Core Strategy

Draft Issues and Options Paper

Draft as at 16th March 2007

CORE STRATEGY – ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER

Contents

- 2 -

Contact details…

Introduction

This document is the 'Core Strategy – Issues and Options Paper', which is part of the first stage of consultation in preparing an adopted Core Strategy covering Luton and South Bedfordshire.

What is the Core Strategy? How does it relate to other plans?
The Local Development Framework (LDF) is part of the new generation of plans that determine where development will take place and what form it will take. It will replace the existing Local Plans and Structure Plan for the area. A Joint Local Development Scheme (LDS) prepared for Luton and South Bedfordshire contains more detail about the various elements of the LDF, and how they all fit together within the new planning system. The 'Further Information and Links' section at the back of this document tells you where you can find the Joint LDS, and other publications or resources referred to in this document.

This document is the 'Issues and Options Paper', which is the first stage of consultation in preparing an adopted 'Core Strategy and Key Diagram' for the Luton and South Bedfordshire Growth Area. The Core Strategy is one of the Development Plan Documents that are part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). When adopted, the Core Strategy will set out a spatial vision for the area and the broad development principles and proposals that will help achieve that vision over the coming years. Importantly, the discussions in this paper are not site specific at this stage; rather they seek to develop broad principles. Specific development sites for different land uses will be considered as part of the Growth Area DPD, which will be the next document to be produced.

The Core Strategy and the LDF must comply with regional and national Government plans whilst helping to respond to the needs and aspirations identified in local Community Strategies. As such we need to make sure the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy match these other strategies, particularly the three local community strategies produced, and soon to be revised and replaced, for Bedfordshire, Luton and South Bedfordshire.

Structure of this document
The first section of this document reviews the strategic and local context of the planning agenda in this area, and identifies a profile of issues that are important for Luton and South Bedfordshire.

The remainder of this document then discusses the identified issues in more detail and presents some options to answer the big questions that we need to think about for the way development in Luton and South Bedfordshire should be planned over the next decade and beyond. Many of the issues and options raised in this paper are intrinsically linked, and cannot be properly considered in isolation. However, to help focus your thoughts and understand some of the options that could assist in delivering the proposed growth, we have split our discussions of them into the sections set out below, with links between them drawn out as necessary.

The final pages of the paper are the questionnaire, containing a set of questions which we want your thoughts on. Please read through the whole of the document before answering these questions so you can get an overview of all the issues raised. You can answer as many or as few of the questions as you feel able to, as any feedback you give us is useful. Details of how to send your responses back to us are included with the questionnaire.

Context, Vision and Objectives

Strategic Context

'The Sustainable Communities Plan' and Growth Areas
Luton and South Bedfordshire has a challenging future ahead, with great opportunities to make improvements to the quality of our towns, villages and countryside through increased investment in facilities and infrastructure. This opportunity stems from the Government's growth agenda, which looks to develop a 'step-change' in housing supply, development and investments in the south east of England, to tackle the issue of affordability and economic disparities. In 2003, the Government published a document called 'Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future', known as the Sustainable Communities Plan, which aims to deliver this growth where it is most sustainable and where it could have the greatest economic and regeneration benefit on existing communities. Four growth areas in the wider south-east were identified, including the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area, which incorporates Luton and South Bedfordshire.

While delivering the growth is a very challenging task and much attention has been paid to the large housing figures, the Government stresses that growth shouldn't just be seen as building houses. It is also about improving the quality of life for local communities by using the increased development opportunities and investment that growth at this large scale provides, to improve the local economy and assist regeneration. This Issues and Options Paper discusses some of the challenges and issues that we face in deciding how to deliver and maximise this growth in Luton and South Bedfordshire, and asks for your thoughts on the possible options for the way forward.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy
In 2005, more guidance on the detail of our growth area was given in the 'Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy', also known as MKSMSRS. This document emphasised the potential benefits of growth for the local economy of Luton, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade which under-performs relative to other areas in the east and south-east of England, and has failed to attract investment in recent years. This has resulted in relatively high levels of unemployment, low income and pockets of deprivation. The MKSMSRS also recognised the potential that growth could have on funding transport infrastructure improvements, and regenerating the town centres and the most deprived communities.

The MKSMSRS (p12) says the following about the growth in this area:

> "*Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis, where the emphasis should be on building the principal growth towns into a vibrant, culturally diversified conurbation with a major improvement in the local economy and skills base, and capacity to meet housing need. This should be achieved through economic regeneration across the urban area, making the most of its location close to London and other economic drivers in the South East and its good transport links. Leighton Linslade will absorb a proportion of the growth allocated to Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis in a way that complements these aims and makes the most of its location between Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis and Milton Keynes.*"

The MKSMSRS says that 26,300 additional homes should be provided in Luton and South Bedfordshire in the period up to 2021, and an additional 15,400 by 2031. The East of England Plan also requires some 1,000 dwellings be provided in South Bedfordshire (outside Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade). The purpose of this 'residual' figure is to encourage housing provision in rural areas, particularly affordable housing. Alongside this, we

need to deliver adequate employment opportunities. The emerging East of England Plan says that would mean about 23,000 extra jobs up to 2021, and a further 12,000 to 2031.

A lot of people don't want to see high level of house-building in Luton and South Bedfordshire, but it is now a part of the statutory planning framework and the Government's plans for the region and we have to determine where the development will go and what form it will take. What we can do, with the help of local communities and other stakeholders, is make sure the growth is delivered in the most sustainable way, and maximise the benefits it is intended to achieve for the area and its existing and future residents, workers and visitors.

Joint-working

Because of the joined-up nature of Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis, which effectively form a single conurbation, and the growth that needs to be delivered across Luton and South Bedfordshire, it has been decided that Luton Borough Council and South Bedfordshire District Council, plus Bedfordshire County Council, should work jointly to prepare a Local Development Framework for the whole area. Officers from the three councils are working together to prepare the documents that will make up the LDF and undertake the research and evidence gathering to back it up. All planning policy documents now need to be prepared and adopted by the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Planning and Transportation Committee, made up of Members of the three councils. Development Control decisions on planning applications are still determined by the individual councils.

Local Context

Luton and South Bedfordshire clearly has a challenging future ahead with lots of opportunities but it is important that we don't ignore other important local issues. This section looks at some of these and the challenges that they present.

Meeting Housing Needs

Achieving the MKSMSRS and East of England Plan housing target in a sustainable way is a significant planning challenge for this area but the quantity of housing is not the only housing issue. Two other issues are important: affordability and type of housing. In terms of affordability, relative to other parts of the east and south east regions, the cost of purchasing a house in Luton and South Bedfordshire is much closer to the national average, at 4 times the average local salary. However, house prices have been identified to be rising quickly, particularly in Luton and there is still a significant need to provide affordable housing for those people in the community who struggle to afford a decent home, either to buy or rent.

There is currently a national trend of increasing numbers of smaller households because of, amongst other reasons, changes in social preferences, increasing divorce rates and people living longer. This trend is predicted to continue and a there is a need for more one and two bedroom properties to meet this demand. In addition, a need has also been identified for 3-bedroom properties in South Bedfordshire and 4- and 5-plus bedroom dwellings in Luton. Responding to these existing needs, in addition to meeting the predicted needs of future residents from the growth proposals, is therefore an important issue.

Improving the Local Economy

Like most of England, Luton and South Bedfordshire have experienced a significant decline in the manufacturing sector with a number of large companies reducing or ceasing activity in the area. However, unlike some other areas, Luton and South Bedfordshire still retain a relatively high

proportion of manufacturing employment, with around 12% of the 2005 workforce in such jobs, and the towns continue to attract manufacturing firms.

Although the economy has diversified into some of the growing sectors of banking, finance and public administration, the real challenge that faces Luton and South Bedfordshire is continuing this diversification. A successful response to this issue will contribute to a more stable and expanding local economy, a priority that remains important for Luton and South Bedfordshire.

Improving Transport and Relieving Congestion

Congestion is a frequently identified issue, particularly on the main routes into and out of the towns, within the town centres and along the A5, especially when there are problems on the M1. Car-based commuting and HGV traffic are significant causes of this congestion. The impact of congestion on the environment, health, safety and the local economy means that viable alternatives to car-travel, improvements to the public transport network and the introduction of strategic roads to relieve congestion, must be delivered.

Responding to Income and Employment Deprivation

A significant issue for Luton and South Bedfordshire is that of multiple deprivation. Luton is ranked 101st most deprived local authority area out of 354 in England. In terms of income and employment deprivation Luton is ranked 69th out of 354. Unemployment levels in Luton are also 2% higher than the national average (at 7.3% in Luton), and particularly acute amongst males and ethnic minority groups, making Luton 82nd out of 354 local authorities in England, in terms of unemployment. South Bedfordshire suffers less in terms of deprivation and unemployment but importantly, as in Luton, there are concentrated areas of deprivation within a number of wards in the towns.

Building and Improving Communities and Developing Local Distinctiveness

The provision of and access to a wide range of opportunities, activities and facilities for people of all ages can help develop a sense of belonging and sense of community, particularly where different social groups meet and share experiences. The diversity in the Luton and South Bedfordshire townscape, natural environment, and social and cultural assets provide significant opportunities to develop and celebrate local distinctiveness. The LDF will help to ensure that buildings and public spaces are promoted and improved.

Safeguarding and Improving the Natural Environment

The countryside around our towns and villages is highly cherished. On the edge of Luton and throughout the rest of South Bedfordshire there are a number of areas designated and protected for their landscape or nature conservation value, and the whole of South Bedfordshire outside of the towns and villages is green belt. Many of these areas are well maintained and provide good access to recreation areas for the nearby communities. In other areas there is scope to improve and enhance the quality and access to such areas. Balancing the protection, enhancement and access to these areas with the significant growth proposed is both an important issue and an opportunity.

Community Safety

Crime is above the national average in Luton and South Bedfordshire, particularly vehicle and racially related crime. The fear of crime can also be very important and policies in our LDF will help to ensure that new developments are suitably designed to help reduce the opportunity for crime and, as a result, fear of crime.

Changing Population Profile

Currently, Luton and South Bedfordshire have a greater proportion of young people, particularly those aged under 15, in comparison to the national and regional averages. In contrast, the number of people in older age groups is at or below the national average, particularly those aged over 60. The scale of the growth envisaged could potentially alter the population profile of Luton and South Bedfordshire but it is important that the needs of this relatively young population are considered, particularly with regard to education and leisure.

Health

The quality of health continues to improve but there remains a significant gap between the health of our residents living in more deprived areas and the rest of the area. Improving the health of our population requires an improvement to housing quality and access to employment, transport, leisure and open space as well as access to high quality health services. The LDF will focus on ensuring that such facilities and services are located appropriately and enhanced where possible.

Learning and Skills

In an economy in which employers are constantly seeking higher qualified employees, gaining qualifications is becoming increasingly important. In Luton and South Bedfordshire there are wide disparities in education achievement between different parts of the authorities. Providing access to high quality, well-located and well-resourced education and learning facilities will be important and the growth provides significant opportunity to consolidate, expand and improve existing facilities and also develop new high-quality facilities.

Sustainable Community Strategies and the Vision for Luton and South Bedfordshire

As noted above, LDFs must help to respond to the local issues and achieve local ambitions contained within the local Community Strategies produced by the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) of South Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire and Luton. In particular, the LDF will need to assist in delivering these Strategies and their visions and objectives by identifying and encouraging the implementation of spatial solutions. The existing community strategies are being reviewed and will shortly be replaced by Sustainable Community Strategies. They will each contain a new vision and set of objectives for their areas.

To ensure consistency across the different documents it is anticipated that consultation on this document will be undertaken in conjunction with that for one or more Sustainable Community Strategies with the Core Strategy vision for Luton and South Bedfordshire developed in partnership with LSPs.

Objectives

Whilst there is, as yet, no agreed vision for the future of the area as a whole, a set of objectives has been formulated which will help the emerging vision to be achieved. These are listed below:

Environmental

o Protecting and enhancing the natural, cultural and historic environment of Luton and South Bedfordshire
o Reducing the consumption of natural resources; including agricultural land, minerals and fossil fuels
o Managing waste in a sustainable way and reducing pollution; including CO_2 emissions, water, air and soil pollution
o Improving the attractiveness of urban areas

o   Promoting a safe and healthy environment
o   Promoting public transport, cycling and walking in Luton and South Bedfordshire, to reduce the need to travel by car, thereby reducing congestion and motorised transport's contribution to greenhouse gases
o   Accommodating the demand for telecommunications and accommodating future energy needs

Social
o   Making adequate and appropriate provision for sport, leisure and community development and green space to meet local community needs
o   Providing for local housing needs; including those necessary to meet special and affordable housing needs
o   Ensuring provision is made for those with special needs
o   Providing a full range of services and ensuring easy access to local facilities
o   Providing a range of educational opportunities to enable people to realise their preferred learning and training potential

Economic
o   Retaining the sub-regional shopping role of Luton and maintaining the vitality and viability of all the town centres and other shopping areas, whilst meeting the shopping needs of residents
o   Providing opportunities for the creation of new and the expansion or relocation of existing businesses which will expand the diversity of the local economy
o   Ensuring best use is made of our economic resources; people, land and buildings, whilst respecting the environment

The Issues
The key focus for this consultation document is discussion of those issues with the greatest spatial implications and those that planning can have the greatest influence on. These discussions will be supplemented and supported by further consultation in partnership with the LSPs as they progress their Community Strategies, along with discussions of other issues outlined above.
Many of the issues are interrelated and so we have split our discussions of them into the following 5 main issues, with links between them drawn out as necessary:

Issue 1   Where should the development go?
Issue 2   Where will people work? And in what sort of jobs?
Issue 3   How will people travel?
Issue 4   What role will our town centre have?
Issue 5   What sort of housing should we be planning? What can we do to make development more environmentally friendly?

Issue 1   Where will the development go?

As discussed in the background to this paper, delivering the growth and maximising its opportunities is our major challenge and will require a significant amount of land to be developed over the next few decades. Where this development will go is one of the most difficult and yet most important questions we need to answer.

What does MKSMSRS say about where development should be located?
The urban areas of Luton and South Bedfordshire are tightly bound by the green belt. The MKSMSRS recognises the significant capacity within the existing urban areas to provide some of the land that is required for new development, and encourages this to be maximised. However, it also states that in order to accommodate the scale of housing growth and associated development, a review of our green belt boundaries is required to allow sufficient 'headroom' for potential development needs in the form of sustainable mixed-use urban extensions to 2031 (MKSMSRS, p24).

The MKSMSRS says this review should

> "*focus on two areas of search which would exclude the Chilterns AONB [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty]: from west of Dunstable to the A6 in the north; and to the east and south east of Luton, south of the A505 and east of the B653. In the case of Leighton Linslade, there should be a comprehensive review of the Green Belt and of all the options for urban extensions*" (MKSMSRS, p24).

The required level of development at Leighton Linslade will depend on the scale of the growth to be accommodated around Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis.

The next section aims to determine where the future urban extensions should be located, within the MKSMSRS main areas of search in response to the above considerations.   To do this, we first need to establish how much land is required for this future development, by thinking about how much land is available for development within the towns, and what facilities and services will be included alongside housing developments and how much land they need.

How much development do we need to find space for?
The 4,400 homes already built between 2001 and 2006 count towards meeting the MKSMSRS target of delivering 41,700 new homes by 2031. Also, investigations into the capacity within the existing urban areas (to be tested by the forthcoming Urban Capacity Study) show there is potential for between 13,000 and 19,000 homes to be built on sites within our towns, depending on the density that the homes are built at (i.e. how many dwellings are built within a set area). Therefore, sufficient land needs to be found for urban extensions to accommodate the remaining 18,300 to 24,300 homes up to 2031 and associated development to go alongside them. Because of the number of homes that need to be built on greenfield sites, outside of the existing urban areas, it is very unlikely that we will be able to meet the Government target that at least 60% of new dwellings should be built on previously developed land.

In addition to calculating how many homes we need in the urban extensions, we have also done some work to calculate the land needed to build community facilities, shops, schools and employment premises to support the housing development, which is shown in Appendix 1. Using these figures, we have calculated the minimum and maximum amounts of land that will be needed, taking into account the capacity within the existing urban area and the density at which development could be built. This identified a requirement to develop **between 730 and 1,350 hectares of land**.

What considerations do we need to think about?

Now that we know the broad areas for development we have been guided to look at, and the amount of land required, we need to think about the other considerations that could influence development potential and what sort of urban extensions we plan and how these help us achieve our objectives. This includes the following, some of which are shown on Map 1:

o Some potential development areas are closer to the town centre and other existing facilities, and may have better access by public transport, thereby reducing the need to travel long distances, particularly by car;

o Some areas have protective designations and sensitive landscape features which will need to be considered in detailed design work (possibly by avoiding development in that specific area), and might restrict the levels of development that can take place around them. However, there may be potential for such areas to be used as managed open space for new developments;

o Smaller urban extensions might be developed quicker than larger ones, but may not be able to sustain all services and facilities that a new community might need, although this may create potential to improve and develop facilities in adjacent existing communities;

o It is possible that development could be spread across all the possible locations, but this might not provide the 'critical mass' that is provided by a larger population in one place to deliver new local facilities;

o Building homes at higher densities (for example 50 dwellings per hectare) will mean less land is needed than a development of the same number of homes built at lower densities (for example 30 dwellings per hectare);

o Having a fixed and visible boundary forming the edge of the green belt, for example a road, gives more permanence and confidence that the boundary is a long-term feature.

o Careful design will be needed to deal with some unattractive or difficult features in the landscape, for example pylon lines, the motorway, railway lines, airport noise or areas at risk of flooding;

Different responses to these considerations will result in various ways in which these urban extensions could be planned and delivered. For example, we could concentrate on developing a large number of smaller urban extensions, which could be delivered quicker than larger extensions. Alternatively, having a smaller number of large urban extensions could mean that more facilities are provided in the new developments, with a larger resident population to make their services more viable.

Other possibilities include focusing some of the development in extensions to our villages, although this might change the character of these areas. Another is some limited amount of development in an acceptable location within the AONB. This could bring substantial benefits in terms of developer-funded infrastructure and provision of a country park. Or we could consider a new or expanded settlement, almost like a mini-new town, but this would take a long time to deliver and may not comply with the guidance for the Luton and South Bedfordshire Growth Area contained within the MKSMSRS.

What follows is an attempt to present different options to accommodate growth and meet the land requirement identified by combining possible locations for these urban extensions, or 'potential areas for development' based on the MKSMSRS areas of search with the exception of Area M and the potential village expansions. These are shown in Map 1 (Areas A-M). Please note that these 'potential areas for development' are based on preliminary work and are subject to further testing of capacity and constraints (see Appendix 1).

The Options

By combining the 'potential areas for development' we have created five possible alternative approaches to how the development could be distributed and created ten **options** that could meet these land requirements. These are presented below (Maps 2.1-2.10) with a brief discussion of the opportunities and challenges of each option.

These illustrative options are not exclusive or exhaustive as there are numerous ways the 'potential areas for development' could be combined. This is our attempt to piece them together to meet the growth target, in accordance with the guidance in MKSMSRS and the possible responses to the considerations that could influence the locations of development, as outlined above. As you can see there is scope to alter the size of the 'potential areas of development', so depending on the overall land requirement, some areas could increase or decrease in size.

Illustrative Options for Development	Minimum land-take	Maximum land-take
Development limited to within the bypasses	Option 1	Option 2
Development not limited to within the bypasses	Option 3	Option 4
Maximise proximity to town centres and main employment areas	Option 5	Option 6
Wide distributional spread	Option 7	Option 8
Development Focused on Luton	Option 9	Option 10

Minimum land-take – assumes high urban capacity and high density development
Maximum land-take – assumes low urban capacity and low density development
See Appendix 1 for all assumptions and calculations.

Map 1 – Potential Areas for Development

OPTIONS

- Potential areas for development (indicative)
- Potential village expansion areas (indicative)
- Proposed road scheme (funding committed)
- Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)
- Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

- Existing Major Development Area
- Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Flood Plain
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Area of Great Landscape Value
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

- Town Centres
- Local Authority Boundaries

Option 1 - Development limited to within the bypasses - minimum land-take.

Concentrates development in the main areas of search, and within the bypasses

OPTIONS

Map 2.1 - Option 1

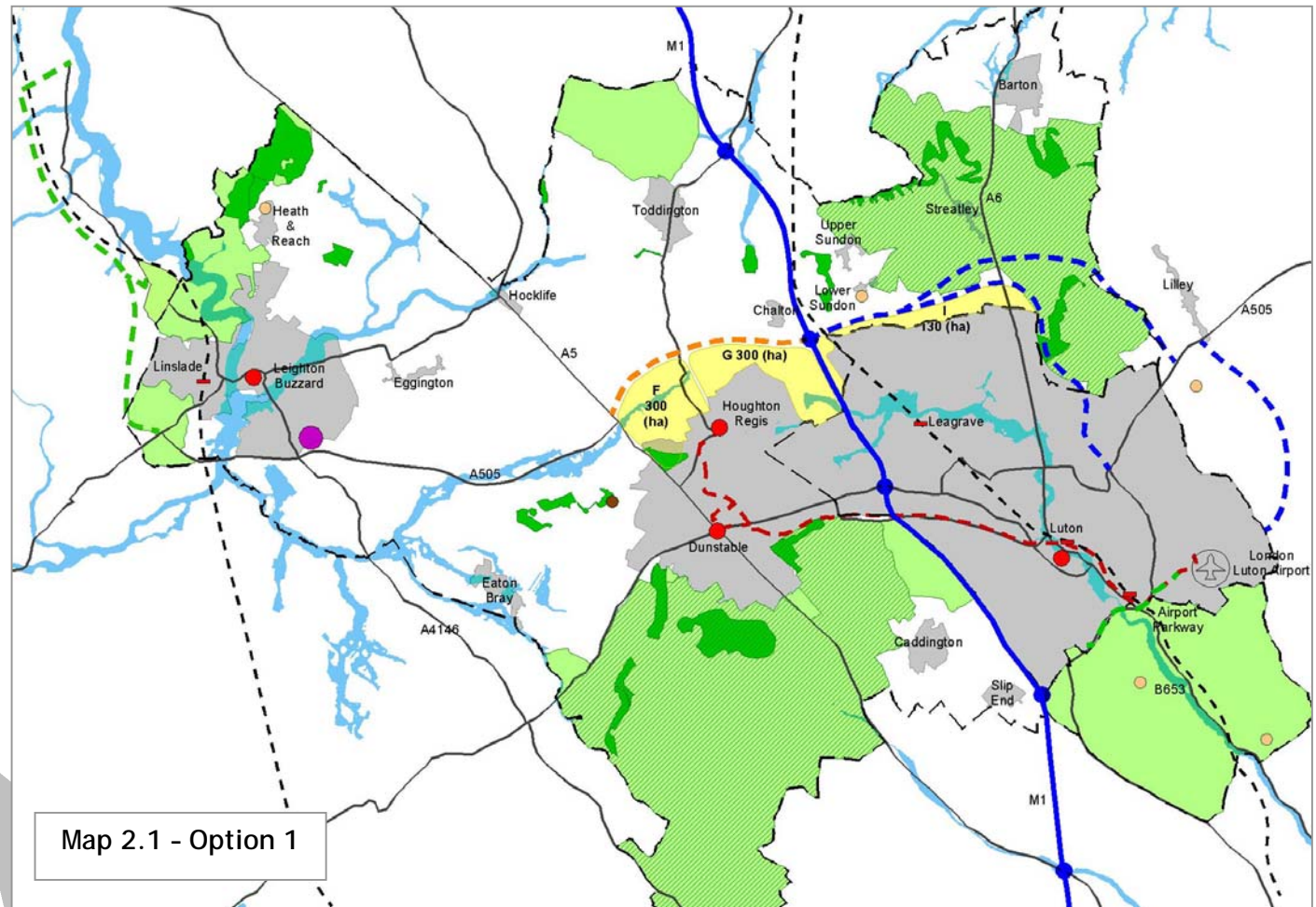| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 1	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 1
- Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis area with some development at Leighton Linslade as required by MKSMSRS. - This area could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport - The bypass gives a hard edge to development and a more defensible Green Belt boundary and helping to prevent development spreading further. - Potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern bypass which currently has no funding agreed. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent to Junction 11a in areas G and I	- It may be considered premature to consider development of area F and G until completion of A5-M1 link (scheduled completion 2016). - Development of areas F, G and I will exacerbate traffic congestion in Houghton Regis and Dunstable in the absence of provision of access from the A5-M1 link. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G, I and particularly L. - Is exclusively large scale developments which may be more difficult to implement quickly due to their complexity. - Potential funding problems for the Eastern Luton Bypass as area L not developed.

Option 2 - Development limited to within the bypasses - maximum land-take.

Concentrates development in the main areas of search, and within the bypasses

Map 2.2 - Option 2

OPTIONS

	Potential areas for development (indicative)
- - -	Proposed road scheme (funding committed)
- - -	Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)
- - -	Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

●	Existing Major Development Area
- - -	Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

●	Scheduled Anceint Monuments
	Flood Plain
○	Historic Parks and Gardens
	Area of Great Landscape Value
	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

●	Town Centres
	Local Authority Boundaries

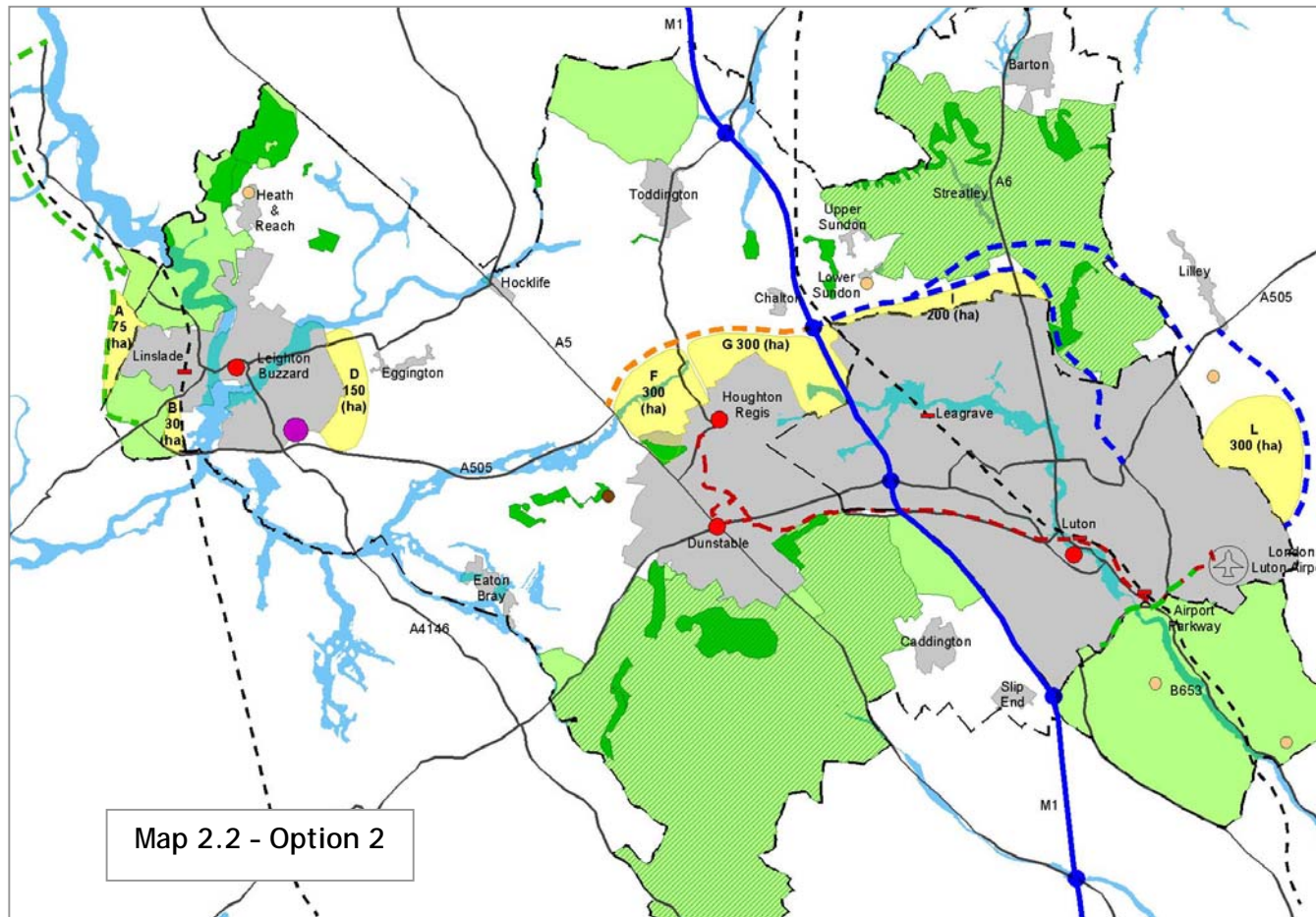| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 2	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 2
- Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis area with some at Leighton Linslade as required by MKSMSRS. - Areas F, G, I could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - The bypasses give a hard edge to development and a more defensible Green Belt boundary and helping to prevent development spreading further. - Potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern bypass and East Luton bypass which currently have no funding agreed. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent to Junction 11a in areas G and I and the airport in area L - Mix of large and small developments increases potential for steady housing supply through to 2031.	- Potential implementation issues with North Hertfordshire and Aylesbury Vale as they lie outside the area covered by the JPTC. - It may be considered premature to consider development of area F and G until completion of A5-M1 link (scheduled completion 2016). - Development of areas F, G & I will exacerbate traffic congestion in Houghton Regis and Dunstable in the absence of provision of access from the A5-M1 link. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G, I, D and L. - Limited potential to link area A, B and D to Translink scheme and its public transport qualities.

Option 3 – Development beyond bypasses – minimum land-take.

Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis area, developing beyond the bypasses

OPTIONS

- ☐ Potential areas for development (indicative)
- - - Proposed road scheme (funding committed)
- ▬ ▬ Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)
- - - Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

- ● Existing Major Development Area
- - - Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

- ● Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- ☐ Flood Plain
- ○ Historic Parks and Gardens
- ☐ Area of Great Landscape Value
- ▨ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- ☐ Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

- ● Town Centres
- ◇ Local Authority Boundaries

Map 2.3 – Option 3

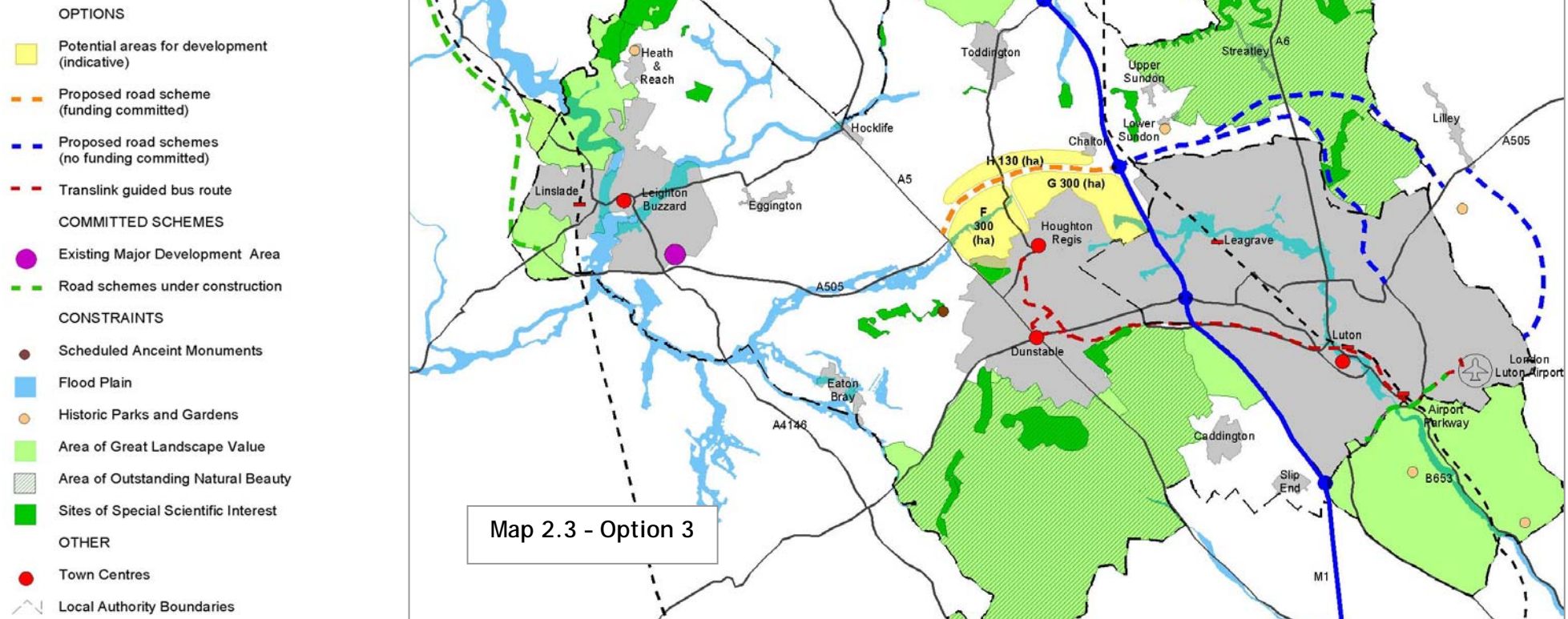| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 3	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 3
- Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis area as required by MKSMSRS. - Areas F & G could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - Development in H capitalises on development of F, G increasing viability of any new and existing services and facilities. - Concentrates the impact of development in one area. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent to Junction 11a in areas G and H	- Difficulty in achieving appropriate level of connectivity across the bypass between areas H & F & G - It may be considered premature to consider development of area F and G until completion of A5-M1 link (scheduled completion 2016). - Development of areas F, G & H will exacerbate traffic congestion in Houghton Regis and Dunstable in the absence of provision of access from the A5-M1 link. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G and H. - Absence of a firm edge and Green Belt boundary and potential for continued expansion as a result. - Potential funding problems for North Luton or East Luton bypass as L and I not developed. - No development at Leighton Linslade to improve its sustainability. - Is exclusively large-scale developments which may be more difficult to implement quickly due to their complexity thereby reducing potential for steady housing supply to 2031.

Option 4 – Development beyond bypasses – maximum land-take.

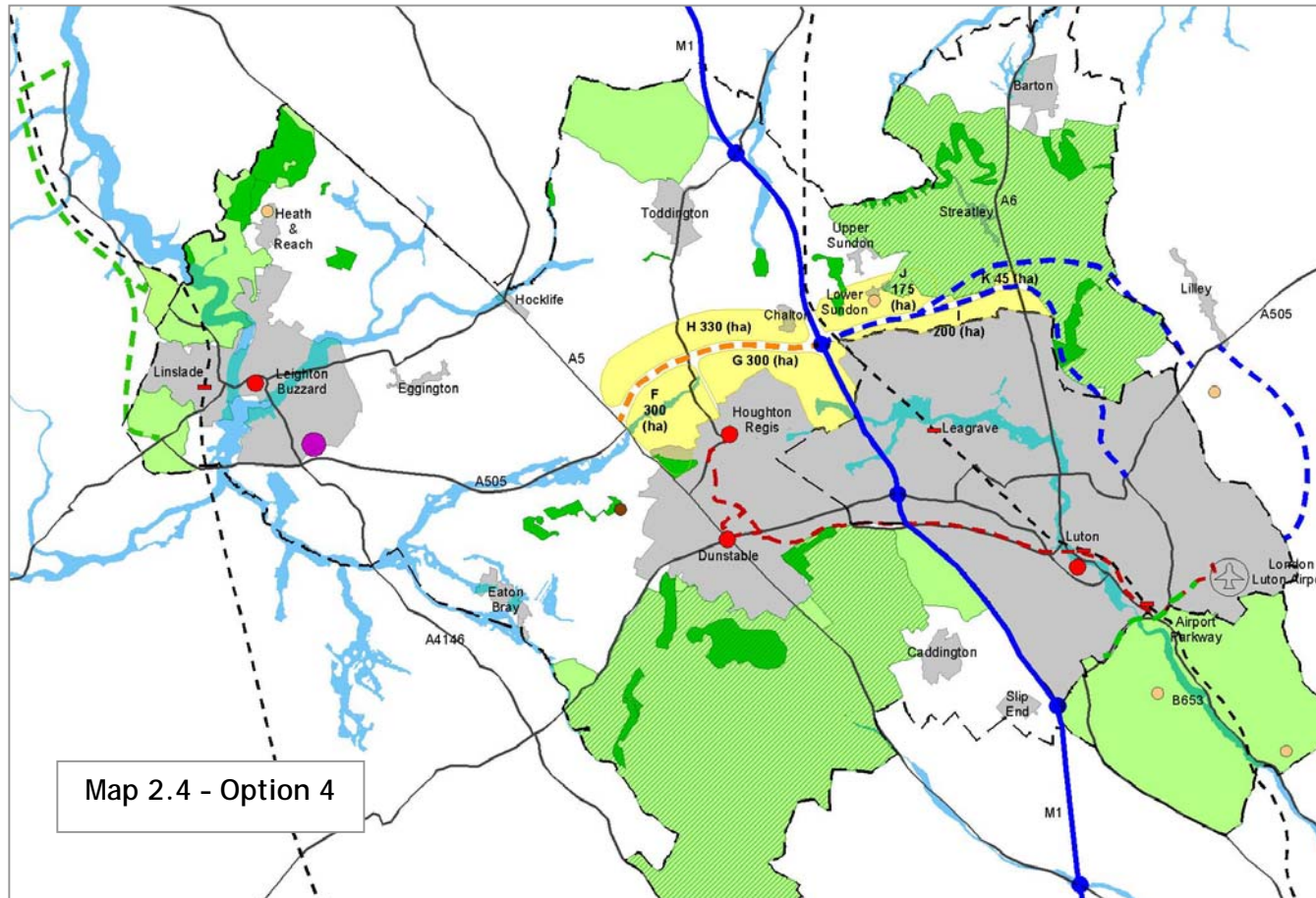Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/ Houghton Regis area, developing beyond the bypasses

Map 2.4 – Option 4

OPTIONS

- Potential areas for development (indicative)
- Proposed road scheme (funding committed)
- Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)
- Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

- Existing Major Development Area
- Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

- Scheduled Anceint Monuments
- Flood Plain
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Area of Great Landscape Value
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

- Town Centres
- Local Authority Boundaries

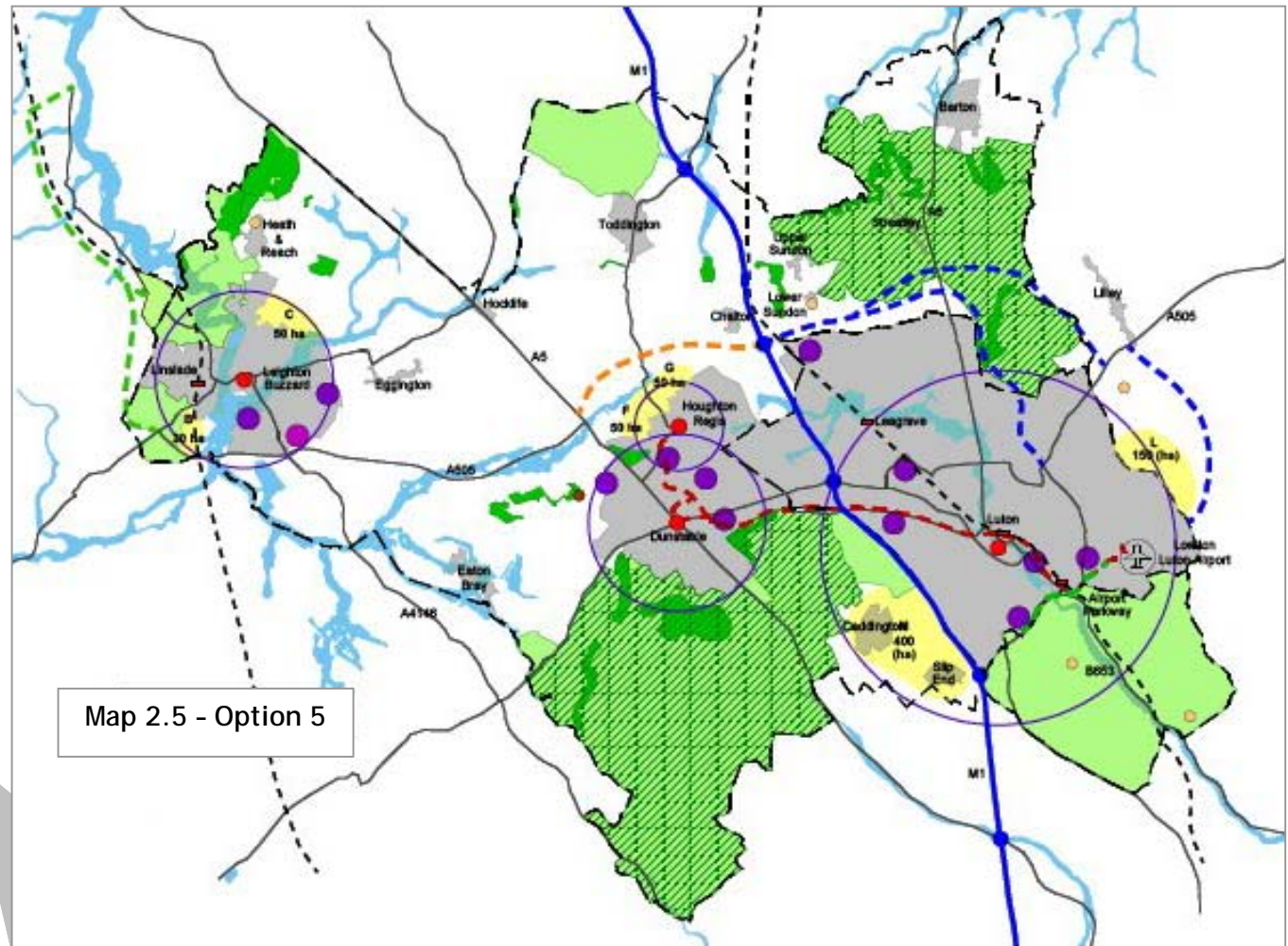| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 4	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 4
- Focuses development in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis area with some at Leighton Linslade as required by MKSMSRS. - Areas F, G, I could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - The bypasses give a hard edge to development and a more defensible Green Belt boundary and helping to prevent development spreading further. - Potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern bypass and East Luton bypass which currently have no funding agreed. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent to Junction 11a in areas G and I and the airport in area L	- Difficulty in achieving appropriate level of connectivity across the bypass between areas H and F and G, and J and K and I. - It may be considered premature to consider development of area F and G until completion of A5-M1 link (scheduled completion 2016). - Development of areas F, G, H, J & I will exacerbate traffic congestion in Houghton Regis and Dunstable in the absence of provision of access from the A5-M1 link. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G and H. - Absence of a firm edge and Green Belt boundary and potential for continued expansion as a result. - Potential funding problem for North Luton or East Luton bypass as I and L not developed - No development at Leighton Linslade to improve its sustainability. - Largely large scale developments which may be more difficult to implement quickly due to their complexity thereby reducing potential for steady housing supply.

Option 5 – Development focused on proximity to town centres and main employment areas- minimum land-take.

Focuses development in those areas with the closest proximity to the town centres and the main employment areas

OPTIONS

☐ Potential areas for development (indicative)

– – Proposed road scheme (funding committed)

– – Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)

– – Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

● Existing Major Development Area

– – Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

● Scheduled Ancient Monuments

☐ Flood Plain

○ Historic Parks and Gardens

☐ Area of Great Landscape Value

☐ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

☐ Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

● Town Centres

⌒ Local Authority Boundaries

● Main Employment Areas

⌒ Town Centre Catchments
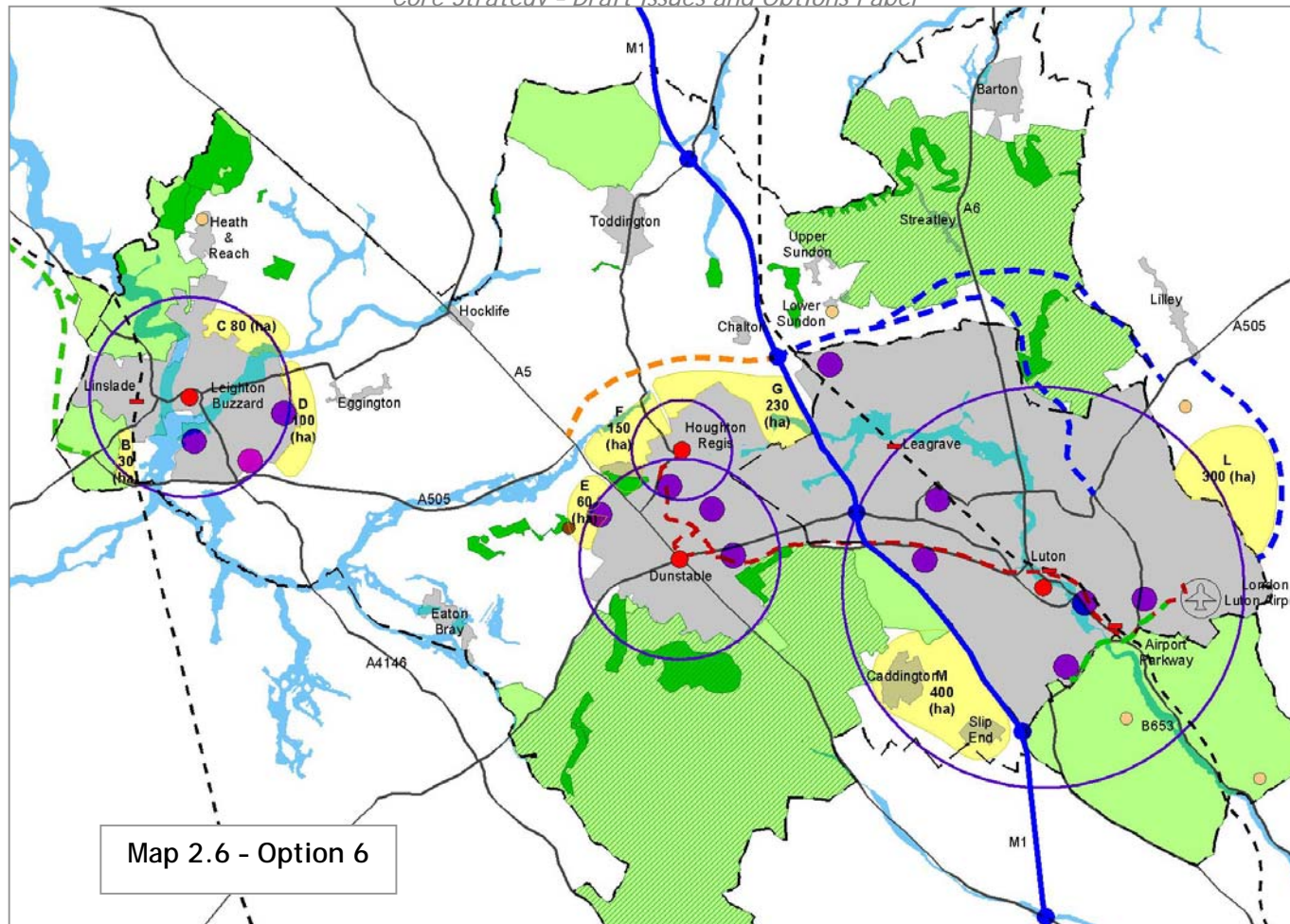
Map 2.5 – Option 5

Opportunities and Advantages of Option 5	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 5
- Focuses development near town centres and main employment areas, potentially helping to reduce the need to travel long distances to the town centres and main employment areas. - Limited development in areas to the North of Houghton Regis reduces the potential for increased congestion in this area prior to completions of the A5-M1 link. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent the airport in area L.	- Potential funding problem for the Luton Northern Bypass and limited funding for East Luton bypass due to size of development at L and no development in area I. - Implementation issues with North Hertfordshire as area L is outside the area covered by JPTC. - The lack of critical mass in areas B, C, F, G and L may reduce viability of supporting community and social facilities, and public transport. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas L and M. - Development of area M, limited focus of development on Houghton Regis and Dunstable and no development at Leighton Linslade may not necessarily comply with the guidance in the MKSMSRS. - Is exclusively large scale developments which may be more difficult to implement quickly due to their complexity thereby reducing potential for steady housing supply.

Option 6 – Development focused on proximity to town centres and main employment areas – maximum land-take

Focuses development in those areas with the closest proximity to the town centres and the main employment areas

OPTIONS

Potential areas for development (indicative)

Proposed road scheme (funding committed)

Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)

Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

Existing Major Development Area

Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

Scheduled Anceint Monuments

Flood Plain

Historic Parks and Gardens

Area of Great Landscape Value

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

Town Centres

Local Authority Boundaries

Main Employment Areas

Town Centre Catchments

Map 2.6 – Option 6

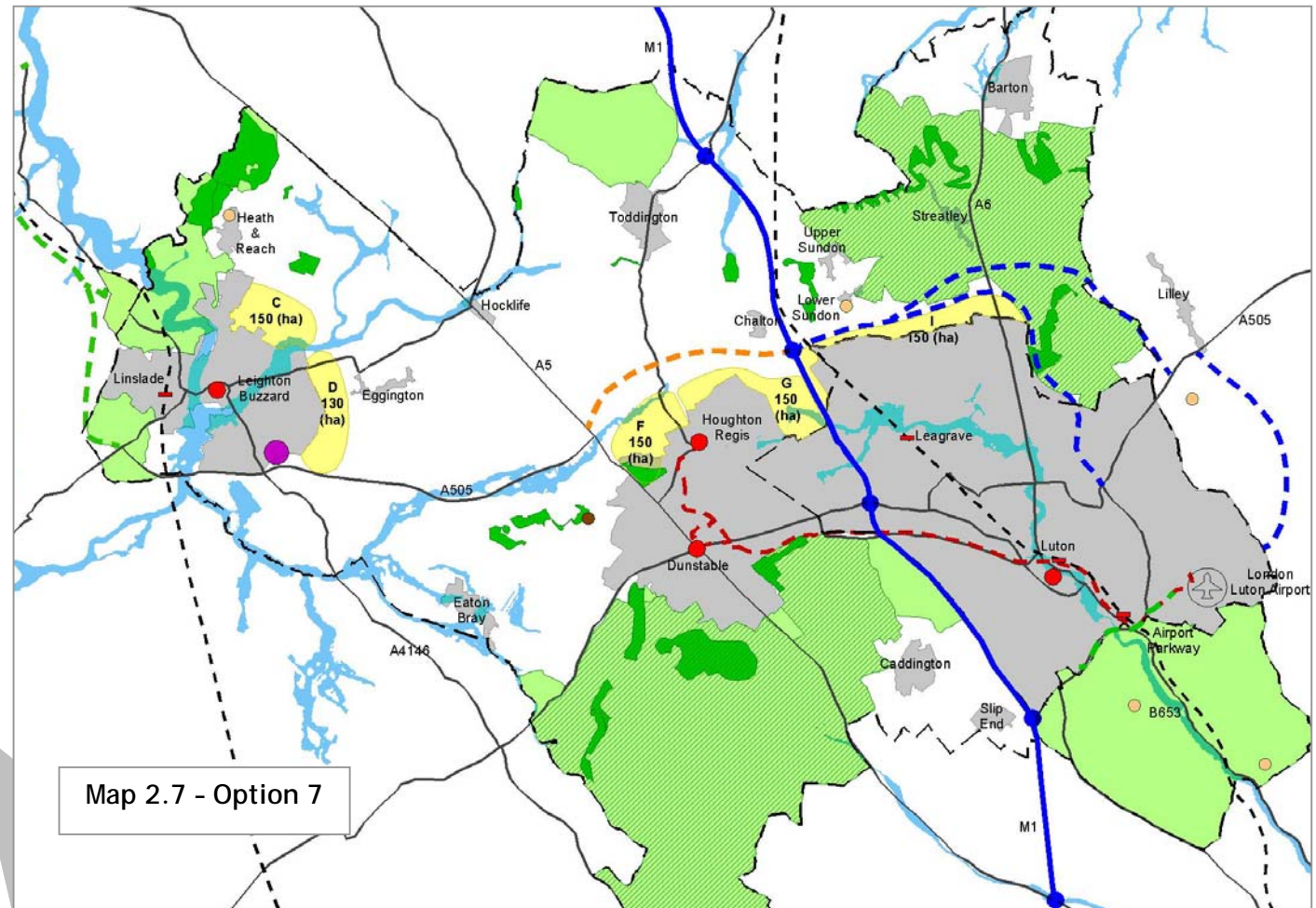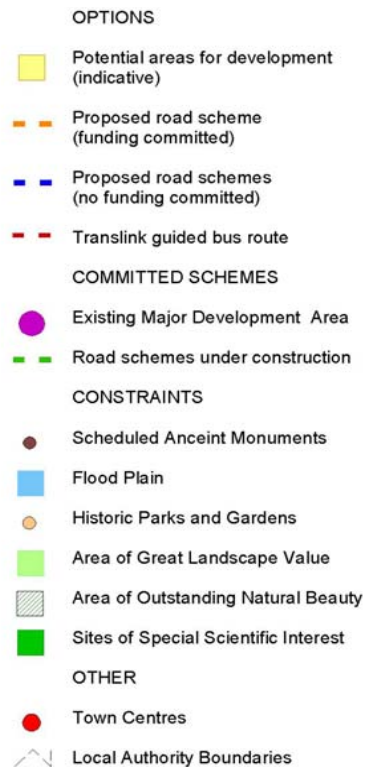| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 6	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 6
- Focuses development near town centres and main employment areas, potentially helping to reduce the need to travel long distances to the town centres and main employment areas. - Focuses development around all main conurbations as required by MKSMSRS. - Limited development in areas to the North of Houghton Regis reduces the potential for increased congestion in this area prior to completions of the A5-M1 link. - Areas F and G could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - Mix of large and small developments increases potential for steady housing supply through to 2031. - Potential for strategic employment development adjacent to the airport in area L.	- Potential funding problem for East Luton bypass and very limited potential to gain developer funding to build the North Luton Bypass due to scale of development in area L and no development in area I - Implementation issues with North Hertfordshire as area L is outside the area covered by the JPTC. - The lack of critical mass in areas B and E may reduce viability of supporting community and social facilities, and public transport in these areas. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G, L, D and M. - Development of area M would not necessarily comply with the guidance in the MKSMSRS

Option 7 – Widespread Development-minimum land-take.

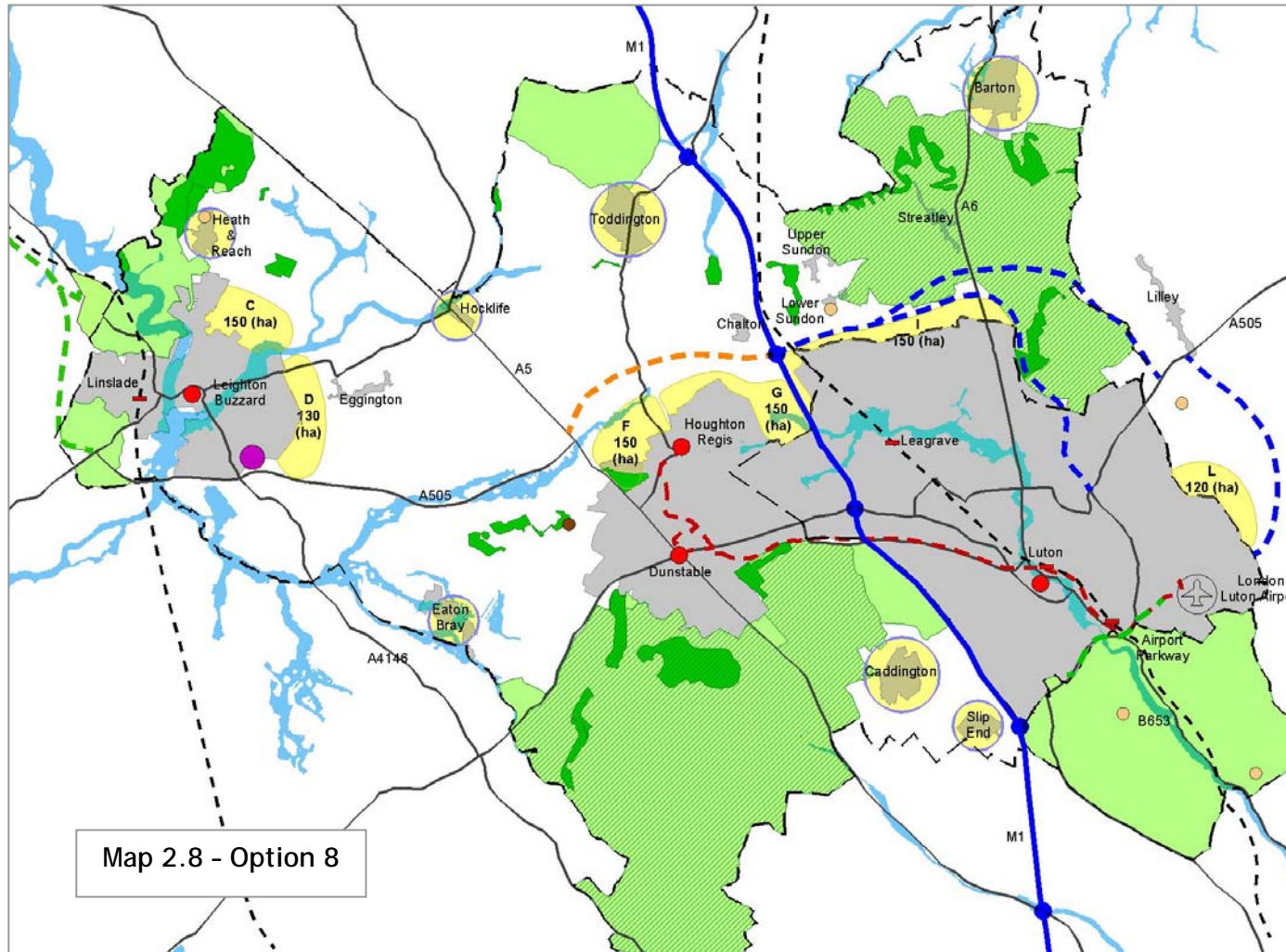Spread development throughout the Luton and South Bedfordshire area

Map 2.7 - Option 7

OPTIONS

☐ Potential areas for development (indicative)

– – – Proposed road scheme (funding committed)

– – – Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)

– – – Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

● Existing Major Development Area

– – – Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

● Scheduled Ancient Monuments

☐ Flood Plain

○ Historic Parks and Gardens

☐ Area of Great Landscape Value

☐ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

☐ Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

● Town Centres

Local Authority Boundaries

Opportunities and Advantages of Option 7	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 7
- Deliberate widespread development at this scale across Luton and South Bedfordshire may help to retain or attract public transport, services and facilities and help to meet rural housing need in certain areas. - Scale and spread of development reduces the impact on any one area. - Widespread relatively small scale development will help to ensure more timely delivery and increases potential for steady housing supply through to 2031. - Areas F and G could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - Potential for development of strategic employment land adjacent to Junction 11a in areas I and G.	- Limited focus on Dunstable and Houghton Regis area would not necessarily comply with the guidance in the MKSMSRS. - Limited potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern Bypass and East Luton bypass as area L not developed and area I only small development - Potential implementation issues with North Hertfordshire. - The lack of critical mass in areas E, F, G, C and D may discourage provision of supporting community and social infrastructure - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G, D and I.

Option 8 – Widespread development - maximum land-take.

Spread development throughout the Luton and South Bedfordshire area

Map 2.8 - Option 8

OPTIONS

Potential areas for development (indicative)

Proposed road scheme (funding committed)

Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)

Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

Existing Major Development Area

Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

Scheduled Anceint Monuments

Flood Plain

Historic Parks and Gardens

Area of Great Landscape Value

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

Town Centres

Local Authority Boundaries

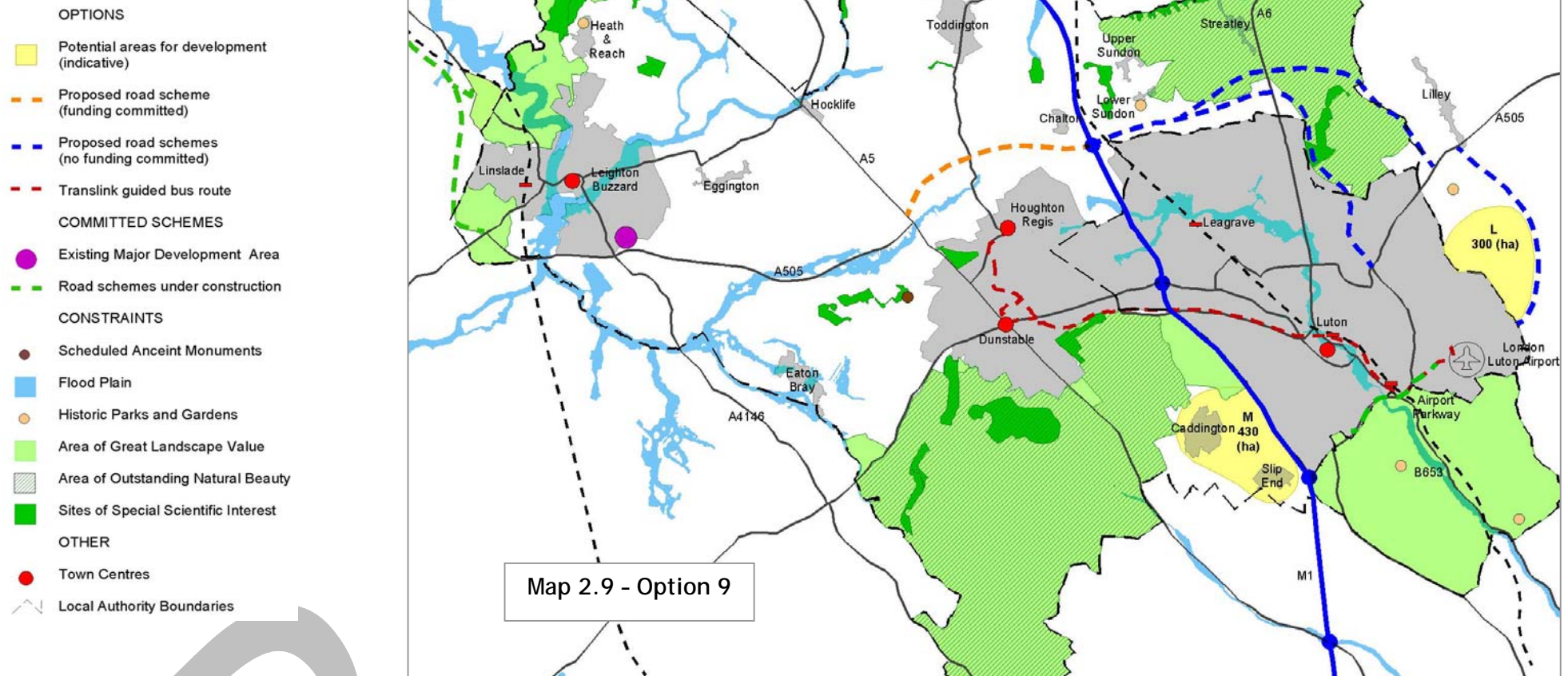| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 8	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 8
- Deliberate widespread development at this scale across Luton and South Bedfordshire may help to retain or attract public transport, services and facilities and help to meet rural housing need in certain areas. - Scale and spread of development reduces the impact on any one area. - Widespread relatively small scale development will help to ensure more timely delivery and increases potential for steady housing supply through to 2031. - Areas F and G could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport. - Potential for development of strategic employment land adjacent to Junction 11a in areas I and G, and the airport in area L.	- Limited focus on Dunstable and Houghton Regis area and village expansion would not necessarily comply with the guidance in the MKSMSRS. - Limited potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern Bypass and East Luton bypass due to scale of development in areas L and I. - Potential implementation issues with North Hertfordshire as area L is not covered by the JPTC. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas F, G, D and I.

Option 9 – Development focused on Luton – minimum land-take.

Focuses development around the Luton area with a minimum land-take

Map 2.9 – Option 9

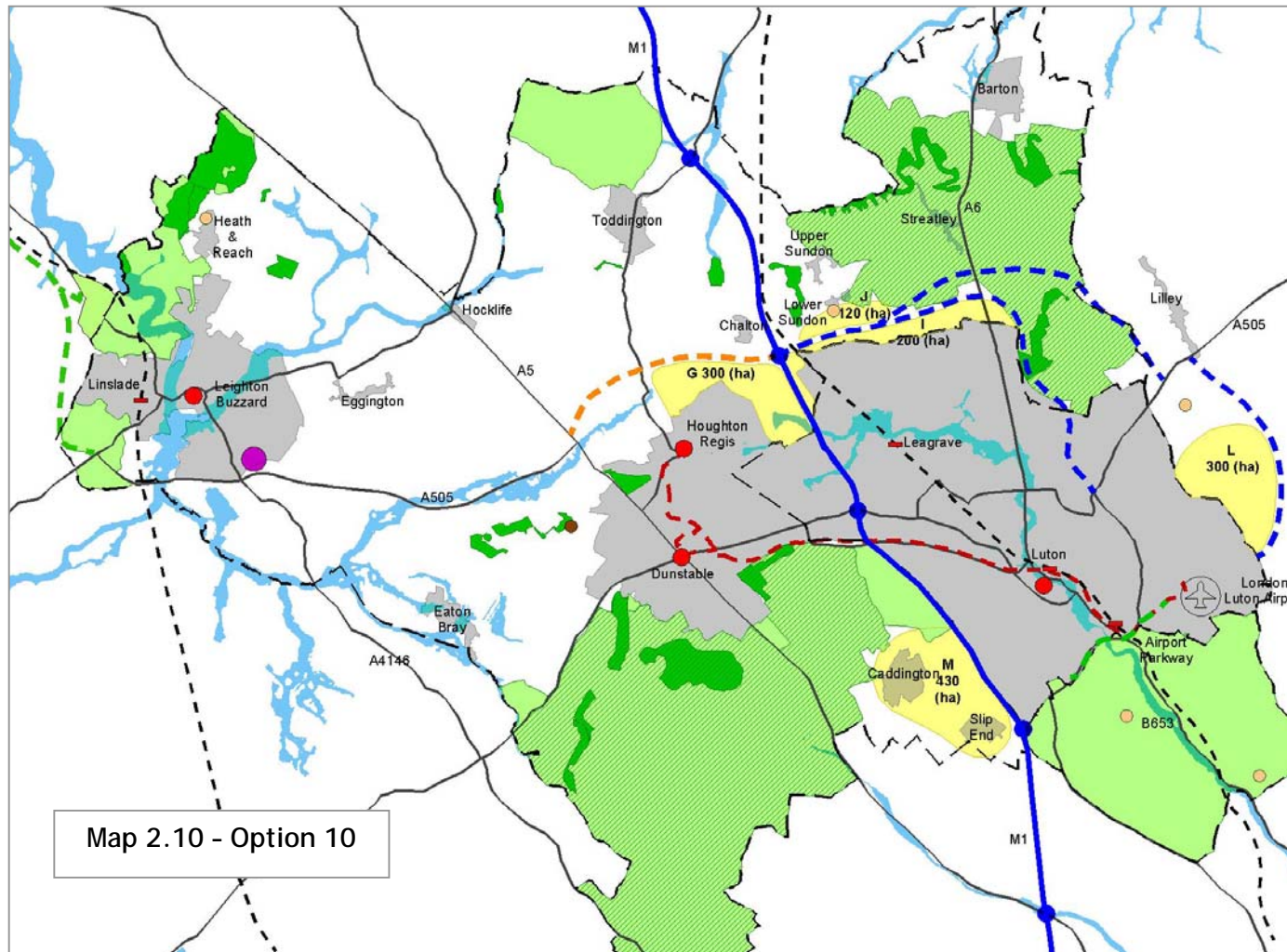| Opportunities and Advantages of Option 9	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 9
- Focuses development in the Luton area as required by the MKSMSRS. - Increased potential to attract developer funding to build East Luton bypass with large scale development in area L. - Development in areas L and M could accommodate strategic employment areas associated with airport expansion and M1.	- No development around Dunstable and Houghton Regis area and around Leighton Linslade would not necessarily comply with the guidance in MKSMSRS. - Development of area M would not necessarily comply with the guidance in MKSMSRS. - Implementation issues with North Hertfordshire as area L not covered by JPTC. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas L and M. - Potential funding problems with the North Luton bypass due to no development in area I.

Option 10 – Development focused on Luton-maximum land-take.

Focuses development around the Luton area with a maximum land-take

Map 2.10 – Option 10

OPTIONS

▢ (yellow)	Potential areas for development (indicative)
- - - (orange)	Proposed road scheme (funding committed)
- - - (blue)	Proposed road schemes (no funding committed)
- - - (red)	Translink guided bus route

COMMITTED SCHEMES

● (magenta)	Existing Major Development Area
- - - (green)	Road schemes under construction

CONSTRAINTS

● (brown)	Scheduled Ancient Monuments
▢ (blue)	Flood Plain
○ (orange)	Historic Parks and Gardens
▢ (light green)	Area of Great Landscape Value
▨ (hatched grey)	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
▢ (green)	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

OTHER

● (red)	Town Centres
⌂	Local Authority Boundaries

Opportunities and Advantages of Option 10	Challenges and Disadvantages of Option 10
- Focuses development in the Luton area as required by the MKSMSRS - Increased potential to attract developer funding to build the Luton Northern Bypass and East Luton bypass with large scale development in areas I and L. - Development in areas L and M could accommodate strategic employment areas associated with airport expansion and M1. - Development in areas I and J could accommodate strategic employment areas associated with Junction 11a. - Area G could potentially be linked to Translink via an extension thereby making the area more accessible by public transport.	- No development around Leighton Linslade may not comply with the guidance in MKSMSRS. - Development of area M would not necessarily comply with the guidance in MKSMSRS - Implementation issues with North Hertfordshire as area L not covered by JPTC. - Potential for coalescence of settlements in areas G, L, I, J and M.

Question 1 – Which of the ten options for development do you prefer (pick the three options you favour most)?

As noted earlier, within these options there is scope to alter the size of some of the 'potential areas for development'. There is also scope to substitute one or more 'potential areas for development' with another, or combine them in different ways to create a new option as long as the total area of land included meets the land requirement of **between 730 and 1,350 hectares**.

Question 2 – Please state any changes to the options for development from Maps 2.1 to 2.10, in terms of size or combination of 'potential areas for development' you consider are appropriate. Alternatively, if you wish to suggest a new option for development to meet the land requirement of between 730 and 1,350 hectares of land, as alternatives to those suggested in Maps 2.1 to 2.10, please tell us.

Question 3 – When choosing your preferred options for development, which of the following considerations were most important to you? (please choose up to three issues)
- Trying to protect the natural environment and landscape character
- Trying to protect important wildlife and biodiversity areas
- Minimising the distance to the town centres and other facilities and services
- Concern about the potential for traffic congestion
- Trying to maximise the benefits of the growth on where I live
- Trying to minimise the effect of growth on where I live
- Concentrating development in bigger urban extensions, to minimise the effect to the wider area
- Spreading development more evenly across a wider area
- Other (please specify)

The growth of Luton, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade, in whichever direction is considered most appropriate, is likely to have an impact on the neighbouring villages and communities. This will be particularly acute in villages that are close to the existing or future urban edge. In these locations, there are two options which could be considered. Firstly, new development in our urban extensions could 'wash over' the existing settlements and villages, and incorporate them within new communities. Alternatively, we can help protect the character of these neighbouring villages by providing green buffer areas, to create clear boundaries between the urban extensions and the existing village settlements.

Question 4 – How should existing village settlements near the edge of the urban area be treated?
- Urban extensions should incorporate the villages close to the urban edge, and integrate them into the new communities
- Green buffers should be created between new development areas and existing villages.

Issue 2	Where will people work? And in what sorts of jobs?

Parts of Luton and South Bedfordshire suffer from high levels of unemployment and income deprivation. In order to respond to this issue and ensure that the housing growth in our towns is supported by appropriate levels of jobs, we need to provide for significant growth in employment opportunities.

Luton and South Bedfordshire have good accessibility to the transport network with access to the M1, the A5 and the A505; the national rail network with four stations on two major rail routes; and the expanding London Luton Airport. These provide strategic advantages for a number of sectors of the economy, particularly distribution based companies. However, this network and the proximity to London, mean that commuting levels are high, both into and out of the area.

A key influence on the economic success of an area is the quantity, quality and location of the employment land and premises. The LDF can make a significant contribution to providing these by identifying and promoting the most suitable land and premises. Detailed studies are being undertaken which will look at which sectors of the economy will most appropriately provide the jobs, what type of land and premises the businesses providing these jobs need and where this land should be located. However, we want you to inform these decisions by telling us how you think we should deliver these jobs.

How many new jobs do we need? And what sorts of jobs will they be?
The emerging East of England Plan is likely to recommend that 23,000 new jobs be provided in Luton and South Bedfordshire, up to 2021, and a further 12,000 up to 2031. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has estimated the broad employment sectors and categories that jobs in Luton and South Bedfordshire in 2021 would fall into. These categories are Business (Use Class B1), General Industrial (B2) and Storage and Distribution (B8). EEDA has suggested that approximately a third of the jobs up to 2021 (8,100 jobs) would be provided in sectors outside of these categories, in other services such as retail, education, health and the public sector. In total, around 106 hectares of employment land will be needed up to 2021, plus up to 55 ha more up to 2031(see Appendix 1).

Where could the jobs be located?
When considering where to locate future employment growth, we need to balance the need to supply land and premises that will attract and support businesses whilst also trying to reduce the need to travel long distances to work, particularly by car. Whilst not all the working residents of any area will want, or be able to work in that same area, national and regional policy encourages the opportunity to minimise the need to travel. Therefore, we should make provision to allow people to work within walking/cycling distance of their homes, or for their workplace to be accessible by public transport, to reduce the need to use a private car for commuting.

Taking into account the above, we have two main options. Firstly, we could concentrate employment provision on existing employment areas, by intensifying development and redeveloping poor quality sites. This option would help to focus development within the existing urban area aiding its regeneration. However, it is possible that this option may not provide sufficient capacity to achieve the growth, or locate development where it is most suitable. It may also be a slow process and on some sites, particularly large contaminated sites, it may prove to be financially unviable without significant funding assistance.

Alternatively, we could retain the existing employment land and premises that are found to adequately meet the needs of modern businesses. Other sites, which are judged to be ill-suited to commercial use, could be redeveloped for residential or other uses. New employment areas would then need to be created within the urban extensions, to meet the remaining jobs growth. This option could help to deliver better, more modern and potentially better located land and premises and would release the existing poor sites for housing and other uses. This option would need to be carefully considered as it may increase the need to travel long distances and by car, particularly in Luton where relatively few people travel to work by car (56%) and many people walk (11%).

Question 5 – When planning for the additional jobs needed to help balance the housing growth in Luton and South Bedfordshire, where should we concentrate employment uses?
o   Safeguard all existing employment areas, intensify development in those locations and redevelop poor quality employment sites, and look at employment provision on other sites as a last resort.
o   Encourage employment development within the proposed urban extensions, with the potential to redevelop existing, poor quality or underused employment sites for other uses.
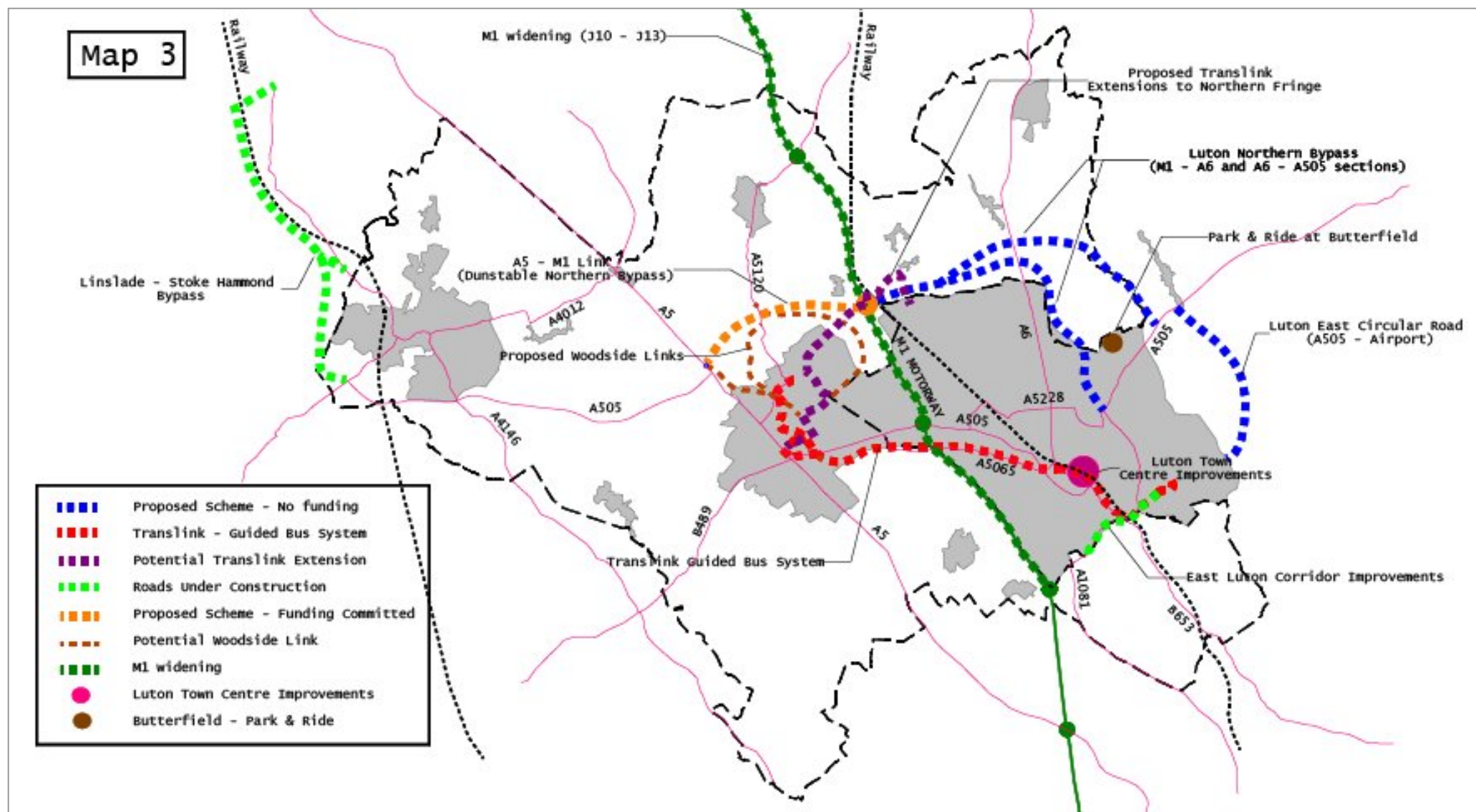
Issue 3	How will people travel?

The road network in the towns is often congested at peak times. The M1 motorway that runs through Luton and South Bedfordshire, operates above its design capacity for much of the working day, and is often heavily congested at peak times. Any incident on this section of the M1 can create significant impacts on traffic movements within the local area as traffic diverts onto local roads, and in particular the A5 trunk road through the centre of Dunstable. Our reliance on private cars for travel, the layout of our towns and the continued growth in road traffic is not only causing congestion, but bad air quality in some areas of Luton, Dunstable and Leighton Linslade. However, congestion is not just a problem in urban areas; roads in our rural areas and villages can also become busier as traffic avoids the congested roads in the towns.

What improvements are proposed for the transport network?
There is a commitment to provide a number of strategic transport infrastructure schemes (see Map 3), which are important for the wider area. Work is currently underway on the East Luton Corridor improvements and Linslade and Stoke Hammond bypasses. Other schemes currently being developed include the A5-M1 Link (Dunstable Northern Bypass), M1 widening between Junctions 10 & 13, the Translink Guided Bus system, Park and Ride at Butterfield, and Luton Town Centre Improvements. These schemes are all essential to improve transport capacity, remove through-traffic from the town centres, and provide a sustainable transport network for the existing conurbation.

A number of other important transport schemes which are not currently in any approved programme include a northern bypass of Luton (see below), Translink Extensions to the Northern fringe and to M1 Junction 10a, a new rail station in the vicinity of the proposed Junction 11a, improvements to Junction 10a, and Luton East Circular Road (A505 – Airport). These schemes are also important to deliver transport capacity improvements necessary to facilitate the provision of the growth area if it is to be considered sustainable. Funding and implementation mechanisms will need to guarantee the early delivery of these schemes.

Map 3

M1 widening (J10 - J13)

Proposed Translink Extensions to Northern Fringe

Luton Northern Bypass (M1 - A6 and A6 - A505 sections)

Railway

Railway

Park & Ride at Butterfield

Linslade - Stoke Hammond Bypass

A5 - M1 Link (Dunstable Northern Bypass)

Luton East Circular Road (A505 - Airport)

Proposed Woodside Links

M1 MOTORWAY

Luton Town Centre Improvements

Translink Guided Bus System

East Luton Corridor Improvements

A5120, A4012, A5, A505, A4146, B489, A5, A6, A5228, A505, A5065, A1081, B653

Legend:

- Proposed Scheme - No funding
- Translink - Guided Bus System
- Potential Translink Extension
- Roads Under Construction
- Proposed Scheme - Funding Committed
- Potential Woodside Link
- M1 widening
- ● Luton Town Centre Improvements
- ● Butterfield - Park & Ride

Between September 2004 and March 2006, alternative routes for a northern bypass of Luton (M1 – A6 and A6 – A505 sections) were studied. The Map shows two alternative routes, which in particular vary over the A6-A505 section. The southern route runs along the edge of the Bushmead area of Luton and passes partly in a tunnel between Bradgers Hill and Stopsley Common. The northern route passes through the narrowest point of the Chilterns AONB north of Warden and Galley Hills. In developing proposals for a new bypass, it is also necessary to consider whether similar traffic reductions could be achieved by lower cost solutions. In addition to continued promotion of area-wide traffic calming and improvements to cycling and public transport networks in the town, these measures could include additional Park and Ride sites at the proposed M1 Junction 11a and other sites on the north fringes of the town, and widening of important local roads where practicable.

Question 6 – Which of the alternatives for a northern bypass of Luton do you feel we should consider?
o   A northern bypass of Luton passing across the narrowest point of the Chilterns AONB between the A6 and A505;
o   A northern bypass of Luton passing close to the edge of the Bushmead area between the A6 and A505
o   No northern bypass of Luton, but other measures such as traffic calming to encourage people to use appropriate local roads, or park and ride sites to encourage greater use of public transport

How can we encourage more sustainable forms of travel?
All these extra people in our towns will create lots of additional journeys, including travelling to work, shops and school and to leisure and entertainment facilities. As discussed under Issue 2, commuting by car is a major cause of congestion on our roads. For example, the 2001 Census showed that 70% of Dunstable's working population and 65% in Luton travelled to work by car, either as a driver or passenger. However, the census also showed that about 60% of residents in these towns travelled less than 10km to work. For such short journeys the use of private cars is considered unsustainable when compared to public transport, cycling and walking. National planning policy says we should encourage the use of these more sustainable forms of travel to ease congestion and the impact on the environment.
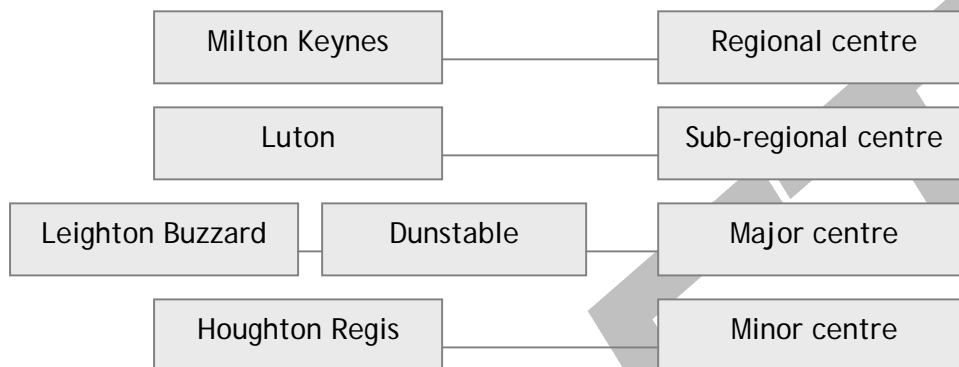
Part of this is making sure our new developments have the facilities and services that people need access to within walking or cycling distance of their homes. This issue is covered in other sections of this paper. There are other options that we can also consider in trying to encourage people to reduce their use of private cars.

Question 7 – Which of these schemes or ideas do you feel we should consider, in trying to encourage people to use their cars less?
o   Make improvements to the public transport network to make it more reliable, efficient, cost-effective and attractive;
o   Reduce parking provision in new housing developments to discourage multi-car households
o   Reduce car parking provision and/or make parking more expensive in town centres, to encourage people to use public transport, or to cycle or walk into town
o   Provide more pedestrian and cycle only routes to make walking and cycling safer and easier
o   Provide more dedicated bus-ways/bus lanes to make bus journeys quicker
o   Pursue the provision of park-and-ride facilities, to reduce congestion in our town centres
o   Encourage key local employers and other commercial premises to implement travel plans that provide incentives for staff and visitors to use public transport, walk or cycle

Issue 4	What role will our town centres have?

Town centres play an important role for many people as places to live, shop and work, enjoy entertainment, leisure and cultural activities, and gain access to important transport routes. Because of this, Government guidance promotes the town centres as an important asset to an area and the preferred location for investment and development. A network of town centres with complementary roles are encouraged to reduce the need for people to travel long distances. In Luton and South Bedfordshire the following 'hierarchy' applies:

Milton Keynes	Regional centre
Luton	Sub-regional centre
Leighton Buzzard — Dunstable	Major centre
Houghton Regis	Minor centre

In recent years, the movement of some retail activities and other functions to out-of-town locations, together with congestion problems in our town centres, limited investment and strong competition from the nearby retail centres of Milton Keynes and Watford, has affected the vitality and viability of our small, constrained and traditional town centres. A 2005 Retail Study identified this and recommended that significant new retail development should be planned to reduce the amount of expenditure that 'leaks' from the Luton and South Bedfordshire area.

New and proposed developments in the town centres, plus ongoing environmental improvements, will help resolve this situation. These include the Grove Theatre in Dunstable, the expansion of the Arndale Shopping Centre and the development of a new shopping area in Luton and improvements to Bedford Square in Houghton Regis. However, to maximise the potential benefits of a growing population and provide the type of retail, cultural and service facilities needed by an increased population, a more proactive approach is needed. The MKSMSRS recognises this but advocates that the role of each town centre should remain distinct and complementary with Luton as the principal focus for retailing, service functions, cultural activities and office development. Good access to viable town centres is also important in reducing need to travel long distances. Therefore a key consideration is how the other centres could enhance their retail, service and cultural facilities, given their proximity to the potential urban extensions, particularly to Houghton Regis town centre.

Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard town centres currently provide services and facilities for local needs, with Houghton Regis playing a more limited role. Congestion problems in Dunstable and Houghton Regis significantly reduce the quality of their environment but the proposed A5-M1 link should help to improve this by diverting traffic and helping increase the attractiveness of the town centres. Leighton Buzzard town centre also has congestion on and around West Street but its semi-pedestrianised High Street makes it a more pleasant environment. Development opportunities in all the town centres are relatively constrained, with the only space for potential expansion being the town centre car parks. In Leighton Buzzard however, the land between the River Ouzel and the Grand Union Canal offers potential but there are no redevelopment proposals

for this area at this stage. The limited potential to expand the town centres means that more expenditure may 'leak' from our town centres to other areas.

Question 8 - How can we best enhance our town centres and meet the retail, service and cultural needs of an increased population?
o Concentrate additional retail, cultural and leisure development in Luton town centre, and seek to enhance the existing character and appearance of the other town centres;
o Distribute additional retail, cultural and leisure development between the existing town centres, but with the majority going to Luton; or
o Concentrate additional retail, cultural and leisure development in Luton town centre, and seek to change the function and character of the other town centres so that all centres complement one another.

Issue 5	How can our communities and neighbourhoods be more inclusive, sustainable and healthy?

How will affordable homes be delivered?
New development should not only meet the identified requirements in terms of numbers of new homes but also seek to reduce social inequalities by meeting identified local needs. Ensuring everyone has a decent home is a national priority and delivering affordable housing is an important part of this. A key objective of the emerging East of England Plan is to ensure there is sufficient affordable housing to meet regional needs. Affordable housing is housing that will be available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market. The East of England Plan says at least 35% of new housing supply should be social rented housing, with an aspiration for 40% or more where particular housing pressures warrant it. The affordable housing policy for South Bedfordshire seeks 35% of dwellings on sites of 1 hectare or more, or 25 dwellings or more, as affordable. In Luton, a similar policy seeks 50% of units on developments of 15 dwellings or more, or 0.5 hectares or more, as affordable. In the light of the opportunity presented by the number of houses that are to be built in Luton and South Bedfordshire over the coming years, the level of existing local need for affordable housing and the need for consistency, it will be necessary to review and rationalise these targets and thresholds across the whole area.

Question 9 – In reviewing these targets, which option should we consider?
o Keep the existing targets and thresholds for Luton and South Bedfordshire
o Have a standard target and threshold across the whole of Luton and South Bedfordshire
o Consider different targets and/or thresholds for different areas (e.g. town centres, other urban areas, villages, or greenfield sites).

Will the new developments be environmentally-friendly?
National policy specifies that we must take account of environmental issues in new development, which includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging the use of renewable energy. We have already discussed how our urban extensions can be sustainable in terms of making sure everyone has easy access to everyday facilities to try and reduce the need to travel, especially by car. In addition to this, the buildings themselves should be sustainable and energy efficient, and we need to decide on the mechanisms to deliver this. The Government's Code for Sustainable Homes has been developed as a national standard to guide the design and construction of sustainable homes. This assessment includes a set of criteria which development must meet in order to be awarded a certain standard of sustainability and energy efficiency. Homes meeting

these standards can be given a rating depending on how sustainable they are, ranging from 'Code Level 1' for a pass, to 'Code Level 6' for the most sustainable and energy efficient homes. Similarly, for non-residential development, the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) system can be used.

The emerging East of England Plan says that the Growth Areas have great potential for developing renewable energy technology and encouraging the use of energy efficiency measures. Part of this is requiring all developments over 50 dwellings or 1,000 square metres to incorporate equipment to allow at least 10% of the development's predicted energy requirements to be generated from renewable sources, and to consider alternative, more environmentally friendly heating systems. Renewable energy sources include wind, solar, biofuel and biomass power, not the finite resources more commonly used for electricity generation like natural gas and oil. Policies in the LDF to support these aims will help towards meeting the national target of 10% of energy coming from renewable sources by 2010. However, we could encourage more renewable energy and energy-efficiency measures to be included in new development, if there was support for such a policy.

Question 10 – Should our Core Strategy include a policy that seeks all new developments to exceed basic Building Control regulations in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability, and meet standards set out by the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM for non-residential buildings?
o   Not seek any minimum Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM ratings on new developments
o   Include a policy that seeks compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM to a reasonable level (e.g. Code Level 3 or 4).

Question 11 – Should renewable energy and energy-efficiency policies in the Local Development Framework go beyond the targets and thresholds put forward in the emerging East of England Plan? We could consider:
o   Leaving the development size threshold and renewable energy target as set out in the emerging East of England Plan
o   Lowering the development size threshold to include more new developments (e.g. developments of 30 dwellings or 750 sq m)
o   Increasing the renewable energy target above 10%, but keep the East of England Plan site threshold
o   A combination of lowering the site threshold and increasing the renewable energy target

What about green space?
In order to create well-balanced and sustainable communities, it is important that existing and new residents have access to both formal and informal recreational opportunities. When we think about green space, we don't simply mean the nearest park which is used for both formal recreation (e.g. organised football or rugby matches) and informal recreation (e.g. walking in a park or using children's play equipment). We also mean the interconnecting footpaths or bridleways, the country parks, the historic parks and landscapes and nature reserves for example which in their own way contribute towards our green space provision.

The current Local Plans for Luton and South Bedfordshire contain open space standards which require green space and children's play space provision as part of new developments. These current standards are being reviewed as part of a Green Space Strategy for Luton and South Bedfordshire which will look at existing and future green space provision, both in terms of quality and quantity.

Question 12 – How would you like to see formal and informal recreational green space provided in the future urban extensions?

o   Combine formal green space provision serving a large area into one or two large sites, with more facilities (all-weather pitches, floodlighting etc) and better management;
o   Have more areas of formal green space, similar to traditional provision, with a standard number pitches/fields per area, related to the size of development;
o   Encourage shared use of quality facilities at schools and colleges, and community centres;
o   Have many small areas of informal green space within neighbourhoods; and/or
o   Concentrate informal green space provision in larger parks at the edge of the built up area, along a country park type model.

What about Gypsy and Traveller accommodation?

Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most excluded minority groups in the UK and historically there has been a serious lack of approved sites, which leads to unauthorised encampments and social tensions. The Bedfordshire and Luton Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2006 identified an accommodation shortfall in this area and concluded that there is a need for a range of sites for owner occupation and rental, for example through Registered Social Landlords, which would, in part, foster social inclusion. A subsequent regional level review will identify the number of additional caravan pitches required across the region, including our area. The East of England Regional Assembly is responsible for this review and will present a number of initial options for public consultation during May to August 2007. These requirements need to be delivered through specific site proposals in future development plan documents. At this stage, consideration needs to be given to where Gypsies and Travellers actually want to live, balanced by the needs of all communities and with general planning principles.

Question 13 – When considering the location and delivery of land for additional Gypsy and Travellers sites, which approaches should we consider?

o   Allocate a range of sites within the potential urban extensions and require them to be developed and purchased at market value
o   Encourage sites to be provided by Registered Social Landlords and other developers as part of their contribution to affordable housing, secured through planning obligations
o   Seek a mixture of sites for sale and sites for social renting.

What happens next?

SECTION TO BE EXPANDED

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment
To ensure that our planning policies are sustainable, we must undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for our Development Plan Documents. A Scoping Report for this work has been prepared and is also now available for comment. It specifies the anticipated scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the Sustainability Report which will be the main written output from the SA process. When finalised, the Scoping Report will form the basis for appraising our preferred development options to emerge at the next stage of the plan-making process, in terms of how they could affect the environment. For more information, refer to the draft Joint Local Development Scheme.

Consultation and Community Participation
Improving and increasing consultation and community participation in the planning process is an important part of the new planning system. As mentioned in the Introduction, this 'Issues and Options Paper' is part of the first stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy. It sets out issues which need to be considered when determining how we plan for growth in the area, and a series of options we think could be used to help guide that development. Once we complete this round of consultation, we will consider all responses and use them to decide on the preferred options, which will then involve further consultation. The draft Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) gives more details about what each consultation period will consist of, and how we want you to get involved in the planning process at each stage. The 'Further Information and Links' section of this document tells you where you can find the draft Joint SCI.

Still to come…

What happens next with the Core Strategy? How will comments and representations be considered? How is the SA/SEA used to help analyse the options to lead to our 'Preferred Options'? When is that expected to be published?

Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing		Housing for rent, shared ownership or outright purchase provided at a cost considered affordable in relation to average or below-average incomes, or in relation to the price of general market housing.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	AONB	A statutory national landscape designation, to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Areas to the south-west of Dunstable, and north of Luton are part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method	BREEAM	
Coalescence		The merging or coming together of separate towns or villages to form a single urban area.
Community Plan/Strategy		A document produced by the local authority and key local partners, which sets out the long-term vision for the town. The LDF is a key implementation tool for some of the objectives of the Community Plan
Conurbation		A large densely populated urban sprawl formed by the growth and coalescence of individual towns or cities.
Core Strategy		A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives of the planning framework for an area, having regard to the Community Strategy.
Density		In the case of residential development, a measurement of the number of dwellings per hectare.
Development Plan Documents	DPDs	Any LDD that forms part of the Development Plan. They are subject to independent examination by a Government appointed Inspector.
Evidence Base		The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.
Green Belt		A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped.
Greenfield Land		Land that has not previously been developed.
Gypsies and Travellers		As defined in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 01/2006 – "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependents' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such."
Index of Multiple Deprivation	IMD	A ward-level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services).

Infrastructure		Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Joint Planning and Transportation Committee	JP&TC	A Joint Committee comprising Members from South Bedfordshire District Council, Luton Borough Council and Bedfordshire County Council who make up a committee with responsibility for all development planning (except Minerals and Waste) in the designated area (the Section 29 Committee) and a committee responsible for the preparation of the Local Transport Plan and any other formal transportation policy documents (the Section 101 Committee).
Local Development Documents	LDDs	These include Development Plan Documents (which form part of the statutory development plan) and Supplementary Planning Documents (which do not form part of the statutory development plan). LDDs collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area.
Local Development Framework	LDF	The replacement for Local Plans. A portfolio of policy documents which will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for Luton and South Bedfordshire
Local Development Scheme	LDS	A document setting out a 3-year programme for the preparation of the different documents that make up the LDF. It is reviewed on an annual basis. It is part of the LDF, but not a DPD
Local Strategic Partnership	LSP	
Local Transport Plan	LTP	
Mixed-use		Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.
Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy	MKSMSRS	
Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes	PPSs PPGs	PPSs replace the existing PPGs. These are Government statements of national planning policy guidance. The RSS and LDFs must be consistent with their content
Previously developed land/Brownfield	PDL	Land which is or has been occupied by a permanent structure and associated fixed-surface infrastructure.
Regeneration		The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of urban and rural areas.

Regional Spatial Strategy/East of England Plan	RSS	A strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and possibly longer. The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. For Luton and South Bedfordshire, the RSS is the emerging East of England Plan or RSS14, which has yet to be adopted.
Renewable Energy		Renewable energy is from sources that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the wind, water flow, tides or the sun.
Section 106 Agreements		Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
Statement of Community Involvement	SCI	The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the processes to be used by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and development control decisions.
Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment	SA/SEA	An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.
Sustainable Communities		Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Sustainable Development		Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Urban Extension		Involves the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities.

Further Information and Links

Joint Statement of Community Involvement	
Draft Joint Local Development Scheme	
Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy	
Luton Local Plan 2001-2011 (adopted 2006)	http://www.luton.gov.uk/internet/Environment/Planning/Land_use_planning/Land%20use%20-%20proposals
South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004	http://www.southbeds.gov.uk/Local_Plan/index.html
Bedfordshire Structure Plan	http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/EnvironmentAndPlanning/BedfordshireAndLutonStructurePlan/CountyStructurePlan.aspx
Bedfordshire Minerals and Waste Planning	http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/EnvironmentAndPlanning/MineralsAndWastePolicyAndPlanning/MineralsAndWastePolicyAndPlanning.aspx
Emerging East of England Plan/RSS14	http://www.go-east.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional_planning/regional_spatial_strategy/?a=42496
PPS/PPGs	http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143802
Luton Community Plan	
South Bedfordshire Community Plan	
Bedfordshire Community Plan	
Joint Planning and Transportation Committee reports and agendas	
The Sustainable Communities Plan	http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1163452
Luton Borough Council website	http://www.luton.gov.uk
South Bedfordshire District Council website	http://www.southbeds.gov.uk
Bedfordshire County Council website	http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk
Government Office for the East of England website	http://www.go-east.gov.uk
Department for Communities and Local Government website	http://www.communities.gov.uk
Planning Portal	http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/genpub/en/
Planning Aid website	http://www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk/
Code for Sustainable Homes	

Status of Studies and Evidence Base – TO BE COMPLETED

Urban Capacity Study
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
Employment Land Review

Appendix 1 – Land-take calculations

To calculate the land required to accommodate the growth, a number of assumptions have been made and incorporated into tables (as below).

<u>Calculating the number of dwellings needed</u>
Table 1 shows the number of dwellings required by 2021 and 2031, with the number already completed between 2001-2006 subtracted, to leave the number of dwellings still remaining (A). This only includes the MKSMSRS target, and not the 1,000 dwellings from the East of England Plan residual target.

Table 1 - MKSMSRS dwellings required

2001 – 2021	26,300
2021 – 2031	15,400
Total	41,700
Dwellings already provided to date (April 2006)	- 4.400
Dwellings remaining to be provided (to 2031)	(A) 37,300

<u>Calculating the number of dwellings to be provided in Urban Extensions</u>
To calculate the number of dwellings that need to be provided in urban extensions (C), it is necessary to establish the capacity within the existing urban areas (B, from Table 2), and subtract this from the number of dwellings required (A) using the formula below:

Number of dwellings required (A)	minus	**Existing Capacity (B)**	=	**Number of dwellings required in urban extensions (C)**

Table 2 outlines the potential from existing sources, principally within the urban area and includes:
o   Urban Housing Capacity – capacity from sites identified in previous studies
o   Employment land sites – selected existing employment sites
o   Allocations and Commitments – outstanding planning permissions and allocations
o   Unallocated sites - designated as 'White Land' in South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review

Due to the uncertain nature of the sites within the urban area, the lowest and highest potential urban capacities have been estimated (Table 2). It should be recognised that these figures represent best estimates at this time and are used for testing of 10 options presented in Maps 2.1 – 2.10. More definitive figures will be gained from the Urban Capacity Study and Employment Land Study currently being undertaken, and will be used in the further testing of these options.

Table 2 – Existing Urban Capacity

	Low capacity	High capacity
Urban Housing Capacity *	4,830	8,050
Employment Land Sites **	2,042	3,396
Allocations and Commitments ***	5,645	7,056
Unallocated Sites ****	456	570
Total Urban Capacity	**12,973 (B1)**	**19,072 (B2)**

Assumptions:

* Low capacity is calculated by deducting 25% from 'best-fit' (6,440) in discounted Urban Capacity Studies

* High capacity is calculated by adding 25% to 'best-fit' (6,440) in discounted Urban Capacity Studies

** Based on assumed mean density figure of 40 dwellings per hectare

*** Includes 1,000 at Vauxhall. Allocations and commitments exclude built completions of 4,400 from 2001-2006

**** Designated as 'White Land' in South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review

Table 3 uses the lowest and highest capacity estimates (B1 – B2) established at Table 2 and applied it to the formula above to identify the amount of dwellings required in the urban extensions (C1 – C2).

Table 3 - Dwellings required in Urban Extensions (figures rounded to nearest 100)

Fewest dwellings required i.e. 37,300 (A) minus highest urban capacity (B2)	18,300 (C1)
Most dwellings required i.e. 37,300 (A) minus lowest urban capacity (B1)	24,300 (C2)

Land Required within Urban Extensions

Having established the range of dwellings required in the urban extensions (18,300 – 24,300), it is necessary to establish the amount of land required to accommodate these dwellings, plus other associated development, by applying a suitable range of dwelling densities (between 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare). In calculating this, assumptions have been made about the land required for employment (see below), and the assumptions and figures used in previous studies have been applied for the remaining uses.

Table 4 outlines the amount of land required to meet the needs of 1,000 dwellings. Note that the calculations are used for illustration and do not take account of any existing surplus or deficiency in existing services and facilities. Further, it assumes that any constraints could be absorbed within the 20% added for transport infrastructure, informal open space and strategic green infrastructure (see section below on Potential Areas for Development). These will be tested at a later stage to define more accurately the amount of land required.

Table 4 - Land Requirements per 1,000 dwellings

	Units	30 dwellings per hectare	50 dwellings per hectare
Residential	1,000	33 ha	20 ha
Community Facilities *		9 ha	9 ha
Employment Land **		4 ha	4 ha
Sub-total		**46 ha**	**33 ha**
Transport infrastructure, informal open space, and strategic green infrastructure ***		9 ha	7 ha
Total (excluding residential element)		**22 ha**	**20 ha**

* Community facilities (including schools and open space) is based on figures used in the MKSMS Study (September 2002) of 4 ha/1000 population and 2.3 persons per dwelling

** Employment land is based on the assumptions of 161 ha employment land (see below) required to meet the 2031 RSS (Proposed Modifications) requirement divided by required dwellings (41,700 to 2031)

*** Transport and green space infrastructure calculated as 20% of sub-total

Having established the amount of land per 1,000 dwellings this is then applied to the range of dwellings required outlined in Table 3 to establish the estimated maximum and minimum range of land required in the urban extensions to 2031. This is shown in Tables 5 and 6 and produces a range of 730 ha to 1,350 ha.

Table 5 - Estimated minimum land take in Urban Extensions to 2031
(i.e. high urban capacity and high density development in urban extensions)

Fewest dwellings required (C1, 18,300) at high density (50 dph)	366 ha
Associated land requirements (18.3 x 20 ha, from Table 4)	366 ha
Total (approximate)	**730 ha**

Table 6 - Estimated maximum land take in Urban Extensions to 2031
(i.e. low urban capacity and low density development in urban extensions)

Most dwellings required (C2, 24,300) at low density (30 dph)	810 ha
Associated land requirements (24.3 at 22 ha, from Table 4)	535 ha
Total (approximate)	**1,350 ha**

Employment land assumptions

To calculate the land required for employment, it was necessary to establish the amount of jobs needed and then apply some broad employment floorspace densities to establish the amount of land required. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has estimated the Luton and South Bedfordshire jobs in 2021 in broad employment categories. Based on these proportions, we have broken down the RSS targets of 23,000 jobs by 2021 and 12,000 jobs between 2021 and 2031 into main employment categories; namely Business (B1), General Industrial (B2) and Storage and Distribution (B8) jobs. The remaining 8,100 jobs (to meet 23,000 jobs target for 2021) are to be found in sectors outside B1-B8.

By applying generic employment densities and plot ratio we have calculated the need for some **106ha** of land to 2021 and **55ha** to 2031 (i.e. (106.2 ha/23,000 jobs) x 12,000 jobs = 55 ha). This gives a total of 161ha of additional land by 2031. Please note that this figure does not take into account existing vacant land or attempt to add any land in replacement of the land included in Table 2 and is used for testing until the Employment Land Study is completed.

Table 7 – Employment land requirements

	New jobs 2001-2021	Employment density (sq.m. internal space per employee)	Ratio of building to plot size	Land requirements 2001-2021
B1 Business	6,616	20 sq.m.	60%	22.1 ha
B2 General Industrial	3,887	30 sq.m.	40%	29.2 ha
B8 Storage and Distribution	4,396	50 sq.m.	40%	55.0 ha
Total	**14,900**	-	-	**106.2 ha**

Potential Areas for Development

In developing the 'potential areas for development', the following major constraints have been considered:
o   Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
o   Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)
o   Significant ridgelines (notably in Areas E and L)
o   Historic Parks and Gardens (notably Area L)
o   Scheduled ancient monuments

The site sizes shown are for indicative purposes and the exact capacity will be amended when further capacity and constraints work has been undertaken. At this stage to avoid double counting of land, it is assumed that the 20% allowed for transport infrastructure, informal open space, and strategic green infrastructure includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), County Wildlife Sites (CWS), other potential environmental constraints and areas liable to flooding. These constraints are therefore not included at this stage.

The 'potential areas for development' which are not bounded by any bypass or recognisable constraint such as a ridgeline (Area L) are considered not to have any limit to their size and therefore no site size is shown.

Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper - Questionnaire

Issue 1   **Where will the development go?**

Question 1 – Referring to Maps 2.1 - 2.10, which of the ten options for development do you prefer? *(please pick up to three options)*

	Minimum land-take	✓	Maximum land-take	✓
Development limited to within bypasses	Option 1		Option 2	
Development not limited to within bypasses	Option 3		Option 4	
Maximise proximity to town centres and main employment areas	Option 5		Option 6	
Wide distributional spread	Option 7		Option 8	
Development Focused on Luton	Option 9		Option 10	

Question 2 – Please state any changes to the options for development from Maps 2.1 to 2.10, in terms of size or combination of 'potential areas for development' you consider are appropriate. Alternatively, if you wish to suggest a new option for development to meet the land requirement of between 730 and 1,350 hectares of land, as alternatives to those suggested in Maps 2.1 to 2.10, please tell us.

E.g. for Option 2, make area X larger, and swap area Y for area Z.

_____

_____

_____

Question 3 – When choosing your preferred options for development, which of the following considerations were most important to you? *(please choose up to three issues)*

	✓
Trying to protect the natural environment and landscape character	
Trying to protection important wildlife and biodiversity areas	
Minimising the distance to the town centres and other facilities and services	
Concern about the potential for traffic congestion	
Trying to maximise the benefits of the growth on where I live	
Trying to minimise the effect of the growth on where I live	
Concentrating development in bigger urban extensions, to minimise the effect to the wider area	
Spreading development more evenly across a wider area	
Other (please tell us, below)	

Other _____

Question 4 – How should existing village settlements near the edge of the urban area be treated? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Urban extensions should incorporate the villages close to the urban edge, and integrate them into the new communities	
Green buffers should be created between new development areas and existing villages	

Issue 2	**Where will people work? And in what sorts of jobs?**

Question 5 – When planning for the additional jobs needed to help balance the housing growth in Luton and South Bedfordshire, where should we concentrate employment uses? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Safeguard all existing employment areas, intensify development in those locations and redevelop poor quality employment sites, and look at employment provision on other sites as a last resort.	
Encourage employment development within the proposed urban extensions, with the potential to redevelop existing, poor quality or underused employment sites for other uses.	

Issue 3	**How will people travel?**

Question 6 – Which of the alternatives for a northern bypass of Luton do you feel we should consider? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
A northern bypass of Luton passing across the narrowest point of the Chilterns AONB between the A6 and A505	
A northern bypass of Luton passing close to the edge of the Bushmead area between the A6 and A505	
No northern bypass of Luton, but other measures such as traffic calming to encourage people to use appropriate local roads, or park and ride sites to encourage greater use of public transport	

Question 7 – Which of these schemes or ideas do you feel we should consider, in trying to encourage people to use their cars less? *(please tick as many as you wish)*

	✓
Make improvements to the public transport network to make it more reliable, efficient, cost-effective and attractive	
Reduce parking provision in new housing developments to discourage multi-car households	
Reduce car parking provision and/or make parking more expensive in town centres, to encourage people to use public transport, or to cycle or walk into town	
Provide more pedestrian and cycle only routes to make walking and cycling safer and easier	
Provide more dedicated bus-ways/bus lanes to make bus journeys quicker	
Pursue the provision of park-and-ride facilities, to reduce congestion in our town centres	
Other (please tell us, below)	

Other _____

Issue 4	What role will our town centres have?

Question 8 – How can we best enhance our town centres and meet the retail, service and cultural needs of an increased population? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Concentrate additional retail, cultural and leisure development in Luton town centre, and seek to enhance the existing character and appearance of the other town centres	
Distribute additional retail, cultural and leisure development between the existing town centres, but with the majority going to Luton	
Concentrate additional retail, cultural and leisure development in Luton town centre, and seek to change the function and character of the other town centres so that all centres complement one another	
Other (please tell us, below)	

Other _____

Issue 5	How can our communities and neighbourhoods be more healthy, inclusive and sustainable?

Question 9 – Should the affordable housing targets and thresholds for Luton and South Bedfordshire be amended? Which option should we consider? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Keep the existing targets and thresholds for Luton and South Bedfordshire	
Have a standard target and threshold across the whole of Luton and South Bedfordshire	
Consider different targets and/or thresholds for different areas (e.g. town centres, other urban areas, villages, or greenfield sites).	

Question 10 - Should our Core Strategy include a policy that seeks all new developments to exceed basic Building Control regulations in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability, and meet standards set out by the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM for non-residential buildings? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Not seek any minimum Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM ratings on new developments	
Include a policy that seeks compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM to a reasonable level (e.g. Code Level 3 or 4)	

Question 11 - Should renewable energy and energy-efficiency policies in the Local Development Framework go beyond the targets and thresholds put forward in the emerging East of England Plan (i.e. all developments over 50 dwellings or 1,000 square metres should incorporate equipment to allow at least 10% of the development's predicted energy requirements to be generated from renewable sources)? Which approach should we take? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Leaving the development size threshold and renewable energy target as set out in the emerging East of England Plan	
Lowering the development size threshold to include more new developments (e.g. developments of 30 dwellings or 750 sq m)	
Increasing the renewable energy target above 10%, but keep the East of England Plan site threshold	
A combination of lowering the site threshold and increasing the renewable energy target	

Question 12 - How would you like to see formal and informal green space be provided in the future urban extensions? *(please tick up to three boxes)*

	✓
Combine formal green space provision serving a large area into one or two large sites, with more facilities (all-weather pitches, floodlighting etc) and better management	
Have more areas of formal green space, similar to traditional provision, with a standard number pitches/fields per area, related to the size of development	
Encourage shared use of quality facilities at schools and colleges, and community centres	
Have many small areas of informal green space within neighbourhoods	
Concentrate informal green space provision in larger parks at the edge of the built up area, along a country park type model	

Question 13 - When considering the location and delivery of land for additional Gypsy and Travellers sites, which approaches should we consider? *(please tick one box only)*

	✓
Allocate a range of sites within the existing urban areas and potential urban extensions and require them to be developed and purchased at market value	
Encourage sites to be provided by Registered Social Landlords and other developers as part of their contribution to affordable housing, secured through planning obligations	
Seek a mixture of sites for sale and sites for social renting	

CONTACT DETAILS, RETURN ADDRESS ETC TO BE ADDED