

Dacorum Local Development Plan to 2041 (October 2024)

Meeting Citizens' Needs – not developers

Dacorum Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and has since prepared a Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. Accordingly, the Dacorum Local Development Plan includes as strategic objectives Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change and Conserving and Protecting the Natural Environment.

I welcome these ambitions and kindly suggest the creation of a set of requirements that **MUST** guarantee the implementation of those strategies, government requirements (many of them reflected in the Dacorum Local Plan to 2041) but most importantly in procurement when the selection of developers and contractors take place before the construction phase.

Can then Dacorum Borough Council answer these questions:

- How can our local communities have the certainty that all the sustainable requirements are respected and implemented?
- Is the council responsible for procurement setting the requirements to bid to select sustainable practices firms? Can you make developers accountable and deliver what required?
- New developments should improve in the longer term the transition to Net Zero by 2050 if not earlier, so we believe that reclaimed land for restoration of Chilterns natural ecosystems should be part of the strategy in addition to the 20% of land for green spaces. Is that possible?
- What agency has the borough council to guarantee affordable and council housing? Otherwise, who has that agency? Government? Please explain.
- What agency has the borough council to stop developments for developers' benefit instead of people's benefit? Otherwise, who has that agency? Government? Please explain.

These a set of requirements suggestions which can apply to all selected sites:

Type of housing, infrastructures and services

- **Prioritise building on Brownfield Sites, then greenbelt.** Identify location of brownfield sites and start construction there.
- **Social Housing next priority** – The priority should be to build Social Housing –what citizens want and most need, guaranteeing they remain as social housing or are replaced with similar if not.
- **Then prioritise affordable Housing** – I propose that the greatest part of the new development (80%) are affordable housing with guarantee that they remain affordable

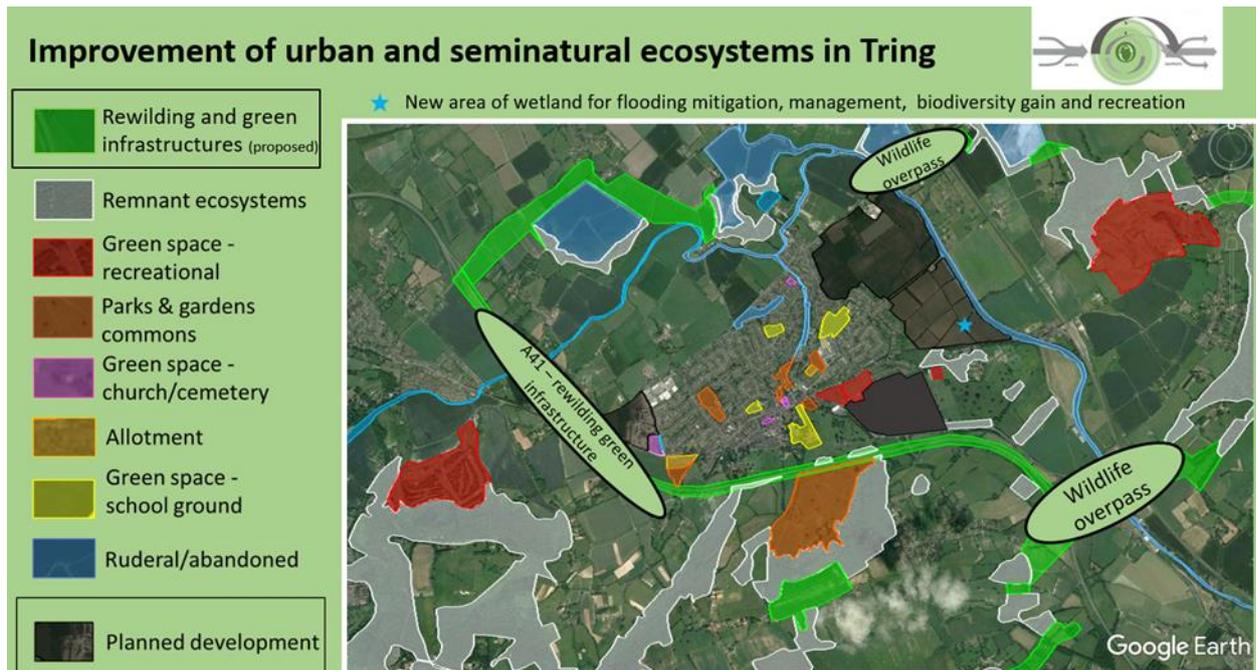
well below the market price for those most in need: young and old people with lower incomes.

- **Infrastructures to support development** must be guaranteed from design phase and implemented during housing construction. This should include new transport infrastructure, schools, health care and open spaces, new and upgraded current infrastructure must keep pace with the delivery of new homes.
- **Clear plan for Public Transport (bus and rail) infrastructure** ensuring clean (electric) service, adapted for those with disabilities and good connection within the town to services and elsewhere. Local new buses should be electric and old ones substituted gradually to electric. Consider a tram from Tring town to the Station and study to extend to Berkhamsted.
- **Creation/development/extension of high street and business areas** for the largest areas to be developed to ensure that enough local businesses can be established to deliver goods and services to the increase of population favouring community and cultural thrive (cinema, theatre). Avoid just dormitory neighbourhoods.
- Development of **modern and sustainable community centres**, leisure and sports facilities for the youth as well as community gardens in the new areas.

Nature

- All **trees and hedges** shall be preserved and the development design shall work around that.
- **20% or more of the land** subject to development shall be dedicated to **green spaces** that ensure an increase of diversity.
- Land adjacent to the Chilterns AONB to be **restored as a seminatural woodland** ecosystem to increase biodiversity and decrease the pressure of semi-natural ecosystems with the increase of population, as part of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) to be delivered by local authorities (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategies/local-nature-recovery-strategies>)
- Build **Nature/green bridges infrastructures** to connect fragmented ecosystems within the area, particularly for the Chiltern Woodlands. Give back to Nature.
- Land located in **flood prone areas** shall be partially **transformed into wetlands for recreation** in the new built areas to manage rainwater excess as an adaptation intervention to climate change and as part of LNRS to be delivered by local authorities.
- Restore **seminatural woodland ecosystems along the A41** to mitigate flooding and noise pollution from traffic as part of LNRS to be delivered by local authorities.

Examples of local Green Infrastructures and Sustainable landscaping (Tring)



Housing Design

- Majority of housing to be **flats of no more than 4 stories**, particularly near the station to ensure affordable connected housing for young people.
- There should be a **proportion of gardens to flat and houses** guaranteeing mental and physical/health and increase in biodiversity.
- **Construction materials to be sustainable** eg: timber, hempcrete, straw bales and miscanthus, minimising the use of concrete and sourced as locally as possible. Construction industry is amongst the highest emitters in the UK.
- **Energy** for the new houses shall be of **renewable sources**: solar, wind and heat pumps and or Passive Housing standards when possible. No use of fossil fuels for heating and cooling.
- Houses and community designs could include infrastructure to **charge electric cars and batteries for energy store**.

Examples of Sustainable Designs for affordable housing in the UK:

- [HTA Design | Hanham Hall](#)



- [Architype / Springhill Co-Housing / The UK's Leading Passivhaus, Sustainable Architects](#)



- [Woodstock North – GHA Knowledge Base \(goodhomes.org.uk\)](#)



Image credit: Pollard Thomas Edwards

- [Affordable Housing Builder: Transforming Communities - Agile Property](#)



- ['HOPE RISE' — Zero Carbon Affordable Homes from ZED PODS](#)

