreation in its widest sense.

Trends

340. Nationally, almost all types of sport and recreation have witnessed increases both in the number of participants and in the frequency of participation over recent years. More leisure time, a higher absolute population level, rising car-ownership and the trend towards more healthy lifestyles have all been amongst the factors contributing to this.

341. Buckinghamshire has been no exception to these national trends. Indeed, through a combination of its attractive environment, proximity to London, rapid population growth, generally high standard of living, lower than average levels of unemployment and higher than average levels of car-ownership, demands for many different types of sport and recreation have been extremely strong.

Existing Levels of Provision

342. So far as the various kinds of informal recreation such as visiting, and walking in, the countryside are concerned, current levels of provision in Buckinghamshire are generally good - and constantly improving. The County Council is committed to ensuring that all Rights of Way (footpaths and bridleways) are open for use by the end of

the century. In addition, the County Council has an ongoing programme of new Circular Walks and Rides and plays its part in developing new long-distance routes such as the Thames Path National Trail. Picnic sites and Country Parks too are popular facilities for informal recreation. Although the overall picture is, therefore, encouraging there are nonetheless some localised deficiencies in provision which need to be addressed. These mainly occur in the northern half of the county, where a need for more horse-riding and recreational cycling facilities, in particular, has become apparent. So too is there a need for an additional Country Park to serve the Aylesbury area and to relieve pressure on the Chilterns ridge.

343. More "formal" countryside sport and recreation covers a multitude of activities, ranging from land-extensive uses like golf, to water-based pursuits such as rowing, sailing and wind-surfing, and to the so-called "noisy sports" such as motor-cycling, which may not easily be accommodated near to centres of population. All of these kinds of activity are provided for in Buckinghamshire, but continuing demands both from within and outside the county for additional provision are not always easy to reconcile with other rural interests.

344. Finally, there are the more "urban" types of facility, such as playing fields, sports centres and swimming pools, for which current levels of provision are generally good. Again, however, there are a number of localised deficiencies - particularly in respect of playing fields and play areas to serve some rural communities.

345. The above text can only provide the most general picture of provision for sport and recreation in Buckinghamshire. More detailed assessments of needs will therefore be carried out at the local level, drawing

upon information provided by bodies such as the Sports Council, the National Playing Fields Association and the Central Council for Physical Recreation.

Meeting the Demand for New Provision

346. It is self-evident that, subject to other criteria being met, new facilities should be located as conveniently as possible to those whom they serve. The young without access to private transport, or the disabled, should not be disadvantaged by facilities which are remote and inaccessible, for example. In most cases, therefore, new recreational provision should be provided within or immediately adjoining centres of population. This is also important from the wider environmental perspective of reducing the need for vehicle usage. Having said that, reference should also be made to relevant Local Plans for any, more detailed, criteria which may need to be satisfied at the local level.



347. In the open countryside, beyond the immediate fringes of built-up areas, only those forms of sporting and recreational activity which, of their nature, require a countryside location and can be provided without prejudicing other rural interests should be considered.

348. The following strategic policy framework will therefore apply in considering any proposals for new facilities in Buckinghamshire.

General

SR1 The local planning authorities will support the further development of sport and recreation in so far as is consistent with the other policies of this Plan. Permission will not be given for any development which would result in the loss of existing recreational facilities, including playing fields and other amenity open spaces, for which there is a proven and continuing community need unless alternative provision of at least equivalent size, suitability and convenience is made. Any new or replacement provision should have regard to the needs of special groups, including children, the disabled and those without access to private motorised modes of transport.

Countryside Recreation

SR2 In the open countryside, permission will be given for those sporting or recreational activities which, of their nature, require a countryside location provided that:-

- a) any ancillary built development is both small-scale and necessary for the proposed sporting or recreational use; and
- b) there is no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan.

Special attention will be accorded to the protection and enhancement of the Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails and encouragement will be given to the creation of new long-distance recreational routes, insofar as there is no significant conflict with other policies of this plan.

Other forms of Sport & Recreation

SR3 Other than as provided for by Policy SR2, new development for sport and recreation will only be permitted within or immediately adjoining the existing or planned built-up limits of settlements, and subject to there being no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan or any other significant local planning objections.

Dual-Use

349. Local Authorities have, for some years, been encouraged by Central Government to make school premises available for wider community recreational use. The County Council has played its part in doing this and, so far as it is able, will continue to do so.

SR4 It is the policy of the County Council, wherever possible, to promote the use of facilities at all its suitable premises for general community recreation.

Major Initiatives

350. One of the most important and extensive recreational initiatives in this part of the region for many years has been the Colne Valley Park, part of which lies in south east Buckinghamshire. Many new recreational opportunities have been provided here, including Country Parks, Picnic Sites, footpaths and bridleways. As indicated earlier (see Urban Fringe chapter) a new Strategy for the Park has now been published by the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference.

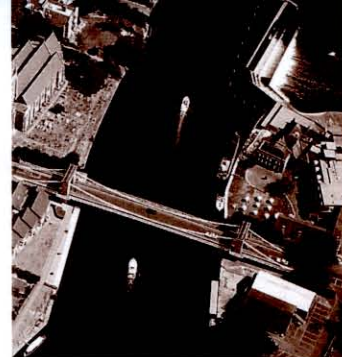


351. Amongst other major new initiatives are proposals for new Community Woodlands within the County - areas of mass tree planting where public recreational access is to be provided. Further details are available from the County Council.

352. Other major recreational opportunities will come about through the restoration of mineral extraction sites (particularly for water-based recreation) and, predominantly in the northern half of the county, in consequence of the further large-scale housing growth which is proposed in this Plan.

TOURISM

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



The Importance of Tourism

353. In economic terms, tourism is a highly significant activity, both nationally and locally. Recent figures indicate that the industry provides jobs for 1.5 million people in Britain and contributes £33 billion p.a. to the economy, 5% of GDP. In Buckinghamshire, tourism is one of the County's biggest industries, employing 1 in 18 working people and generating around £200 million in 1995.

Tourist Activity in Buckinghamshire

354. Buckinghamshire has many attractions which bring people to the county. Of those which are man-made, Bekonscot Model Village, Waddesdon Manor, Stowe Park, the Chilterns Open Air Museum, the Quainton Railway Centre and the Buckinghamshire stretches of the Grand Union Canal are amongst the most popular. But, compared with other man-made attractions elsewhere in the region, their popularity is quite modest. Buckinghamshire is, undoubtedly, much more renowned for the beauty of its natural features, principally the Chiltern Hills and the River Thames in the south of the county.

Current and Future Trends

355. While information at the county level is rather limited, surveys conducted within the Thames & Chilterns region indicate that this part of the country is a much more significant destination for short breaks and day-trips than it is for long-stay holidays. And this sector of the market is projected to increase considerably over the coming years.

356. "Business tourism" (conferences and meetings, for example) is another area which has seen a great deal of local growth in recent years - both from domestic and overseas markets. The Thames & Chilterns region is, in fact, a more significant destination for overseas business tourism than any other part of the United Kingdom. With the County's good communication links to other parts of the country, with Heathrow nearby, and with the possibility of Crossrail in the early years of the next century, this type of tourism is also likely to experience heightened activity at the local level.

Accommodating the Demand

357. A key theme of this Plan is the need to strike a balance between the demands imposed upon the county (by a variety of different activities) and the need to protect its resources for future generations. Tourism is no exception to this, and while the anticipated growth may bring substantial economic benefits, the possible environmental consequences cannot be ignored.

358. Through a process of tourism management, the overriding aim must therefore be to reconcile the growing demand for tourism with the protection of the things that bring people into the county in the first place.

TM1 The local planning authorities will support the further development of tourism in so far as this is consistent with conserving the character, appearance and amenity value of the County, and there being no conflict with other relevant policies of this Plan. Consideration will be given to the needs of special groups, including the disabled.

359. Reflecting the central concentration strategy of this Plan, and the need to avoid sporadic and unrelated development in the open countryside, it is proposed that the provision of new built facilities for tourism will be primarily focussed on the three main urban areas of the county. This recognises their key locations in relation to public transport routes and their existing and planned facilities for shopping, visitor accommodation, leisure and entertainment.

360. Although this strategy will not rule out the possibility of new tourist facilities elsewhere, there will be certain parts of the county where major new development will nonetheless be inappropriate. In the south of the county, particularly, the continuing need to protect the Green Belt and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be of great importance - the more so because this is where demands are likely to be greatest. However, even in areas such as these, there may be opportunities to increase the level of provision through the re-use of rural buildings for bed and breakfast accommodation or for small-scale tourist attractions. General support for such small-scale provision is accorded by policies elsewhere in this Plan - refer, for example, Policies E7 and GB3. However, reference should also be made to relevant Local Plans for the more detailed criteria which will need to be satisfied.

361. As regards more informal tourism provision, the continuing programme of Country Parks, Picnic Sites, Circular Walks and the like will, no doubt, prove to be of continuing popularity with residents and visitors alike.

TM2 Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury and High Wycombe will serve as the main centres for tourism in the County. Subject to there being no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this Plan, tourist developments, including sites for camping and touring caravans, may also be permitted in other appropriate locations.

ENERGY

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



362. The depletion of non-renewable energy resources and the issue of “global warming” are amongst the most pressing of all environmental problems at present. Central Government has therefore advised that planning authorities should play their part in addressing these problems by devising appropriate land-use policies for energy conservation and the development of renewable energy sources.

Energy Conservation

363. Energy conservation can be achieved in two particular ways. The first is to reduce the demand for energy, while the second is to use it more efficiently.

364. One of the main methods by which Structure Plans can influence energy consumption is by locating new development so as to reduce the need to travel. While it is accepted that travel patterns can only be modified over fairly lengthy time periods, the central “Concentration Strategy” of this Plan, which assigns the majority of new urban development to a very limited number of existing centres, nevertheless marks a step in the required direction. With Local Plans given the flexibility to determine the detailed location of new development at those centres, patterns of land-use which serve to encourage walking, cycling and public transport usage may well lead to further reductions in energy consumption.

365. The more efficient use of energy can also be encouraged through the planning system by, for example, the careful design, layout and orientation of buildings. Again, the District Councils of Buckinghamshire will have a considerable role to play in this when preparing their Local Plans and Development Briefs and in exercising their development control functions.

EN1 The District Councils, in preparing their Local Plans, should include development control policies which seek to ensure that:-

- a) the objective of reducing travel demands can be met;
- b) major generators of travel demand are accessible by means other than private motorised modes of transport;
- c) the siting, design and orientation of new development takes into account the need to maximise energy efficiency.

Renewable Energy

366. In order to reduce the consumption of finite energy resources such as coal, gas and oil, the use of renewable resources is now commanding serious attention on the world stage. Solar energy, wind and tidal power, and hydro-electricity are perhaps the best known examples of these. Others which are, perhaps, less well-known include using the heat from within the earth itself (geothermal energy) and that which results from the combustion or anaerobic digestion of industrial, agricultural or domestic waste. In Buckinghamshire, three large landfill sites - Calvert, in Aylesbury Vale District; Newton Longville, near Milton Keynes; and Wapsey's Wood in Gerrards Cross - produce electricity through the burning of methane, which is then fed into the National Grid. Similarly, Aylesbury Sewage Treatment Works uses sewage gas as a source of energy generation.

367. Encouragement for schemes like these is provided by the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation introduced by the Electricity Act 1989, which requires regional electricity companies to obtain a certain proportion of their electricity by such means. While the full potential for using renewable energy sources in Buckinghamshire is not clear as yet, schemes (such as those mentioned above) which are the most likely to produce results locally should be supported, provided that adequate measures to safeguard the environment are taken and no harm is caused to other interests of acknowledged importance.

EN2 The local planning authorities will generally support proposals which would provide for energy conservation or the generation of energy from renewable sources, in so far as there is no significant conflict with any other policies in this plan, and there is no adverse environmental impact on nearby communities. Such proposals may include those energy projects which would:

- a) maximise the energy potential of landfill gas produced at large landfill sites;
- b) involve the incineration of waste materials; or
- c) involve the utilisation of sewage gas.

WATER

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011



Water Resources

368. The adequacy of water resources in South and South East England is a matter of some concern in the context of future development planning. These areas receive the lowest rainfall in the country; they are expected to show the highest rate of increase in demand over the next 20-30 years; they contain a high proportion of the 40 locations which the former National Rivers Authority (now part of the Environment Agency) identified as having unacceptably low flows due largely to excessive abstractions and, to a lesser extent, the effect of low rainfall on groundwater; and they are areas where most of the available water resources are already being utilised.

369. In Buckinghamshire, the stress on water resources has become apparent through the virtual disappearance, in some places, of the River Misbourne - one of the five worst affected rivers in the Thames region.

370. During the preparation of this Plan, the County Council was assured by the National Rivers Authority that there should be sufficient water resources to meet the levels of development proposed to 2011.

Water Quality

371. Recent advice from Central Government has called for special attention to be paid to the protection of groundwater resources from contamination, since they are susceptible to a wide range of threats from different land-uses and are difficult, if not impossible, to rehabilitate if contamination occurs. A series of "Groundwater Vulnerability Maps" covering the entire area of the County was published by the National Rivers

Authority in 1995/96 to highlight the areas which are most at risk, and these will be taken into account in land-use planning decisions. In areas where past development has caused widespread contamination, the County Council, in conjunction with the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies (such as the Water Companies and British Waterways), will review the merits of remedial works and, where found to be feasible, will seek to implement them.

372. Surface water too can be affected by inappropriate development and, likewise, should be protected.

W1 Development will not be permitted where in the opinion of the local planning authority, after consultation with the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies, it is considered:

- a) that adequate water resources do not exist or could not be satisfactorily ensured;
- b) that the proposal is likely to have a detrimental effect on existing abstractions, water quality, fisheries, amenity and nature conservation;
- c) that the proposal is likely to contaminate groundwater or adversely affect the amount and quality of water resources in ponds, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, waterways, or watercourses.

The Water Environment

373. Besides their importance as a source of water, river corridors and other water features often have



considerable value in the nature conservation, landscape and amenity contexts. Accordingly, their protection and enhancement for these purposes should be secured wherever possible.

W2 Development which would have a significant adverse impact on ponds, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, waterways or watercourses or adversely affect public access to them or their use for water-related recreation will not be permitted. Proposals which seek to enhance and restore the natural elements of the water environment and encourage appropriate water based recreation will normally be permitted, subject to there being no conflict with policies SR1 - SR4.

The River Thames

374. The River Thames experiences particular pressures associated with a wide range of competing demands. In conjunction with the Sports Council, the former National Rivers Authority produced a Recreation Strategy for the River Thames in 1995 to help reconcile some of these demands and to optimise its use for recreation. However, it is also necessary to provide an appropriate strategic land-use policy framework to guide development proposals affecting the River.

W3 In considering proposals for development on or affecting the River Thames and its immediate valley in Buckinghamshire, the local planning authorities

will seek to preserve and where appropriate enhance, its pleasant environmental qualities and to prevent congestion and consequent loss of amenity. To this end and subject to other policies in this plan:

- a) any new riverside development incorporating substantial buildings and structures should be associated as far as possible with existing settlements, and should be capable of being provided with adequate road access and parking areas;
- b) the provision of new permanent moorings will not be permitted;
- c) proposals for the extension of existing hire bases will be considered in relation to their effect on the character of the river and its surroundings;
- d) opportunities will be taken where desirable to relocate existing on-river moorings into side-channels, gravel workings or backwaters provided that this can be done without detriment to nature conservation and other interests;
- e) proposals for organised water sports which would result in a significant increase in congestion or insuperable conflicts between river users, or would damage the character of the river and its surroundings, will not be permitted;
- f) proposals which seek to improve opportunities for public access and informal recreation through the improvement and completion of the Thames Path National Trail will be supported.



The Grand Union Canal

375. The Grand Union Canal (and its Arms) in Buckinghamshire is an important feature both within the open countryside and within some of the urban areas of the county. Besides its heritage value, the canal (and towpath) is a significant wildlife corridor and provides opportunities for various forms of recreation. In the future, the County Council would wish to see the Canal once again used for the transport of freight, to which end the provision of wharf facilities for freight transfer will generally be encouraged in accordance with the Transport policies of this Plan and the aims of the Buckinghamshire Integrated Transport Strategy.

W4 The local planning authorities will seek to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance the environmental, recreational, ecological and heritage value of the Grand Union Canal and its Arms in Buckinghamshire. Encouragement will be given to the provision of wharf facilities for freight transfer, in accordance with policy TR12.

Flood Protection

376. Floodplains are areas of low-lying land adjacent to watercourses which, as the name suggests, are liable to flood under certain conditions. For the purposes of this plan, they are more closely defined by the peak water level of the 1 in 100 years return period flood, where known, or the highest known water level. In locating new development, it is important not to reduce the capacity of floodplains or to impede the flow of water thereon, thereby increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere.

W5 Areas at risk from flooding will be defined in Local Plans following consultation with the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies. New development, redevelopment or the intensification of existing development will not be permitted in these areas unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not of itself, or cumulatively in conjunction with other development:

- a) impede the flow of flood water; or
- b) reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store flood water; or
- c) increase the number of people or properties at risk from flooding; or
- d) obstruct land adjacent to water courses required for access and/or maintenance purposes; or
- e) cause significant adverse effects on the environment, with particular emphasis on areas of nature conservation, landscape and heritage importance.

Proposals which would result in the alleviation of flood risks will be permitted, subject to there being no significant conflict with this policy or any other relevant policies of this plan and there being no other significant local planning objections.

377. Unless carefully sited and designed, new development in built-up areas can significantly exacerbate the problems of flooding in areas downstream,

through an increase in run-off from additional impermeable surfaces such as roofs and paving. In some cases, however, it may be possible to overcome these problems by the construction of flood storage/balancing ponds for urban and industrial development, which may have the added benefit of reducing the amount of silt and organic matter entering watercourses.

W6 Planning permission will not be given for new development or redevelopment if this would result in an increased flood risk in areas downstream due to additional surface water run-off.

MINERALS

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



378. During the 1980s, Buckinghamshire produced an average of nearly 1.3 million tonnes of sand and gravel per year. Following the general downturn in the economy which occurred in the early 1990s, annual rates of production dropped to a low of 500,000 tonnes in 1992 although they have since risen again to over 700,000 tonnes in 1993 and over 900,000 tonnes in 1994. Apart from sand and gravel, the county also produces small amounts of limestone and Chiltern brickclay.

Safeguarding Minerals Deposits

379. The Government requires that any economically important mineral deposits should be safeguarded against other forms of development which could prevent or hinder their possible future extraction. The following policy accordingly provides this protection, subject only to the need to ensure that the Plan's growth proposals are not hampered by so doing.

M1 Development which would be likely to prevent the ultimate extraction of significant deposits of economically workable minerals, whether it is directly over the deposits or close to them, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Where it is possible to do so, and subject to there being no conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan, the extraction of minerals prior to other more permanent forms of development will be encouraged.

Protection of the Environment

380. The winning and working of minerals is, of course,

not without its environmental disbenefits. In order to minimise these, it is important to establish firm environmental criteria against which any applications or Local Plan proposals will be considered.

M2 Permission will not be given for the extraction, dressing or treatment of minerals where such proposals would be likely to endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character, appearance and/or setting, of the following:-

- a) urban and other built-up areas (including small settlements);
- b) the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, except where it would be in the national interest and no alternative sources are available elsewhere (refer policy LS2);
- c) Sites of Special Scientific Interest, other nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites and Local Nature Reserves (refer policy NC1);
- d) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites (refer policy HE1);
- e) Historic Parks and Gardens (refer policy HE1);
- f) Conservation Areas (refer policy HE1); and
- g) Listed Buildings (refer policy HE1).

Applications for the extraction, dressing or treatment of minerals where such proposals would endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character,

appearance and/or setting of the following will also be strongly resisted, unless it can be shown that it is necessary to meet an essential need which cannot be satisfactorily met by any other means:

- h) designated Areas of Attractive Landscape (refer policy LS3);
- i) areas of nature conservation importance which are not otherwise protected by sub-para c) above (refer policy NC1);
- j) ancient semi-natural woodlands, as defined by English Nature;
- k) Country Parks, common land and village greens;
- l) airfields in current use; and
- m) National Trust land which is not otherwise protected by sub-paras. a) - l) above.

381. Even though an extraction proposal may be able to satisfy the criteria in the above policy, many other local considerations will also need to be taken into account.



M3 In reviewing the County Minerals Local Plan and in determining applications for minerals extraction, account will be taken of the following factors in addition to those set out in policy M2:

- a) the need for buffer zones defined to protect the residential environment and other sensitive areas from the adverse effects of mineral extraction;
- b) the need to protect and conserve the local landscape including any areas of District-wide importance designated in Local Plans.
- c) the need to protect areas of amenity/recreational importance (refer policy SR1);
- d) the effect of vehicular traffic generated by the development on the local environment, particularly of conservation areas, and on road structures. Every effort should be made to route traffic away from residential areas and onto roads capable of carrying it, or onto rail (refer policies TR1 - TR22 and HE1);
- e) the need to protect well-managed woodland;
- f) the need to protect grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land from irreversible development (refer policy OC2) and to secure its restoration to a high standard of agricultural use within a reasonable period;
- g) the likelihood of excavated land being restored to a high standard capable of supporting productive agriculture or woodland or meeting a need for recreation or nature conservation;

h) the likelihood of restoration providing adequate surface water run-off (refer Policy W6) and satisfactory integration with adjoining landscape.

i) the effect of excavation and/or restoration, including the final landform, on the water table, the stability of surrounding land, water resources - including rivers, lakes and canals, the means of water supply and drainage (refer policies W1 - W6);

j) the need to protect watercourses, aquifers and nearby land uses from pollution and gas migration where excavated sites are to be infilled with waste materials (refer policies W1 - W6 and P1 - P4);

k) the need to avoid the working of exposed or conspicuous sites which cannot be screened satisfactorily; and

l) any other relevant policies of this plan, including Mineral Policies M4 - M10.

Satisfying the Demand for Aggregates

382. Although it is necessary to ensure a continuous supply of aggregates for the construction industry, it does not inevitably follow that all of this must be provided through new extraction. It would be consistent with the environmental aims of this Plan to pay very close attention to the opportunities for using secondary sources of supply (such as colliery waste and power station ash) and for recycling existing materials as an alternative to, and in

order to reduce the need for, new extraction sites. Such considerations will therefore be taken into account by the County Council when considering how to meet its apportionment of the regional requirement for aggregates.

M4 The County Council will have regard to the needs of the construction industry in the South East for adequate supplies of aggregates. To this end, it will maintain a reserve of land with planning permission (a landbank), and also maintain its contribution to meeting its share of the aggregates demand in the region on the advice of SERPLAN, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, in accordance with national guidance contained in MPG6 (Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England).

Phasing

383. Too many active minerals sites in one location can provide a variety of adverse effects, such as unacceptable levels of associated traffic, dust and noise. The Colne Valley Park, part of which lies in south Buckinghamshire, has particularly suffered from this in the past.



M5 The release of sites shall be so phased, and their maximum output so prescribed, as to:

- a) prevent an over-concentration of production likely to harm the amenities enjoyed by residents or damage the local environment including that part of the Colne Valley Park that lies within Buckinghamshire; and
- b) avoid an undue concentration of heavy vehicular traffic conveying minerals, mineral by-products, and materials used in filling the excavated holes.

Imported Aggregates

384. In order to help meet the regional need for aggregates, the importation of supplies (most likely to consist of crushed rock) from outside the South East is an approach which has been endorsed by Central Government. However, it will be important to ensure that appropriate facilities are available for bringing these supplies into the region in an environmentally acceptable way. New depots or wharves alongside railway lines or waterways and with ready access to the main road network may therefore be required. Since few sites are likely to be able to satisfy these criteria, however, some relaxation of other policy constraints may be necessary if such facilities are to be provided.



M6 Consideration of proposals for rail depots and wharves will have regard to the aggregate requirements of the region and the need to import aggregates from other parts of the country to meet demand (refer policy TR12).

Borrow Pits

385. On some occasions it will not be possible to obtain minerals for specific road projects from sources (either within or outside the County) that would normally be considered appropriate in planning terms. In these circumstances, it will be necessary to consider applications to work minerals on land which is constrained in some way. The breaching of such constraints has to be weighed against the reduction of traffic movements through sensitive areas which may result from sites being adjacent to the project they serve. However, the same restoration standards as for other extraction sites will be applied.

M7 Where no other appropriate source of minerals for specific road projects is reasonably available, planning applications to work minerals from land which is constrained by policies M2 and M3 will be considered on the basis of the extent to which:

- a) the proposal conflicts with policies M2 and M3;
- b) the proposal would avoid heavy traffic movements to the construction site through nearby residential areas; and

c) acceptable restoration would be possible within a given timescale consistent with the road construction programme.

Any permission for borrow pits to produce sand and gravel will contribute to the reserve referred to under policy M4.

Other Minerals

386. Until recently, both Chiltern and Fletton bricks were produced in Buckinghamshire - the former from Reading clay worked, as the name suggests, in the Chiltern Hills, the latter from Lower Oxford clay worked in the north of the county. Since production of Fletton bricks has now ceased and there are, in any event, large permitted reserves of Lower Oxford clay in the county, further permissions to extract it seem unlikely in the foreseeable future.

M8 Notwithstanding policy M2(b), the County Council will give sympathetic consideration to applications to extract brick clay which will be processed at the existing small local brickworks of the Chiltern Hills; but further extraction of Lower Oxford clay will not be permitted in the foreseeable future unless particularly strong reasons exist.

387. In 1988, Buckinghamshire produced 13% of all the chalk extracted in the South East and 8% of all that produced in Great Britain. The whole of this production originated from just one source, Pitstone, which closed

down in 1991. Although the prospect of new quarries or works in the Chilterns is unlikely (other than as a possible replacement for the Chinnor works in Oxfordshire), the important escarpment must be protected from damage. Any such proposals will therefore be evaluated in the context of Policy M2 above.

Restoration

388. It is highly important that mineral workings do not remain derelict after extraction but that they are satisfactorily restored to a beneficial after-use.

M9 The extraction of any minerals will be permitted only if the proposed restoration and after-use of the site are appropriate and achievable. Conditions may therefore be imposed on any planning permission in order to achieve the restoration of the site to its former use or, where this is not desirable, to an appropriate alternative use. Conditions may additionally be imposed to secure the aftercare of the site for a period of five years or such longer period as the Secretary of State may allow from the completion of restoration. When considering restoration proposals, the County Council will also take account of factors (g) - (j) in policy M3.

Secondary and Recycled Aggregates

389. In order to minimise the requirement for new extraction sites in the County, and in line with Government policy, it will be important to encourage the use of secondary and recycled aggregates. Provided that

this can be done in a satisfactory fashion, facilities for the recycling of materials will therefore be permitted in appropriate locations.

M10 The County Council will encourage the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary, land-won sources. To this end, favourable consideration will be given to the provision of facilities for the recycling and handling of appropriate materials, in so far as there is no significant conflict with other relevant policies of this plan.

The Minerals Local Plan

390. In addition to its strategic planning function, the County Council is also responsible for the preparation of a Minerals Local Plan for Buckinghamshire, which translates the broad strategic framework set out above into more detailed and site-specific policies. Reference should, therefore, also be made to that document for guidance as to what would, and would not, normally be acceptable in terms of mineral-related development.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



391. Waste disposal activity in Buckinghamshire has increased considerably in recent years - the amounts of domestic waste and building/excavation waste disposed of locally both doubling during the 1980s. Although some of this growth is attributable to increases in the county's own self-generated waste, a large proportion has resulted from imports from other parts of the South East and beyond.

Waste Minimisation & Recycling

392. Every effort must be made to minimise future waste generation, thereby extending the use of available void space. Unless such steps are taken, there is a risk that the environmental quality of the county will deteriorate to an unacceptable level.

393. The recycling and reuse of waste can also play an important role in this respect - a fact recognised in the Environmental White Paper, which set a target of 25% for the recycling of domestic waste.

394. The other advantages of waste recycling and reuse are that they can both reduce the need to exploit new resources. Of particular local significance here are the opportunities offered by the recycling of construction waste, such as inert rubble, to limit the demand for new mineral extraction sites.

WM1 The reduction of waste at source, by all producers, will be supported, including the recycling and reuse of waste products wherever practicable. To this end, the County Council will support the establishment of recycling and associated facilities

in locations where there would be no significant adverse impact on the environment, and where they would be consistent with the other relevant policies of this plan.

Waste Reduction

395. Where waste cannot be reused or recycled, incineration can reduce the amount requiring disposal - by up to 95% in volume and by 70% in weight. As well as extending the life of certain types of existing sites and reducing the need to identify new sites, incineration can also offer opportunities for energy generation (refer "Energy" chapter previously).

396. Other forms of waste reduction include composting, which results in the production of valuable humus. About one third of household waste is suitable for this purpose.

WM2 Where it is impracticable to recycle or reuse waste, its reduction will be supported by appropriate means where this would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment.

Waste Disposal

397. Advice from Central Government emphasises the need for the South East to make adequate provision for the disposal of all of its own waste. However, because the availability of suitable facilities in the London area is limited, surrounding counties (including



Buckinghamshire) are asked to ensure that their existing and potential void spaces are, where appropriate, available to help meet regional as well as local needs. It should also be noted that, on occasions, there may be cross-boundary movements of waste between neighbouring counties within and beyond the South East due to the local distribution of waste management facilities.

WM3 The County Council will seek to ensure the provision of adequate capacity for the safe disposal of waste arising in Buckinghamshire. In addition, consideration will be given to accommodating a proportion of the waste requirements arising outside the County

Landfilling

398. Although the recycling and reuse of waste can go some way towards reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal, it must be recognised that significant quantities of waste will still require disposal and that landfilling will remain the primary means of accommodating it.

399. Much of the available void space in Buckinghamshire has arisen through mineral extraction. The County Council would wish to see such sites restored to an appropriate after-use. Various different after-uses are possible, and not all will involve filling of the voids. Lakes for water-based recreation or nature conservation can represent the most appropriate after-use in some cases. However, where the site is to be restored for a productive after-use, such as agriculture or forestry, the County Council will generally support the disposal of waste in

mineral voids if adequate environmental standards are met.

WM4 The County Council will generally support the disposal of waste which involves the filling of voids created by mineral extraction, where this enables such land to be returned to an appropriate after use as soon as practicable in accordance with the restoration and aftercare provisions of policies M3 and M9.

Landraising

400. In areas where there is a shortage of suitable void space, landraising (the disposal of waste in such a way as to significantly alter the natural contours of the land) can offer an alternative to landfilling as a means of waste disposal. It can also prove to be a beneficial means of restoring derelict or damaged land. Notwithstanding this, there are many circumstances in which the practice would not be so acceptable, and it is accordingly necessary to protect against these.

WM5 The practice of landraising will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, and provided that:

a) the environment and visual amenity of the area would not be adversely affected by the proposed development;

- b) an appropriate after-use can be secured; and
- c) there is no reasonable alternative.

Site Selection

401. As is the case with mineral extraction sites, there are certain areas which are quite unsuitable for waste management operations. Accordingly, the same range of locational factors will be considered when waste management operations are proposed as will be the case in respect of minerals proposals.

402. More detailed guidance in the Waste Local Plan (see opposite) will supplement the strategic policy framework set out in this Plan.

WM6 In considering applications for waste management facilities, including disposal sites, the County Council will have regard to the same principles as are set out in policies M2, M3 and M9 of this plan.

The Waste Local Plan

403. In addition to its strategic planning function, the County Council is also responsible for the preparation of a Waste Local Plan for Buckinghamshire. This translates the broad strategic policy framework set out above into more detailed policies.

404. The Waste Local Plan also takes account of the provisions of another document, the Waste Management Plan, which serves a variety of purposes including the identification of waste disposal needs, and the provision of a strategy for waste minimisation and, where practicable, reclamation. Formerly produced by the County Council, responsibility for the preparation of Waste Management Plans now lies with the Environment Agency.



POLLUTION

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



405. Although many polluting activities are the subject of specific pollution control legislation, the Government has indicated that the planning system also has an important role to play, by regulating the location of developments which are either potentially harmful in themselves, or would be adversely affected by existing sources of pollution.

The Precautionary Principle

406. An important factor to be reflected in such locational decisions is the precautionary principle, established in the Environment White Paper and subsequently reflected in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. This requires that where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, pollution controls will take into account the need to prevent or limit harm, even where scientific knowledge is not conclusive. This principle applies particularly where there are good grounds for judging that action taken promptly at comparatively low cost may avoid more costly damage later, or that irreversible effects may follow if action is delayed. The following policy embodies this principle.

P1 Having regard to the advice of the statutory pollution control authorities, permission will not be given for:-

a) potentially polluting developments which would pose unacceptable risks to other land uses; or

b) developments which would be at an unacceptable risk from existing, or potential, sources of pollution.

In circumstances where development proposals may be able to satisfy relevant pollution control requirements, the local planning authorities may nonetheless withhold consent if, having regard to other social, economic and environmental factors, unacceptable risks are still considered to exist which cannot be overcome by appropriate planning conditions.

Air Pollution

407. This Plan demonstrates a commitment to tackle air pollution on several fronts. The central “concentration strategy” seeks to address the problem by reducing the need to travel. Together with this, the encouragement for public transport should help to reduce (or at least stem the increase in) vehicle emissions. Similarly, those policies which encourage the use of renewable energy sources will also help to minimise the consumption of fossil fuels, with its attendant consequences for air quality.

Water Pollution

408. Policies for the protection of water quality are detailed in the chapter headed “Water”, earlier in this Plan.

Noise Pollution

409. Noise is constantly present in our daily lives and is recognised as a form of pollution which can be injurious to health if excessive. The Government has published



guidelines which set out noise exposure categories, to be used in assessing proposals for new noise-sensitive developments (such as homes and hospitals) near to existing or potential sources of noise. Conversely, it is important to ensure that noise-sensitive development is located away from sources of unacceptably high noise.

P2 Having regard to the most recent Government noise exposure recommendations or standards for the type of development in question, permission will not be given for:-

a) developments which would create an unacceptable increase in the ambient noise level of noise-sensitive developments such as homes, hospitals and schools: or

b) noise-sensitive developments such as homes, hospitals and schools in locations where they would be exposed to unacceptable levels of noise from existing, or potential, sources of such noise.

410. Aviation activity, from airfields and airports both within and outside the county, creates a significant noise impact on some of the residents of Buckinghamshire. While the County Council has no powers to control existing activities, it will use current consultation procedures to try and ensure that proposals for new facilities, or for the intensification of uses at existing sites, do not result in a worsening noise climate in the county.

P3 The local planning authorities will support proposals for the reduction of aviation noise in

Buckinghamshire. Any airport or airport-related development which would increase the level of aircraft noise will not be supported, unless the noise impacts are slight and clearly outweighed by any advantages which stem from other considerations.

Hazardous Developments

411. Regardless of whether or not any associated development is involved, local planning authorities are enabled, under recent legislation, to exercise a degree of control over the use and storage of Hazardous Substances. This is done through the issuing of Hazardous Substances Consents. Although the Health & Safety Executive are to be consulted (in accordance with Circular 11/92) on every application for a Consent, in order for the risks to be assessed, it will be for local authorities to determine whether those risks are acceptable in the context of existing and neighbouring land uses. Notwithstanding any risk, however, planning permission will still be required where development is involved.

P4 Proposals which involve the use or storage of controlled quantities of hazardous substances as defined in the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992, will only be allowed where they do not impose unacceptable risks on the local community. Similarly, development in close proximity to hazardous installations will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the level of risk to the potential occupants of the proposed development would be acceptable.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



The Need for Balance

412. Although this Plan proposes significantly reduced levels of growth by comparison to what has happened hitherto in Buckinghamshire, such growth as does take place will impose considerable demands upon the County's infrastructure.

413. While one of the key aims of the Plan is to reduce the need to travel, and to encourage the use of more environment-friendly alternatives to the private car, the County's roads will inevitably be subject to pressures for increased usage. The same will be true of its community facilities, such as schools, libraries and public open spaces, and its energy and water supplies. It is very important, therefore, that new development should not outstrip the capacity of the supporting infrastructure.

414. In drawing up this Plan, careful consideration was given to this issue. For example, the major growth proposals at Milton Keynes were, in part, premised upon the fact that infrastructure standards here are much higher than in other parts of the County. Conversely, in the southern half of the County, the much lower levels of growth reflect not only the incidence of established land-use constraints such as the Green Belt and the Chilterns AONB, but also the Government's aim to reduce overheating in this part of the region, so allowing the area to catch up in the provision of infrastructure and services.

415. Many different agencies will be responsible for providing and maintaining the infrastructure that will be required to service new developments in Buckinghamshire. These include Central Government Departments, Local Authorities and a range of other statutory service providers.

416. Increasingly, given the prospect of continuing tight controls on public expenditure, private developers will also be required to contribute to the provision of infrastructure made necessary by their developments.

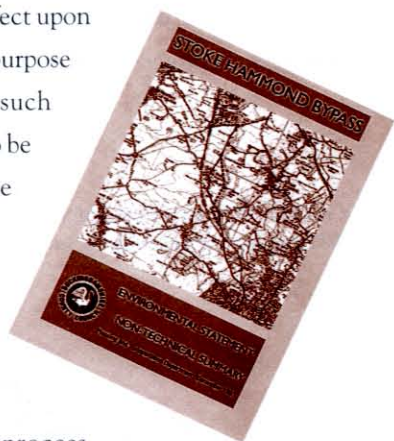
IN1 New residential, employment-generating, or other commercial development must be consistent with the availability of services, including road capacity, water and sewage infrastructure, public transport and, for residential development, schools, libraries, local shopping, recreational and health facilities and amenity open spaces. To this end:

- a) those agencies with statutory responsibilities for the provision of infrastructure and services in Buckinghamshire will be expected to take into account the development proposals made in this plan when preparing their future investment programmes;
- b) planning applications for the development of sites will be expected to be associated with the provision of, or contributions towards the provision of, infrastructure made necessary by, and commensurate with the development concerned, such provision to include on-site or off-site facilities directly related to the proposed use in the interests of comprehensive planning; and
- c) where existing infrastructure and services are inadequate, the local planning authorities should take into account any other options available for securing necessary improvements in making provision for new development in Local Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011

417. In order to supplement and co-ordinate the normal processes of planning control exercised by member states, a Directive issued by the European Community in the mid-1980s introduced a set of general principles for the evaluation of development projects likely to have a major effect upon the environment. The purpose of this was to enable such environmental effects to be taken into account at the earliest possible stage in the decision-making process.



418. The evaluation process, formally known as “Environmental Assessment”, involves the drawing together, in a systematic way, of expert quantitative analysis and qualitative assessment and the presentation of the results in a way which enables the importance of the predicted environmental effects, and the scope for modifying them, to be properly evaluated before a decision is taken to grant or withhold consent for the development in question. The developer’s key role in this evaluation process is the submission of an “environmental statement” with his or her planning application, which describes the likely significant effects on the environment of the development, explained by reference to its possible impact on human beings, flora, fauna, soil, water, air and so on, together with a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce or remedy those effects.

419. The requirements of the Directive are implemented in the United Kingdom under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects)

Regulations 1988. Some projects (such as motorways and nuclear power stations) are to be the subject of environmental assessment in every case, while others may create the need for assessment in certain circumstances. Schedules accompanying the Regulations identify all these different types of projects, indicating those for which assessment is compulsory and those for which it may be needed.

420. Although a “full-blown” environmental assessment is not to be imposed where it is not specifically required by the Directive or the Regulations, adequate environmental information to inform decisions on less major developments will none the less be desirable in the context of the wider need to secure more environmentally-sustainable forms and patterns of development.

EA 1 In addition to those development proposals for which an Environmental Assessment is required under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the local planning authorities should, in appropriate circumstances, request the provision of adequate information about the environmental impact of particular schemes.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, & REVIEW

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011

Implementation

421. The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have regard to the likely availability of resources when preparing Development Plans. Particular attention is to be paid, in this context, to the conservation of finite or non-renewable resources and to the control of public expenditure.

422. Such concerns have been reflected in this Plan in many ways. The lower levels of growth, by comparison to what has happened hitherto; the emphasis on the recycling and reuse of physical resources such as land and buildings; the minimisation of waste; the avoidance, wherever possible, of irreversible development on high quality farmland; the protection and enhancement of cherished landscapes and important nature conservation areas; the safeguarding of valuable mineral deposits; and the controls over potentially polluting developments are all examples of this.

423. Notwithstanding the above, a significant amount of development will still have to be accommodated in Buckinghamshire over the coming years. Although the County Council believes that sufficient human and physical resources will be available to implement the Plan, the question arises as to whether adequate financial resources will also be available in view of the substantial investment programmes which the Plan implies.

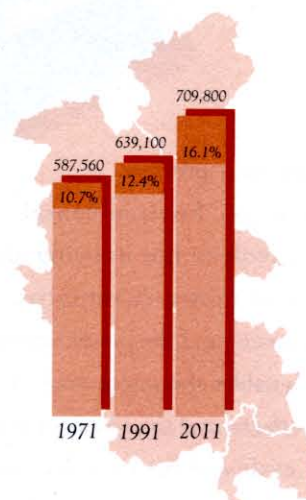
424. Over the next few years, the economic future of the country, and within it the South East region, is likely to be uncertain and probably difficult. In the face of increased competition within and beyond Europe, our economy and resources will be placed under considerable pressure. Not only may they grow more slowly than we would wish, but there may also be changing priorities for

their use. For example, it is highly likely that more resources will need to be directed towards the care of the elderly, as the proportion of the population represented by this group increases (see Figure 10). At the same time, the proportion of “wealth creators” within the population, who will be required to generate these resources, is projected to decrease.

Fig.10

Growth & Ageing Population

Total population & percentage 65 years of age and over



425. On the assumption, therefore, that the immediate financial climate will be difficult and the longer-term outlook uncertain, initiatives both within and outside the planning system will be needed to ensure the successful implementation of this Plan.

426. This Plan seeks to minimise calls on available financial resources by, for example: concentrating most new development on the county’s larger urban areas in order to capitalise upon existing or currently-planned infrastructure such as roads, schools, sewers, electricity, gas and water supplies and to reduce travel costs; tightly

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991~2011



controlling new development in the open countryside where the provision of new services and infrastructure is likely to be relatively more expensive; and shifting the emphasis of transport investment from private to public modes, in order to minimise the need for road building and to cut energy costs.

427. Outside the planning system, the successful implementation of the Plan will depend, to a much greater extent than before, on close working relationships between public, private and voluntary sector bodies and on the County's ability to encourage reinvestment by established firms and to compete for mobile investment. Two excellent examples of such working arrangements are the Milton Keynes and Thames Valley Economic Partnerships (serving the north and the south of the county respectively) which bring together a range of different private and public business organisations (including the County Council) to address a variety of pressing economic issues.

Monitoring & Review

428. As detailed above, several measures have been taken to enhance the chances of successful implementation of this plan. Together with these, the long time horizon of the Plan should prove to be of assistance to those development agencies and infrastructure providers who need to plan their investment decisions many years in advance. So too, does the newly-heightened status of Development Plans in the planning process, and the likelihood that development will take place in accordance with plan proposals, give grounds for confidence that successful implementation can be achieved. Nevertheless, the extent to which public, private and voluntary sector organisations are able to

shoulder the scale of investment implied by this Plan remains to be seen. It will therefore be essential for progress on implementation to be monitored, so that any necessary adjustments can be made if present assumptions are not realised.

429. To this end, annual reports will be produced detailing the progress made each year - not only in terms of the extent to which the various development proposals are being implemented, but also whether the other aims and objectives of the Plan (as detailed in the "Broad Strategy" chapter) are being realised.

430. These reports will then form the basis of discussions with other local authorities, within and beyond Buckinghamshire, with statutory undertakers and other service providers, with business organisations and with other interested bodies. In this way, future reviews of the Plan will be informed by a sound appraisal of what has already been achieved and what remains to be done.

AFTERCARE (*of mineral extraction sites*) Measures taken to bring restored sites to a required standard for future use.

AMBIENT NOISE LEVEL Totally encompassing noise in a given situation at a given time which is usually composed of noise from many sources near and far.

ANAEROBIC DIGESTION The breakdown of organic material in the absence of air, producing carbon dioxide, methane and a growing medium.

AREAS OF SPECIAL RESTRAINT Areas of land, identified in some Local Plans, which carry the same degree of protection against most forms of development as land in the Green Belt, until such a time as the land in question may be formally allocated for development. In Buckinghamshire, Areas of Special Restraint exist only within Wycombe District.

BROADLEAVED DECIDUOUS WOODLAND In the context of the Chilterns, mainly beech and oak woodland, but also including (for example) cherry, ash and field maple.

BUCKS BIOLOGICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL NOTIFICATION MAPS A register of all known sites of nature conservation importance in Buckinghamshire, which is maintained by the Environmental Records Officer at the County Museum. Sites are evaluated based on accepted biological and geological criteria and include all Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - see definition below.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE Local organisations which represent the local business network. Their principal activities often include export promotion, training and education, business services, enterprise development and political representation of the business community.

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY The agricultural policy of the European Community (EC). As set out in the Treaty of Rome, the CAP has the following objectives: to increase agricultural

productivity; to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community; to stabilise markets; to assure the availability of supplies; and to ensure that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices. The subject of major reform in 1992.

COMMUNITY WOODLANDS New woodlands planted on public or private land, to which pedestrian access is encouraged.

COMPARISON GOODS Durable items, such as furniture, clothing and electrical appliances. Non-durable items, such as food, are known as convenience goods.

COUNTY RAIL NETWORK See Key Diagram and the Transport chapter of this Plan.

CROSSRAIL Proposal to link the Aylesbury and Reading lines by new tunnels under Central London to the Essex routes served by Liverpool Street.

DESIGNATED AREA Specifically, the defined limits of Milton Keynes New City when responsibility for its construction lay with Milton Keynes Development Corporation. The term Milton Keynes Designated Area no longer applies now that the Corporation has gone out of existence. More generally though, areas of land may be "designated" for a variety of different planning purposes - such as Green Belt (see below), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Areas of Attractive Landscape etc.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS Statutory documents which set out local planning authorities' policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area.

ECONOMICALLY-ACTIVE POPULATION Those persons aged 16 or over, who are either in employment (whether as employees, in self-employment, or on work-related Government employment and training schemes, but excluding those in the Armed Forces) or registered as unemployed.

ENTERPRISE AGENCIES Joint ventures between the public and

private sectors, which provide a team of independent and experienced business professionals who are able to offer advice and guidance free of charge.

GLOBAL WARMING A phenomenon which is caused by an increase in emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, which trap the sun's heat and warm the earth's surface. Emissions from human activity such as fossil fuel burning and widespread deforestation have been the main cause of rises in concentrations of greenhouse gases this century.

GRADE SEPARATION An arrangement to carry main roads through a junction without interruption of the flow.

GREEN BELT An area of land, designated in Development Plans, whose primary purpose is to curb the outward expansion of a large urban area and within which development is strictly controlled.

GRID ROAD SYSTEM (Milton Keynes) The layout of the main road network to form a grid of approximately 1 kilometre squares.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT The total value of all goods and services produced by a country in a specified period (usually annually) less income from foreign investments.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES Substances specified in Schedule 1 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992. Over 70 different substances which are toxic, highly reactive, explosive or flammable are included.

INDICATIVE FORESTRY STRATEGY A document and map identifying areas of land for the creation of new woodlands on a significant scale, and those areas where such expansion would not be appropriate.

INDIGENOUS GROWTH Population growth arising from people already residing in any given area.

INFRASTRUCTURE Roads, sewers, electricity, gas and water supplies etc.

KEY DIAGRAM A map, forming part of a County Structure Plan, illustrating in non-site-specific terms its main policies and proposals. See inside the back cover of this plan.

LAND BANK (Minerals) A stock of planning permissions for the winning and working of minerals.

LISTED BUILDINGS Buildings of special architectural or historical interest, recorded on lists compiled by the Secretary of State for National Heritage. These are graded I, II* or II to reflect their relative importance and permission is required for works which may affect their character or appearance.

LOCAL NATURE RESERVES A statutory term denoting an area of land designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as being of importance for nature conservation and where public understanding and enjoyment of nature conservation is actively promoted.

MASTER PLAN (Milton Keynes) The original planning proposals for the New City, published in 1970 by Milton Keynes Development Corporation.

NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES A statutory term, denoting an area of land designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being of national, and sometimes international, importance. May be in a variety of different ownerships, but the essential characteristic is that they are primarily used for nature conservation.

NATURAL CHANGE Same as indigenous growth (see above)

NON-RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES Fossil fuels, such as Coal, Oil and Gas. Finite supply.

OPPORTUNITY AREAS A concept originally defined in SERPLAN's proposed New Strategy for the South East, 1990. Broadly, parts of the region where expansion of economic activity is to be encouraged, and where economic initiatives are required to stimulate demand and encourage investment. Mainly concentrated in Inner London and Thames Gateway (see below), but also in one or two northern and some coastal towns.

OVERHEATING The occurrence, temporarily or locally, of a rate of growth which is not capable of being maintained indefinitely. The consequences include shortages and cost inflation in, for example, labour and housing markets. Congestion is one of its physical symptoms.

PARK & RIDE Facilities which seek to reduce urban congestion, by encouraging motorists to leave their vehicles at the edge of towns and proceed into the centre by public transport, normally buses.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES The earth's physical geography (hills, valleys ec.).

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES Documents issued by the Department of Environment setting out the Government's policy guidance on various planning issues - such as housing, employment, shopping, tourism etc.

RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES Term used to cover solar energy, wind and tidal power, and hydro-electricity. The heat from within the earth (geothermal energy) is also usually regarded as renewable. Other renewable sources include industrial, agricultural and domestic waste and energy crops (such as coppiced woodland), which are combustible or digestible.

SEMI-NATURAL HABITAT Areas where the presence of plant and animal communities is determined primarily by the physical characteristics of the habitat (such as soil type and drainage) and by the interaction of species on each other (such as grazing

by deer). Such habitats are generally recognised as being of high nature conservation value.

SERAWP *The South East Regional Aggregates Working Party* One of 10 such Regional Aggregates Working Parties, who draw their membership from mineral planning authorities, the minerals industry and Government Departments. SERAWP provides technical information and advice on the supply of and demand for aggregates in South East England.

SERPLAN *The London & South East Regional Planning Conference* The representative body of all local planning authorities in South East England, SERPLAN considers regionally important land-use and transportation issues and provides advice to Government accordingly.

SET ASIDE The practice of temporarily or permanently removing arable farmland from agricultural production in order to reduce unwanted surpluses.

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI) A statutory term denoting an area of land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) as being of special nature conservation interest. SSSIs include wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms.

START-UP SPACE Premises, usually smaller in size, suited to the needs of small and newly forming businesses.

STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK See Key Diagram and the Transport chapter of this plan.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

THAMES GATEWAY The major Opportunity Area (see above) within the South East region, extending on both banks of the

Thames Estuary from Stratford and the Royal Docks to Tilbury in Essex and Sheerness and Sittingbourne in Kent.

TOWN CENTRES City, town, traditional suburban and, as identified in Local Plans, larger village centres, which provide a broad range of facilities and services and fulfil a function as a focus for both the community and public transport. Small parades of shops and individual shops of purely local significance are excluded.

TRANSPORT POLICIES & PROGRAMMES (TPP) DOCUMENT A document produced annually by the County Council in support of its bid for Transport Supplementary Grant (TSG) and borrowing approval, to cover its transport capital programme for the following financial year.

TRAFFIC CALMING A series of measures designed to reduce accidents by slowing traffic or by persuading drivers to use a more suitable route.

UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS Plans produced in London and the metropolitan areas which combine the functions of Structure and Local Plans produced in non-metropolitan areas.

USE CLASSES ORDER An order made by the Secretary of State for the Environment, which groups together certain types of activity for planning purposes - the groups being known as Classes. In general terms, activities within the same Class may change (eg from light industrial use to office use) without the need for planning permission, whereas activities changing from one Class to another (eg from a shop to an office) usually require permission.

WINDFALL SITES Housing sites too small to be identified very far in advance of their development, but for which an appropriate allowance may be made in development plans.

*Development Control Principles
referred to in Transport Policy TRIA(g)*

The following principles are to be taken into account when considering the highway implications of development proposals:-

- A** The safeguarding of adopted and approved local highways proposals;
- B** access from Primary Routes or routes designated as "routes of more than local importance" will not normally be permitted. Consideration of access to other roads within the county road hierarchy is dealt with in the County's Highway Development Control Policies document. Wherever possible, access shall be taken from the lowest category of road appropriate to the development;
- C** the operational and environmental capacity of the adjoining highway network and its ability to accept additional traffic flow;
- D** the avoidance of traffic of excessive volume, size or weight on unsuitable roads, including rural lanes, or in residential or Conservation Areas;
- E** where appropriate the developer will be expected to provide for, or contribute to, satisfactory improvements to the highway transportation infrastructure;
- F** the provision of satisfactory off-street vehicular parking, servicing arrangements and movement within the site;
- G** the improvement of road safety;
- H** the incorporation of traffic calming measures, as appropriate, on all new residential developments;
- I** the provision of facilities for buses serving new major developments where appropriate;
- J** the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, horseriders and people with disabilities;
- K** the enhancement of the environment and the safeguarding of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas;
- L** the requirements of the Highway Authority that all new estate roads should be constructed to the Council's specification and laid out in accordance with the Council's Residential Road Layout Standards and offered for adoption;
- M** the submission of a traffic impact study assessment for all major development proposals;
- N** the avoidance of individual service facilities for the travelling public. Key sites within the road hierarchy will be encouraged to become the focus for a range of facilities for motorists including lorry drivers.

BROAD STRATEGY

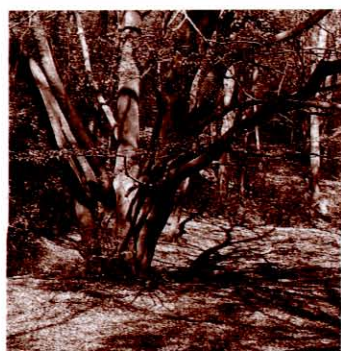
BS1 New development will be planned so as to reduce the need for travel, in so far as this is consistent with the protection of areas of designated land-use importance such as the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To this end, a close correlation will be sought between new homes, jobs, community facilities and supporting infrastructure, with most new urban development concentrated at Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury Town and High Wycombe.

BS2 In order to discourage high levels of commuting, a broad balance will be sought between the growth in local employment and the growth in the economically active population of Buckinghamshire, but having regard to the sub-regional role of Milton Keynes City in curbing the need for longer-distance commuting.

BS3 New transport infrastructure will be integrated with the national and regional transport system. Through the concentration of most new development on existing urban centres and appropriate traffic management measures, particular emphasis will be placed upon improving the viability of more energy-efficient modes of transport than private cars.

HOUSING

H1 Within the 1991 - 2011 period, about 64,000 net additional dwellings will be provided in Buckinghamshire. These will be distributed and phased in accordance with the following allocations:



	1991 - 2001	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011	1991 - 2011
Milton Keynes Borough	20,000	8,600	8,100	36,700
Aylesbury Vale District	7,000	5,000	3,600	15,600
Wycombe District	3,500	2,000	1,700	7,200
Chiltern District	1,500	300	300	2,100
South Bucks District	1,800	300	300	2,400
Bucks	33,800	16,200	14,000	64,000

The term 'net additional dwellings' refers to all additions to the dwelling stock (ie. completed dwellings) as at 31 March 1991, from all sources, including those resulting from new construction, conversions and changes of use, less demolitions and any other permanent losses to the dwelling stock. Any dwellings provided within the 'affordable' category (as defined in Policy H9) will also contribute to the total and individual dwelling requirements.

Of the total provision for the Borough of Milton Keynes, about 18,300 dwellings in the 1991 - 2001 period and about 7,300 dwellings in the 2001 - 2006 period will be provided within the former Designated Area of Milton Keynes City. These dwellings represent the "currently planned development" of the City for the purposes of Policy H2(a).

H2 Within the dwelling allocations set out in Policy H1, the following new strategic allocations are proposed for the 2001-2011 period, the location of which will be identified in Local Plans for each area:

a) Milton Keynes Borough

Not less than 6,000 dwellings within and/or adjoining the former Designated Area of Milton Keynes.

Planning permissions for the development of additional land adjoining the City will be phased so that housing construction only starts once the “currently planned development” of the City is substantially complete. The “currently planned development” of the City is defined in Policy H1. For the purposes of this policy, “substantially complete” is defined as when no more than about 1,600 dwellings remain to be completed within the City;

b) *Aylesbury Vale District*

Not less than 3,000 dwellings within and/or adjoining Aylesbury Town (which is defined as the built-up area of Aylesbury including parts of neighbouring parishes contiguous with that area); and

c) *Wycombe District*

Between 1,500 and 1,700 dwellings on land excluded from the Green Belt in the High Wycombe Area (which is defined as High Wycombe, Hazlemere, Tylers Green, Downley, Loudwater and Wooburn Green).

H3 In addition to those settlements identified for strategic growth in Policy H2, Local Plans may identify other locations for significant housing growth which would:-

- a) establish a close relationship between homes, jobs, community facilities and supporting infrastructure;
- b) reduce the need for car journeys and distances driven, or permit the choice of more energy-efficient forms of transport;
- c) avoid, and create no significant adverse impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, designated Areas of Attractive Landscape and any other nationally important land use constraints; and
- d) avoid the coalescence of settlements.

H4 Any proposals for freestanding new settlements which may be proposed in Local Plans must:-

- a) fulfil the requirements of Policy H3;
- b) result in the positive environmental improvement of derelict, damaged or otherwise underused land;
- c) avoid unacceptable traffic loadings on the existing highway network; and
- d) minimise calls on public expenditure for the provision of infrastructure made necessary by the proposed development.

No proposals for new settlements will be permitted unless specifically supported by appropriate Local Plan policies.

H5 Except as provided for in Policies H2 - H4, OC1 and GB3, any new housing development should be -

- a) small-scale;
- b) located within existing settlements; and
- c) consistent with other relevant policies of this plan.

H6 Where practicable, Local Plans should introduce policies to control the release of new housing sites:-

- a) in order to secure an orderly and co-ordinated pattern of development; and/or
- b) where infrastructural or other service constraints indicate that particular sites cannot be released before a certain date; and/or
- c) where there is evidence that market demand would otherwise exhaust the total housing provision for the area within the early years of the plan.

H7 Subject to there being no conflict with any other policies of this plan and there being no other significant planning objections, the local planning authorities will give priority, in preparing Local Plans, to the re-use of vacant, derelict or otherwise under-used urban land for housing and related development before the release of new “greenfield” sites.

H8 New housing developments should, in conjunction with other existing and proposed developments, provide for a mix of housing types and sizes within each District which is appropriate to the needs of the local community. In circumstances where such a need can be demonstrated, the local planning authorities should seek to negotiate for the inclusion of an element of housing which is suitable for, or could readily be adapted to meet the requirements of, those with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.

H9 The local planning authorities will assess the need for, and bring forward proposals to secure, an appropriate element of affordable housing in the context of policy H1, for those local households whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase or rent homes on the open market as a result of the local relationship between incomes and market prices. Such housing will be subject to arrangements which will ensure its availability to local households at sub-market prices or rents in perpetuity.

H10 Local Plans will make provision for such further gypsy accommodation as may be needed, either by identifying appropriate sites or, where this is not possible, by the introduction of criteria-based policies against which planning applications will be considered. Applications for the development of new sites will be considered on the basis of their suitability for gypsies, their impact on the local environment and neighbouring land-uses and in accordance with Government advice.

ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

E1 Major new employment areas will only be permitted at the following locations and in the circumstances specified:-

a) Milton Keynes City, in order to achieve a balance between housing and employment provision, both within the former Designated Area and in the subsequent further growth of the City in accordance with Policies H1 and H2;

b) Aylesbury Town, in order to secure necessary economic restructuring and to meet shortfalls in employment opportunities for the existing and future economically-active residents of the town; and

c) High Wycombe Area (as defined in policy H2), in order to secure necessary economic restructuring, provided that any new employment land is only provided in substitution for an equivalent area of existing employment land within Wycombe District which is to be redeveloped for non-employment use(s).

Any major new employment areas will firstly be identified in Local Plans, should be well-related to the public transport network without significantly adding to traffic congestion and should be consistent with other relevant policies of this plan.

E2 Within or adjoining the built-up limits of any settlement beyond the Green Belt expanded under the terms of Policy H3, new employment-generating development appropriate to the needs of:

a) the settlement itself; and

b) adjoining areas for which the settlement acts as a local centre, but having regard to the availability of employment in nearby major employment centres

will generally be permitted provided that any new employment

sites beyond the existing built-up limits of those settlements are firstly identified in Local Plans.

E3 Within the built-up limits of rural settlements beyond the Green Belt and not otherwise identified for expansion under the terms of Policy H3, small-scale employment generating developments appropriate to the local needs of the individual settlement will be permitted where they would not cause significant environmental, infrastructural or highway problems. Where a suitable site cannot be found within the built-up limits of the settlement, a location immediately adjoining the settlement will be permitted provided that there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan and subject to the site's prior identification in a Local Plan.

E4 Where major existing developed sites in the open countryside beyond the Green Belt are proposed for redevelopment under the terms of Policy OC3 and the new use would be predominantly residential, provision for commensurate employment - generating development within the existing site boundary may also be acceptable in so far as there would be no conflict with Policy E1.

E5 Within Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe Districts:

a) no new sites for employment-generating development will be permitted, other than in accordance with Policies E1 - E3 respectively;

b) unless otherwise provided for in a Local Plan, the re-use of existing employment sites for uses outside Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended (or their equivalent Classes in any future revision of the Order) will not be permitted.

E6 In considering proposals for the redevelopment of existing employment areas or the development of new employment areas in accordance with Policy E1, the local planning authorities will, subject to there being no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan or any other significant local planning

objections, particularly encourage provision for Classes B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended (or their equivalent Classes in any future revision of the Order).

E7 Subject to there being no conflict with any other policies of this plan, and in order to assist small businesses, the local planning authorities will give favourable consideration to proposals which would provide for:

a) the conversion and/or change of use of appropriate buildings to provide suitable space for small businesses;

b) smaller units in major redevelopment schemes; and

c) small starter units of 100 sq metres or less.

E8 Any proposals for new sub-regional Dedicated Distribution Parks which may be included in Local Plans must:-

a) avoid and create no significant adverse impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Colne Valley Park, designated Areas of Attractive Landscape and any other nationally or locally important land-use constraints;

b) cause no unacceptable congestion, pollution or disturbance in any neighbouring built-up areas;

c) have or provide direct access to rail;

d) have good access to the motorway and trunk road network;

e) be capable of being laid out exclusively for uses within Class B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987, as amended; and

f) provide for extensive and comprehensive landscaping.

TRANSPORT

TR1A In seeking to restrain future levels of traffic growth in the county, and to promote more environmentally sustainable travel, the County Council will implement measures to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys; encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact than the private car; and reduce reliance on the private car. The measures to be implemented will include:

In towns:

- a) the restraint of traffic in town centres and residential areas through the introduction of demand management and traffic calming measures and the provision of additional traffic-free areas, together with footpaths and cycleways into town centres and across towns;
- b) the implementation of an integrated policy for town centre on-street and off-street parking throughout the County;
- c) the improvement of public transport access through towns and into town centres, particularly through bus priority measures, park and ride schemes, and passenger information systems, but also by reducing road congestion;

In towns and villages:

- d) the management of heavy goods vehicle traffic and parking, to minimise environmental damage;
- e) essential junction and road improvement schemes;
- f) the reduction of traffic speed to a level commensurate with the type of road, safety requirements, and the local environment by the implementation of traffic calming principles;
- g) development control policies to be advised by the District

Councils in Local Plans following the principles set out in the appendix to this Plan.

TR1B The County Council in seeking to develop and implement its integrated transport policies, will set relevant targets. These will be identified within the Council's Integrated Transport Strategy. The District Councils will be encouraged to include similar targets within their Local Plans. The County Council will monitor progress towards its targets within detailed Policy Statements such as the Transport Policies and Programme (TPP).

TR2 The County Council will continue to develop the Milton Keynes City road network in accordance with the Master Plan, and will seek the early completion of these roads. The local planning authorities will require the same standard of road network, together with appropriate landscaping, at such a time as development beyond the former Designated Area may take place and will press for such improvements to the transport system as may be necessary to maintain the same standards of mobility within the former Designated Area.

TR3 The County Council will review the need to construct previously approved (but not yet implemented) urban highway schemes during the early years of the plan in the light of progress made with the management of demand, in accordance with Policy TR1, in those towns. In the meantime, the routes of approved schemes will be protected from development likely to prejudice their construction.

TR4 The County Council in conjunction with the District Councils, will selectively use parking controls to influence car use in towns and manage the demand to travel by car. Parking will be managed by controlling the number of spaces, drawing a distinction between long and short-stay parking, and differential charging both in car parks and on the highway. It is the policy of the local authorities that both off street (public and private) and on street parking provision will be considered together to ensure that provision is complementary.

The total number of spaces provided within town centres and their operation will be determined and managed so as to:

- a) restrain overall demand for access to urban areas and town centres by the private motor car to levels commensurate with environmental capacity;
- b) reduce traffic congestion, especially on important urban traffic and bus routes;
- c) assist in increasing demand for public transport services;
- d) reinforce other policies intended to increase the integration of transport provision in towns;
- e) minimise accident potential and improve safety;
- f) improve, where possible, amenity for those living within predominately residential areas.

Within town centres the Local Authorities will seek priority for the provision of short-stay car parking in order to support shopping, commercial and leisure activities. With the exception of parking provision for rail users, the supply of long-stay commuter parking in towns will be progressively reduced and on-street parking charges and other measures will be introduced to deter long-stay parking. Where appropriate the County Council will seek to develop Park and Ride facilities near the periphery of urban areas for long-stay parking.

To achieve adequate enforcement of on-street waiting restrictions the County Council will seek to implement, where appropriate, the powers to manage (including charging for) on-street parking under the Road Traffic Act 1991, when these are extended to highway authorities outside London.

The Local Authorities will determine and manage the provision of off-street (public and private) parking space taking into account traffic management arrangements, public transport

provision, and the capacity of the roads and junctions in the vicinity. In order to reduce Private Non-Residential parking (PNR) in town centres the County Council will encourage the District Councils to examine the practicability of relating their parking standards for PNR parking to operational need and to reflect this in local plan policies.

TR5 The local authorities will reduce the intrusion and danger in urban residential areas from on-street non-residential car parking and lorry parking by:

- a) supporting the introduction of on-street residents' parking schemes in appropriate areas; and
- b) implementing parking controls to minimise lorry parking in residential streets whilst supporting the provision of lorry parks in suitable non-residential locations.

TR6 New road proposals will be designed to minimise the effect on nearby development of traffic noise and air pollution and to integrate the road into its surroundings with hard and soft landscape features. In addition to those schemes for which a formal Environmental Assessment is required under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the County Council will undertake an appraisal of the environmental effects of other significant highway proposals in its construction programme, in accordance with policy EA1.

TR7 The County Council has defined a Strategic Highway Network, which is shown on the Key Diagram, comprising the following inter-urban routes:

- a) *Motorways (Government Responsibility):* M1, M4, M25, M40;
- b) *Trunk Roads (Government Responsibility):* A5(T), A41(T), A428(T), A404T (south of M40);
- c) *Primary Routes (County Council Responsibility):* A40 (east of

Tatling End), A355 (north of M40), A413 (south of Aylesbury), A418 (east of Aylesbury), A421, A509, A4010, A4146 (north of Linslade).

d) *Other Strategic Roads (County Council Responsibility)*: A40, A355, A404, A412, A413, A416, A418 (west of Aylesbury), A422.

The Council will improve and maintain those parts of the Strategic Highway Network for which it is responsible, to a high standard, and will seek to ensure that longer distance traffic uses these roads through the use of design, signing, management and regulation.

TR8A Proposals for trunk roads and motorways in Buckinghamshire, as determined by Central Government, are as follows:

a) *Design, Build, Finance & Operate (DBFO)*

M40 Junction 1A-3 widening

b) *Main Programme*

M25 Junction 15-16 widening

A41 Aston Clinton Bypass

c) *To be reviewed as potential smaller scale improvements*

M1 Junction 10-15 widening

M4 Junction 4B-8/9 widening

M25 Junction 16-19 widening

d) *Longer Term*

M40 Junction 3-4 widening and Junction 4 improvement

Footnote to Policy TR8A:-

“Design, Build, Finance & Operate” (DBFO) arrangements are those under which a single contractor finances and constructs road improvements, and maintains and operates them for a 30 year period, receiving revenue from the Department of Transport as “shadow tolls” in proportion to the traffic carried.

TR8B The County Council’s objectives for new highway investment in Buckinghamshire to 2011 (not in order of priority) will be:-

a) To provide high standard links between Aylesbury and the motorway/trunk road network, and to improve links between Milton Keynes and Aylesbury, including:-

A418 Wing Bypass

A4146 Linslade Western Bypass

A4146 Stoke Hammond Bypass

b) To complete other inter-urban connections to Milton Keynes, including:-

A421 Buckingham to M1, Junction 13

A421 Tingewick Bypass

A509 Olney Bypass

A509 Newport Pagnell Bypass, Junction Improvements

A509 Newport Pagnell Bypass to M1,
Junction 14-Dualling

c) To improve links between Aylesbury and the High Wycombe area, embracing improvements to:-

A4010 Stoke Mandeville to Princes Risborough

A4010 Princes Risborough to High Wycombe.

d) To provide essential bypasses to towns and villages presently damaged by through traffic including:-

Aylesbury Bypass

(Local scheme; conditional upon outcome of Aylesbury land-use/transport study)

A413 Wendover Bypass

Other schemes mentioned in a) and b) above.

e) To improve other congested parts of the Strategic Highway Network to acceptable standards when resources permit.

Road investment will be provided by Central Government, the County Council and other bodies as part of development and this, in part, will determine detailed priorities.

Detailed programmes will be set out in the County Council's Transport Policies and Programmes, which will be determined in accordance with the availability of resources and analysis of specific problems at the time.

TR9 Any proposals for new Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) will be considered on the basis of current Government advice and will:

- a) not be within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty unless in the national interest and no alternative site is available elsewhere;
- b) not be in the Colne Valley Park or the Green Belt;
- c) be well located in relation to existing settlements or areas allocated for development in local plans;
- d) be sensitively related to existing settlement patterns; to the historic, wildlife and landscape resources and quality of the area; and be unobtrusive in the landscape;
- e) allow for a high level of design and associated landscaping and screening from surrounding areas; and
- f) create no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

TR10 In order to meet the needs of users of the Strategic Highway Network (SHN) a limited number of roadside service facilities, in appropriate locations, should be provided in association with:

- a) the construction of any major new inter-urban road:

- b) a significant increase in the capacity of an existing interurban road comprising part of the SHN:

- c) an identified existing deficiency in the provision of roadside services along the SHN.

These service areas will be more modest in scale than MSAs but will be expected to conform to the same locational requirements as set out in Policy TR9(a) to (f). To this end, the District Councils, when preparing local plans, should identify suitable locations for roadside service areas in accordance with these criteria.

TR11 The County Council will mitigate, wherever possible, the environmental problems caused in towns and villages by the movement of heavy commercial vehicles. Through the introduction of traffic management measures, highway design, signing and development control, the Council will seek to achieve the following:

- a) the attraction of freight traffic on to the Strategic Highway Network;
- b) where alternative routes are available, the diversion of freight traffic from residential streets and other environmentally sensitive areas including rural lanes;
- c) the avoidance of development which does not have immediate access to the principal road network and which will give rise to heavy commercial vehicular traffic in environmentally sensitive areas, including rural lanes;
- d) the promotion of loading and unloading restrictions where necessary (and the provision of improved loading facilities where they are required).

TR12 The local planning authorities will seek to secure the fullest use of rail and waterways for the carrying of freight by:

a) giving favourable consideration to proposals for the siting of suitable new industries in growth areas next to railway lines to which sidings could connect, or to appropriate waterways;

b) giving favourable consideration to the establishment and development of rail and water freight depots, including those for handling aggregates for the construction industries;

c) favouring developments which would maximise the use of rail or waterway access, rather than those which would seek to use nearby road access insofar as there would be no significant conflict with any other relevant policies in the Plan.

TR13 The County Council wishes to see the balance of transport resources increasingly shifted towards public transport. It will promote the use of bus services and will use its planning, highway, and public transport powers to:

a) maintain and improve existing bus services within urban areas, between towns and in rural areas, where a need for such services can be demonstrated;

b) promote measures in towns which will give advantage to bus services including bus priority schemes, bus lanes, park-and-ride facilities and access for buses to service pedestrian priority areas;

c) encourage new development to locate where it can be supported by and will strengthen existing public transport services;

d) ensure the early provision of local bus services to meet the needs of new residential and industrial development throughout the County;

e) secure adequate bus services to feed the main railway stations and will work with bus and train operators to co-ordinate arrival and departure times at railway stations.

TR14 The County Council has identified a County Rail Network, which is shown on the Key Diagram, comprising the following routes:-

a) *Principal European and InterCity Routes:*
London to Birmingham, North West, and Scotland
London to South Wales and the West Country

b) *Other Principal Routes:*
London to Northampton and Birmingham
London to Banbury and Birmingham
London to Aylesbury via Amersham
London to Aylesbury via High Wycombe

c) *Branch Line Routes:*
Bletchley to Bedford
Chalfont and Latimer to Chesham
Maidenhead to Bourne End and Marlow

d) *Routes with Potential for Restoration:*
Aylesbury to Claydon Junction
Bletchley to Claydon Junction
Bicester to Claydon Junction
Grendon Underwood Junction to Ashendon Junction

e) *Routes to be Safeguarded for Possible Rail Service Provision:*
Claydon Junction to County Boundary
(trackbed of former Great Central line)
Princes Risborough - Thame - Cowley
High Wycombe - Bourne End (part)
West Drayton - Poyle

f) *Tourist and Community Railway:*
Princes Risborough to Chinnor.

The County Council will support investment decisions by Railtrack, or others, which will improve the County Rail Network and encourage the provision of enhanced quality rail services

by the railway operators. In addition, the Council will consider making funding available in support of specific projects, such as the construction of new stations or the modification of tracks to facilitate relevant new services, if there is significant benefit to existing and potential rail users within the County from such schemes.

TR15 In furtherance of the County Rail Network identified in Policy TR14, the County Council will press Railtrack, or others to:

- a) Re-open, for passenger and freight rail services, the Oxford-Bletchley and Aylesbury-Bletchley railway lines;
- b) Where appropriate, restore for passenger and/or freight rail services those disused railway trackbeds identified in Policy TR14 as routes to be safeguarded for possible rail service provision.

The County Council will oppose any developments which would prejudice either of these objectives. In the interim, the use of disused railway trackbeds for walking, cycling, riding or for alternative forms of public transport provision, will be supported, provided that there are no overriding local planning objections and their potential restoration for rail services in the longer-term is not compromised.

District Councils will be encouraged to include similar policies within their Local Plans.

Neighbouring local authorities will be encouraged to take similar action in adjoining areas where it would assist in the implementation of this policy.

TR16 The County Council will support the development of integrated bus services (including park and ride facilities) to provide the maximum diversion from road to rail-borne commuting at all railway stations where this is appropriate and feasible, and in particular in conjunction with the improved

CrossRail route to provide a focus for public transport movement (especially Central London commuting).

TR17 The Local Authorities will seek the development and provision of safe and convenient pedestrian routes and bridleways in order to encourage walking and riding as non-polluting and healthy forms of transport and recreation. In particular the County Council will:-

- a) Implement measures to give a greater priority to pedestrians over the private car, especially in towns;
- b) Promote the development and provision of safe and convenient pedestrian routes within towns and villages, into town centres, and across towns;
- c) Make better provision for pedestrians in shopping and residential areas through town centre enhancements, traffic calming schemes, and by ensuring high standards are adopted for commercial developments;
- d) Maintain footways in the county to a high standard; and
- e) Give full consideration to the needs of pedestrians when designing new highways and highway improvement schemes.

TR18 The County Council, in conjunction with the District Councils, will seek to provide facilities which assist the movement and parking of bicycles and encourage the development of cycling as a safe, convenient, healthy and non-polluting method of transport for journeys to work, school, shopping, and for recreation.

TR19 The Local Authorities will identify strategic cycle routes, particularly in Local Plans, and will promote their implementation. These will use existing streets, shared facilities with pedestrians, or be cycle only, depending upon need and safety considerations.

In the consideration of retail proposals in these centres, particular attention will be given to the improvement of comparison shopping and other complementary uses which are sympathetic with their scale and function. In all centres, new retail proposals will be judged in the context of their contribution to the improvement of the local environment.

S3 The local planning authorities will support the future expansion of Milton Keynes Central Shopping Area to serve a growing local population and to maintain its service to a wider area in line with its emerging regional status in the hierarchy of centres in the County.

S4 The local planning authorities will encourage the expansion and improvement of Aylesbury and High Wycombe town centres for both comparison and convenience shopping in line with their sub-regional status in the hierarchy of centres.

S5 Out of centre shopping developments, including superstores, supermarkets, retail warehouses, factory outlet centres and warehouse clubs will be permitted only where they would:-

- a) meet an identified quantitative and qualitative need which cannot be met satisfactorily either within, or on the edge of the town centre;
- b) create an overall pattern of provision within a built-up area which is well related to the resident population so as to minimise the need to travel;
- c) not, either on their own or in conjunction with other such developments and associated facilities, seriously affect the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre as a whole in the County or similar centres in neighbouring counties.
- d) provide a high degree of accessibility by both public and private transport, including cyclists and pedestrians; and
- e) create no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

In furtherance of this policy, the local planning authorities may impose conditions on planning permissions to restrict the range of goods which can be sold at specific shops.

TOWN CENTRES

TC1 The local planning authorities will seek to maintain and strengthen the vitality and viability of each town centre in the County. Favourable consideration will be given to the diversification of town centre functions to embrace a variety of appropriate activities, including the introduction of new residential accommodation, where this would not result in the loss of viable retail uses.

TC2 Major development proposals in town centres will be assessed in relation to their impact on the centre as a whole. This assessment will include:-

- a) the likely effect of the development upon the surrounding highway network;
- b) the likely contribution which the development will make towards the diversification of town centre functions;
- c) the likely contribution which the proposals would make to the physical enhancement of town centres or to the improvement of their amenity value;
- d) the degree to which accessibility will be improved through the encouragement of public transport usage; and
- e) the likely effect upon the vitality and viability of the centre.

TC3 Major non-retailing developments outside town centres will not be permitted where they would, either on their own or in conjunction with other such developments, seriously affect the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre.

URBAN FRINGES

UF1 The local planning authorities will, in so far as there is no conflict with other relevant policies of this Plan, encourage initiatives leading to the environmental improvement and enhanced amenity and/or nature conservation value of land immediately beyond the existing or planned built-up urban areas in the County.

UF2 Within the Colne Valley Park, the local planning authorities will promote the following key aims:-

- a) to maintain and enhance the landscape (including settlements) and waterscape of the Park in terms of its scenic and conservation value and its overall amenity;
- b) to resist urbanisation of the Park and to safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development;
- c) to conserve the nature conservation resources of the Park through the protection and management of its diverse plant and animal species, habitats and geological features; and
- d) to provide accessible facilities and opportunities for countryside recreation which do not compromise the above.

THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

OC1 In the open countryside outside the Green Belt and beyond the existing or planned limits of built-up areas, only the following types of development will be permitted:

- a) development which is reasonably required for agriculture or forestry;
- b) reuse or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in Local Plans, in accordance with Policy OC3;

c) reuse of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction which are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;

d) limited extension, replacement or alteration of existing dwellings;

e) development for transport, in accordance with policies TR6-20;

f) development for sport and recreation in accordance with policies SR2 and SR3;

g) development for tourism in accordance with policies TM1 and TM2;

h) development which would provide for the conservation of energy or for the generation of energy from renewable sources, in accordance with policy EN2;

i) extraction, dressing and treatment of minerals and subsequent restoration of land, in accordance with policies M1-M10; and

j) waste management operations, in accordance with policies WM1-WM6.

The scale and location of any development will have regard to the amenity value of the countryside and to other relevant policies of this plan, particularly those relating to the protection of the landscape, nature conservation, the man-made heritage and natural resources.

OC2 Any proposals for new development should, wherever possible, avoid the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. In circumstances where this is not possible and where there is a choice between the loss of land graded 1, 2 or 3a, development should be directed towards land of the lowest possible classification.

OC3 The re-use or redevelopment of major existing developed sites in the open countryside will generally be permitted, provided that:

- a) the site has been identified in an adopted Local Plan;
- b) the impact of any conversion or re-development on the countryside is no greater, and preferably less, than the existing use;
- c) any new buildings are well integrated with their surroundings;
- d) the amenity and nature conservation value of the site as a whole is enhanced;
- e) the new use would not lead to unacceptable loadings on the existing highway networks.
- f) no additional expenditure by the public sector on the provision of infrastructure made necessary by the development is required; and
- g) there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

THE GREEN BELT

GB1 It is the policy of the local planning authorities to maintain a Green Belt in southern Buckinghamshire, the purposes of which are:-

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;

e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land.

GB2 The outer north-western and western boundaries of the Green Belt will broadly follow the base of the Chilterns escarpment from the county boundary with Bedfordshire to Saunderton (but excluding the towns of Wendover and Princes Risborough) and then via Stokenchurch and Lane End (but excluding both villages) to the River Thames between Marlow and Medmenham. The following built-up areas are excluded from, but enclosed by, the Green Belt:

In Chiltern District:

Amersham/Chesham Bois	Heath End
Chalfont St Giles	Holmer Green
Chalfont St Peter	Knotty Green
Chesham	Little Chalfont
Great Missenden/Prestwood	Seer Green
Hazlemere/Tylers Green (<i>fringes</i>)	

In South Bucks District:

Beaconsfield	Iver
Burnham/Lent Rise	Iver Heath
Denham Green	Farnham Common
New Denham and Willowbank	Richings Park
Farnham Royal	Stoke Poges
Iver (<i>Ridgeway Estate, Bison Concrete</i>)	Gerrards Cross

In Wycombe District:

Bourne End/Wooburn	Marlow
Flackwell Heath	Marlow Bottom
Naphill and Walters Ash	Great Kingshill
High Wycombe/Downley/Hazlemere/Tylers Green/Loudwater/Wooburn Green	

The precise boundaries of the Green Belt will be defined in District-Wide Local Plans.

GB3 There is a general presumption against development in

the Green Belt, with the following exceptions:

- a) development which is reasonably required for agriculture or forestry;
- b) essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, but not including large-scale spectator facilities;
- c) cemeteries;
- d) limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- e) limited infilling in villages covered by Green Belt designation;
- f) limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans provided that the impact of new development on the Green Belt is no greater than that of existing development;
- g) re-use of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction which are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction provided that the form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings;
- h) mineral extraction and subsequent restoration of land provided that high environmental standards are maintained and the site is well restored;
- i) such other uses of land as would satisfy the general requirement below, together with any essential facilities related thereto.

Any development in the Green Belt should preserve its openness and should not conflict with the purposes of designation as set out in Policy GB1.

The scale and location of any development will also have regard to the amenity value of the Green Belt and other relevant policies

of this plan, particularly those relating to the protection of the landscape, nature conservation, the man-made heritage and natural resources.

LANDSCAPE

LS1 Any development in the open countryside should be so located and designed as to minimise adverse effects on its scenic beauty, conservation interest and amenity value, and should, in appropriate circumstances, provide for the improvement of damaged landscapes.

LS2 Special attention will be paid to the protection and enhancement of the scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Major development will not be permitted unless it is in the national interest and no alternative site is available elsewhere.

LS3 Special attention will be paid to the protection and enhancement of the scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value of the following Areas of Attractive Landscape, whose precise boundaries will be defined in Local Plans:

- a) the Ouse Valley downstream from Newport Pagnell;
- b) an area centred on Stowe, including the landscaped park;
- c) the Brickhills between Woburn Sands and Leighton Buzzard;
- d) the low hills between Quainton and Wing;
- e) the Brill - Winchendon Hills and the Thame Valley downstream from Aylesbury;
- f) parts of the Thames Valley east and west of Marlow, at Cliveden and around Dorney;

g) part of the Wye Valley between Wooburn Green and Bourne End;

h) part of the gravel plateau between Taplow and Gerrards Cross including Burnham Beeches;

i) the area around Black and Langley Parks, Wexham; and

j) small areas of the lower escarpment of the Chiltern Hills between Edlesborough and Pitstone and at Halton and Wendover.

NATURE CONSERVATION

NC1 Permission will not be given for any development likely to have a significant adverse impact on any of the following nature conservation sites:

a) Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

b) Other nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites;

c) Local Nature Reserves.

Local Plans will also include policies for the firm protection of other sites of substantive importance for nature conservation.

NC2 Where development proposals would adversely affect nature conservation interests, the local planning authorities may attach conditions to any permissions, or seek planning obligations, in order to prevent or limit those adverse effects.

NC3 The local planning authorities will generally support initiatives leading to the management and enhancement of the nature conservation value of urban and rural areas through Buckinghamshire. Particular encouragement will be given to the creation and management of new sites of importance for nature conservation, including linear habitats.

THE MAN-MADE HERITAGE

HE1 Permission will not be given for any development which would endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character or appearance and/or setting of any of the following:

a) Listed Buildings;

b) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites;

c) Historic Parks or Gardens.

d) Conservation Areas.

Proposals which would lead to the enhancement of any of these features will generally be encouraged provided that there is no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan.

SPORT & RECREATION

SR1 The local planning authorities will support the further development of sport and recreation in so far as is consistent with the other policies of this Plan. Permission will not be given for any development which would result in the loss of existing recreational facilities, including playing fields and other amenity open spaces, for which there is a proven and continuing community need unless alternative provision of at least equivalent size, suitability and convenience is made. Any new or replacement provision should have regard to the needs of special groups, including children, the disabled and those without access to private motorised modes of transport.

SR2 In the open countryside, permission will be given for those sporting or recreational activities which, of their nature, require a countryside location provided that:-

a) any ancillary built development is both small-scale and necessary for the proposed sporting or recreational use; and

b) there is no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan”.

Special attention will be accorded to the protection and enhancement of the Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails and encouragement will be given to the creation of new long-distance recreational routes, insofar as there is no significant conflict with other policies of this plan.

SR3 Other than as provided for by Policy SR2, new development for sport and recreation will only be permitted within or immediately adjoining the existing or planned built-up limits of settlements, and subject to there being no significant conflict with any other policies of this plan or any other significant local planning objections.

SR4 It is the policy of the County Council, wherever possible, to promote the use of facilities at all its suitable premises for general community recreation.

TOURISM

TM1 The local planning authorities will support the further development of tourism in so far as this is consistent with conserving the character, appearance and amenity value of the County, and there being no conflict with other relevant policies of this Plan. Consideration will be given to the needs of special groups, including the disabled.

TM2 Milton Keynes City, Aylesbury and High Wycombe will serve as the main centres for tourism in the County. Subject to there being no significant conflict with any other relevant policies of this Plan, tourist developments, including sites for camping and touring caravans, may also be permitted in other appropriate locations.

ENERGY

EN1 The District Councils, in preparing their Local Plans,

should include development control policies which seek to ensure that:-

- a) the objective of reducing travel demands can be met;
- b) major generators of travel demand are accessible by means other than private motorised modes of transport;
- c) the siting, design and orientation of new development takes into account the need to maximise energy efficiency.

EN2 The local planning authorities will generally support proposals which would provide for energy conservation or the generation of energy from renewable sources, in so far as there is no significant conflict with any other policies in this plan, and there is no adverse environmental impact on nearby communities. Such proposals may include those energy projects which would:

- a) maximise the energy potential of landfill gas produced at large landfill sites;
- b) involve the incineration of waste materials; or
- c) involve the utilisation of sewage gas.

WATER

W1 Development will not be permitted where in the opinion of the local planning authority, after consultation with the NRA and other relevant bodies, it is considered:

- a) that adequate water resources do not exist or could not be satisfactorily ensured;
- b) that the proposal is likely to have a detrimental effect on existing abstractions, water quality, fisheries, amenity and nature conservation;
- c) that the proposal is likely to contaminate groundwater or

adversely affect the amount and quality of water resources in ponds, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, waterways, or watercourses.

W2 Development which would have a significant adverse impact on ponds, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, waterways or watercourses or adversely affect public access to them or their use for water-related recreation will not be permitted. Proposals which seek to enhance and restore the natural elements of the water environment and encourage appropriate water based recreation will normally be permitted, subject to there being no conflict with policies SR1 - SR4.

W3 In considering proposals for development on or affecting the River Thames and its immediate valley in Buckinghamshire, the local planning authorities will seek to preserve and where appropriate enhance, its pleasant environmental qualities and to prevent congestion and consequent loss of amenity. To this end and subject to other policies in this plan:

a) any new riverside development incorporating substantial buildings and structures should be associated as far as possible with existing settlements, and should be capable of being provided with adequate road access and parking areas;

b) the provision of new permanent moorings will not be permitted;

c) proposals for the extension of existing hire bases will be considered in relation to their effect on the character of the river and its surroundings;

d) opportunities will be taken where desirable to relocate existing on-river moorings into side-channels, gravel workings or backwaters provided that this can be done without detriment to nature conservation and other interests;

e) proposals for organised water sports which would result in a significant increase in congestion or insuperable conflicts

between river users, or would damage the character of the river and its surroundings, will not be permitted;

f) proposals which seek to improve opportunities for public access and informal recreation through the improvement and completion of the Thames Path National Trail will be supported.

W4 The local planning authorities will seek to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance the environmental, recreational, ecological and heritage value of the Grand Union Canal and its Arms in Buckinghamshire. Encouragement will be given to the provision of wharf facilities for freight transfer, in accordance with policy TR12.

W5 Areas at risk from flooding will be defined in Local Plans following consultation with the NRA and other relevant bodies. New development, redevelopment or the intensification of existing development will not be permitted in these areas unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not of itself, or cumulatively in conjunction with other development:

a) impede the flow of flood water: or

b) reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store flood water; or

c) increase the number of people or properties at risk from flooding; or

d) obstruct land adjacent to water courses required for access and/or maintenance purposes; or

e) cause significant adverse effects on the environment, with particular emphasis on areas of nature conservation, landscape and heritage importance.

Proposals which would result in the alleviation of flood risks will be permitted, subject to there being no significant conflict with this policy or any other relevant policies of this plan and

there being no other significant local planning objections.

W6 Planning permission will not be given for new development or redevelopment if this would result in an increased flood risk in areas downstream due to additional surface water run-off.

MINERALS

M1 Development which would be likely to prevent the ultimate extraction of significant deposits of economically workable minerals, whether it is directly over the deposits or close to them, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Where it is possible to do so, and subject to there being no conflict with any other relevant policies of this plan, the extraction of minerals prior to other more permanent forms of development will be encouraged.

M2 Permission will not be given for the extraction, dressing or treatment of minerals where such proposals would be likely to endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character, appearance and/or setting, of the following:-

- a) urban and other built-up areas (including small settlements);
- b) The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, except where it would be in the national interest and no alternative sources are available elsewhere (refer policy LS2);
- c) Sites of Special Scientific Interest, other nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites and Local Nature Reserves (refer policy NC1);
- d) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites (refer policy HE1);
- e) Historic Parks and Gardens (refer policy HE1);
- f) Conservation Areas (refer policy HE1); and

g) Listed Buildings (refer policy HE1).

Applications for the extraction, dressing or treatment of minerals where such proposals would endanger, or have a significant adverse effect on the character, appearance and/or setting of the following will also be strongly resisted, unless it can be shown that it is necessary to meet an essential need which cannot be satisfactorily met by any other means:

- h) designated Areas of Attractive Landscape (refer policy LS3);
- i) areas of nature conservation importance which are not otherwise protected by sub-para c) above (refer policy NC1);
- j) ancient semi-natural woodlands, as defined by English Nature;
- k) Country Parks, common land and village greens;
- l) airfields in current use; and
- m) National Trust land which is not otherwise protected by sub-para. a) - l) above.

M3 In reviewing the County Mineral Local Plan and in determining applications for minerals extraction, account will be taken of the following factors in addition to those set out in policy M2:

- a) the need for buffer zones defined to protect the residential environment and other sensitive areas from the adverse effects of mineral extraction;
- b) the need to protect and conserve the local landscape including any areas of District-wide importance designated in Local Plans.
- c) the need to protect areas of amenity/recreational importance (refer policy SR1);

d) the effect of vehicular traffic generated by the development on the local environment, particularly of conservation areas, and on road structures. Every effort should be made to route traffic away from residential areas and onto roads capable of carrying it, or onto rail (refer policies TR1 - TR22 and HE1);

e) the need to protect well-managed woodland;

f) the need to protect grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land from irreversible development (refer policy OC2) and to secure its restoration to a high standard of agricultural use within a reasonable period;

g) the likelihood of excavated land being restored to a high standard capable of supporting productive agriculture or woodland or meeting a need for recreation or nature conservation;

h) the likelihood of restoration providing adequate surface water run-off (refer Policy W6) and satisfactory integration with adjoining landscape.

i) the effect of excavation and/or restoration, including the final landform, on the water table, the stability of surrounding land, water resources - including rivers, lakes and canals, the means of water supply and drainage (refer policies W1 - W6);

j) the need to protect watercourses, aquifers and nearby landuses from pollution and gas migration where excavated sites are to be infilled with waste materials (refer policies W1 - W6 and P1 - P4);

k) the need to avoid the working of exposed or conspicuous sites which cannot be screened satisfactorily; and

l) any other relevant policies of this plan, including Mineral Policies M4 - M10.

M4 The County Council will have regard to the needs of the

construction industry in the South East for adequate supplies of aggregates. To this end, it will maintain a reserve of land with planning permission (a landbank), and also maintain its contribution to meeting its share of the aggregates demand in the region on the advice of SERPLAN, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, in accordance with national guidance contained in MPG6 (Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England).

M5 The release of sites shall be so phased, and their maximum output so prescribed, as to:

a) prevent an over-concentration of production likely to harm the amenities enjoyed by residents or damage the local environment including that part of the Colne Valley Park that lies within Buckinghamshire; and

b) avoid an undue concentration of heavy vehicular traffic conveying minerals, mineral by-products, and minerals used in filling the excavated holes.

M6 Consideration of proposals for rail depots and wharves will have regard to the aggregate requirements of the region and the need to import aggregates from other parts of the country to meet demand (refer policy TR12).

M7 Where no other appropriate source of minerals for specific road projects is reasonably available, planning applications to work minerals from land which is constrained by policies M2 and M3 will be considered on the basis of the extent to which:

a) the proposal conflicts with policies M2 and M3;

b) the proposal would avoid heavy traffic movements to the construction site through nearby residential areas; and

c) acceptable restoration would be possible within a given timescale consistent with the road construction programme.

Any permission for borrow pits to produce sand and gravel will contribute to the reserve referred to under policy M4.

M8 Notwithstanding policy M2(b), the County Council will give sympathetic consideration to applications to extract brick clay which will be processed at the existing small local brickworks of the Chiltern Hills; but further extraction of Lower Oxford Clay will not be permitted in the foreseeable future unless particularly strong reasons exist.

M9 The extraction of any minerals will be permitted only if the proposed restoration and after-use of the site are appropriate and achievable. Conditions may therefore be imposed on any planning permission in order to achieve the restoration of the site to its former use or, where this is not desirable, to an appropriate alternative use. Conditions may additionally be imposed to secure the aftercare of the site for a period of five years or such longer period as the Secretary of State may allow from the completion of restoration. When considering restoration proposals, the County Council will also take account of factors (g) - (j) in policy M3.

M10 The County Council will encourage the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary, land-won sources. To this end, favourable consideration will be given to the provision of facilities for the recycling and handling of appropriate materials, in so far as there is no significant conflict with other relevant policies of this plan.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

WM1 The reduction of waste at source, by all producers, will be supported, including the recycling and reuse of waste products wherever practicable. To this end, the County Council will support the establishment of recycling and associated facilities in locations where there would be no significant adverse impact on the environment, and where they would be consistent with the other relevant policies of this plan.

WM2 Where it is impracticable to recycle or reuse waste, its reduction will be supported by appropriate means where this would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment.

WM3 The County Council will seek to ensure the provision of adequate capacity for the safe disposal of waste arising in Buckinghamshire. In addition, consideration will be given to accommodating a proportion of the waste requirements arising outside the County.

WM4 The County Council will generally support the disposal of waste which involves the filling of voids created by mineral extraction, where this enables such land to be returned to an appropriate after use as soon as practicable in accordance with the restoration and aftercare provisions of policies M3 and M9.

WM5 The practice of landraising will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, and provided that:

- a) the environment and visual amenity of the area would not be adversely affected by the proposed development;
- b) an appropriate after-use can be secured; and
- c) there is no reasonable alternative.

WM6 In considering applications for waste management facilities, including disposal sites, the County Council will have regard to the same principles as are set out in policies M2, M3 and M9 of this plan.

POLLUTION

P1 Having regard to the advice of the statutory pollution control authorities, permission will not be given for:-

- a) potentially polluting developments which would pose unacceptable risks to other land uses; or

b) developments which would be at an unacceptable risk from existing, or potential, sources of pollution.

In circumstances where development proposals may be able to satisfy relevant pollution control requirements, the local planning authorities may nonetheless withhold consent if, having regard to other social, economic and environmental factors, unacceptable risks are still considered to exist which cannot be overcome by appropriate planning conditions.

P2 Having regard to the most recent Government noise exposure recommendations or standards for the type of development in question, permission will not be given for:-

a) developments which would create an unacceptable increase in the ambient noise level of noise-sensitive developments such as homes, hospitals and schools: or

b) noise-sensitive developments such as homes, hospitals and schools in locations where they would be exposed to unacceptable levels of noise from existing, or potential, sources of such noise.

P3 The local planning authorities will support proposals for the reduction of aviation noise in Buckinghamshire. Any airport or airport-related development which would increase the level of aircraft noise will not be supported, unless the noise impacts are slight and clearly outweighed by any advantages which stem from other considerations.

P4 Proposals which involve the use or storage of controlled quantities of hazardous substances as defined in the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992, will only be allowed where they do not impose unacceptable risks on the local community. Similarly, development in close proximity to hazardous installations will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the level of risk to the potential occupants of the proposed development would be acceptable.

INFRASTRUCTURE

IN1 New residential, employment-generating, or other commercial development must be consistent with the availability of services, including road capacity, water and sewage infrastructure, public transport and, for residential development, schools, libraries, local shopping, recreational and health facilities and amenity open spaces. To this end:

a) those agencies with statutory responsibilities for the provision of infrastructure and services in Buckinghamshire will be expected to take into account the development proposals made in this plan when preparing their future investment programmes;

b) planning applications for the development of sites will be expected to be associated with the provision of, or contributions towards the provision of, infrastructure made necessary by, and commensurate with the development concerned, such provision to include on-site or off-site facilities directly related to the proposed use in the interests of comprehensive planning; and

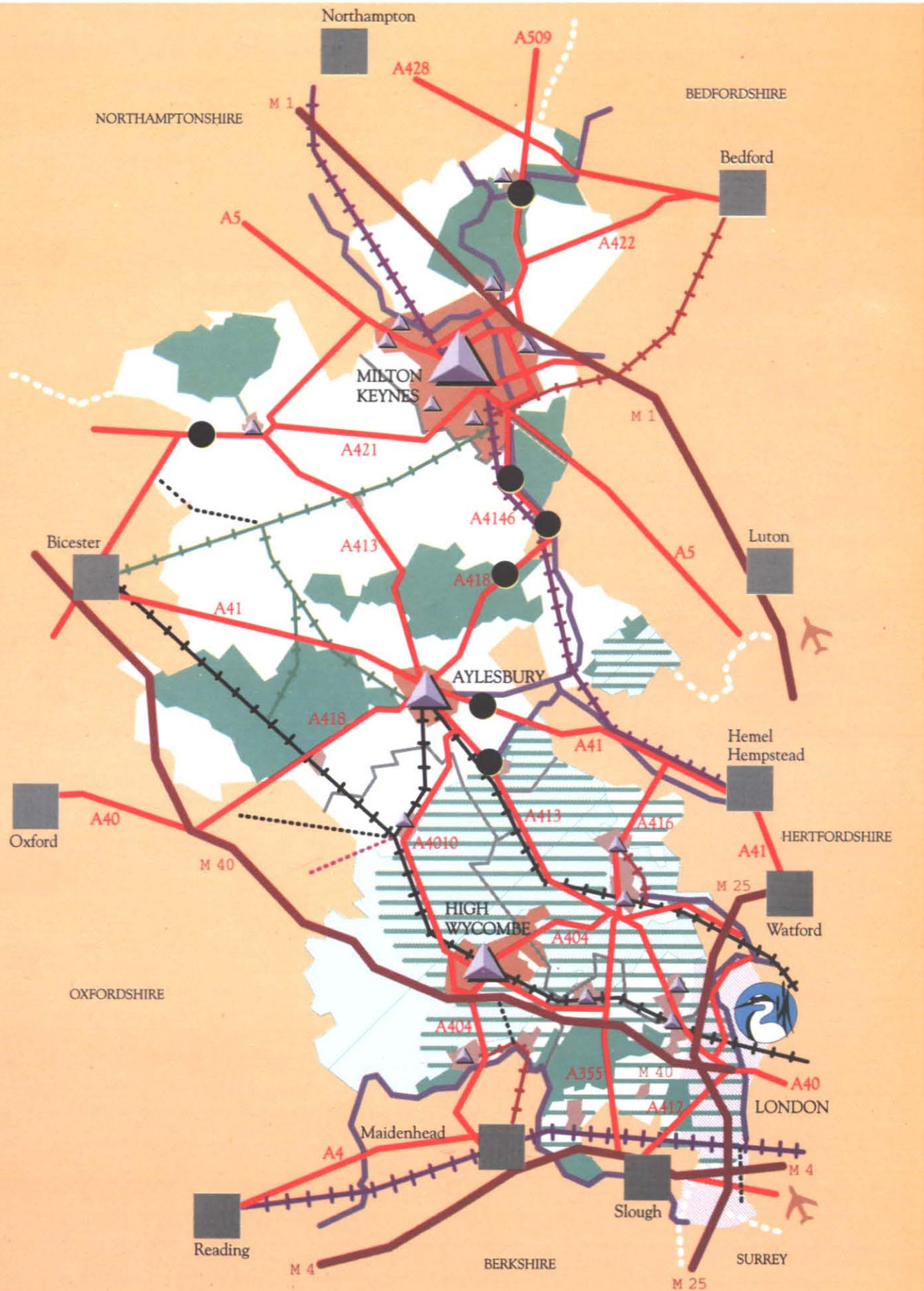
c) where existing infrastructure and services are inadequate, the local planning authorities should take into account any other options available for securing necessary improvements in making provision for new development in Local Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA1 In addition to those development proposals for which an Environmental Assessment is required under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the local planning authorities should, in appropriate circumstances, request the provision of adequate information about the environmental impact of particular schemes.

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991 - 2011

KEY DIAGRAM



- District Boundaries
- Strategic Growth Settlements
- Other Large Settlements
- Green Belt
- Open Countryside Beyond the Green Belt
- Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Areas of Attractive Landscape
- Colne Valley Regional Park
- Rivers & Canals

- ### STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK
- Motorways
 - Other Principal Routes

- ### COUNTY RAIL NETWORK
- Principal European & Intercity Routes
 - Other Principal Routes
 - Branch Line Routes
 - Routes with Potential for Restoration
 - Routes to be Safeguarded for Possible Rail Service Provision
 - Tourist & Community Railway

- Settlements Proposed to be Bypassed Within Plan Period
- Major Airports
- Emerging Regional Shopping Centre
- Sub-Regional Shopping Centre
- District Shopping Centre



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