



# Dacorum's Local Plan

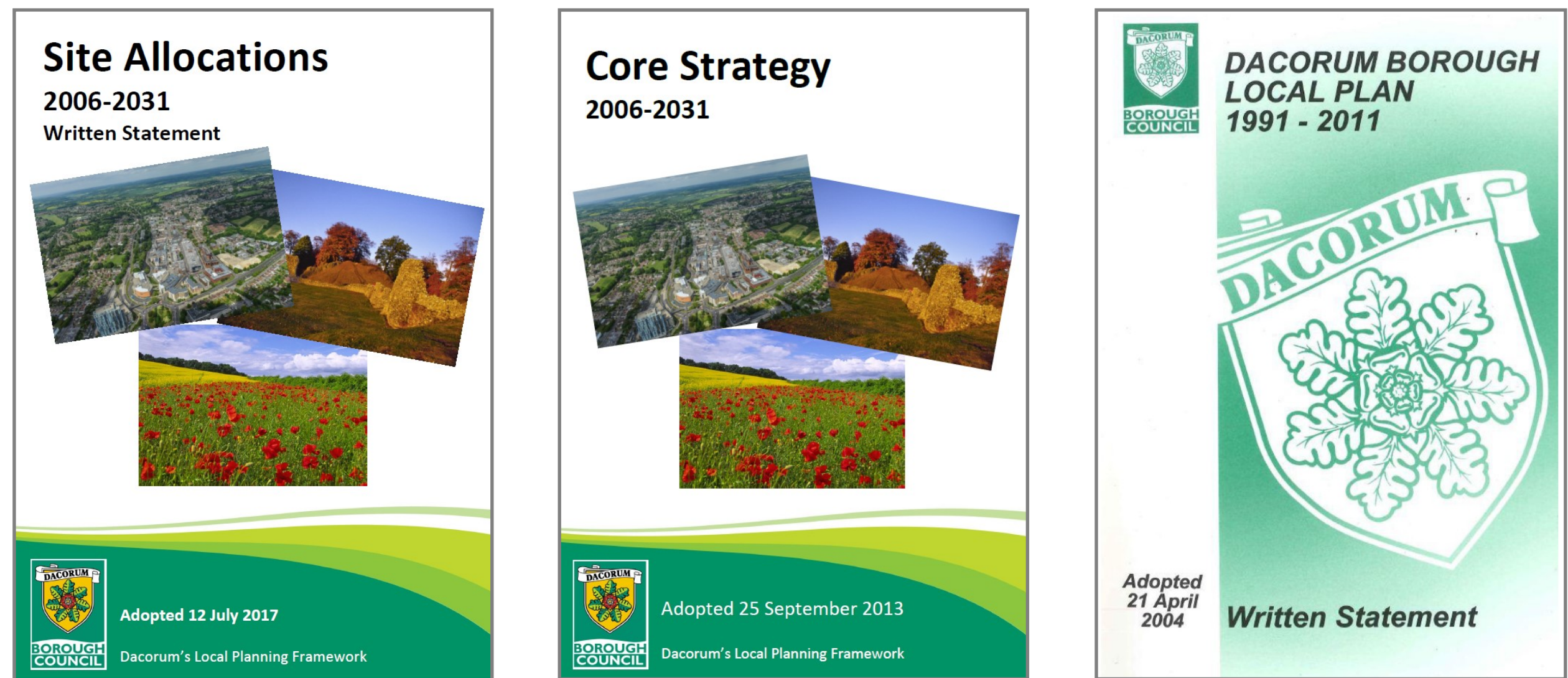
## 2013-2036

# Issues and Options Consultation

## What is a Local Plan?

The Local Plan is the document which sets out the **planning strategy** for Dacorum for the next 20+ years. It sets out the amount and broad location of new development we must plan for and includes policies to protect our natural and historic environment. It will ensure new development is well designed and supported by necessary infrastructure.

The key documents that will be replaced by the new Local Plan.



Government requires us to review our planning strategy every five years. For Dacorum, we have been told that we need to look at:

- 1.) The need for new homes in the area;
- 2.) The role of our Green Belt, and whether any of this land should be used for new development;
- 3.) How we work with neighbouring Councils to deliver local housing needs.

**Saying 'no' to any further growth in Dacorum is not a realistic option.** The Government continues to stress the need to provide more homes across the country, particularly in high house price areas such as Hertfordshire. **The new Local Plan consultation is the opportunity for local communities to influence how Dacorum should grow.**

We have started collecting and producing the evidence that will help inform these decisions, alongside feedback from this consultation. This work is referred to as the 'Evidence Base' and includes studies on particular topics like the need for new homes, shops and jobs. It will be expanded and updated as the new Local Plan progresses.

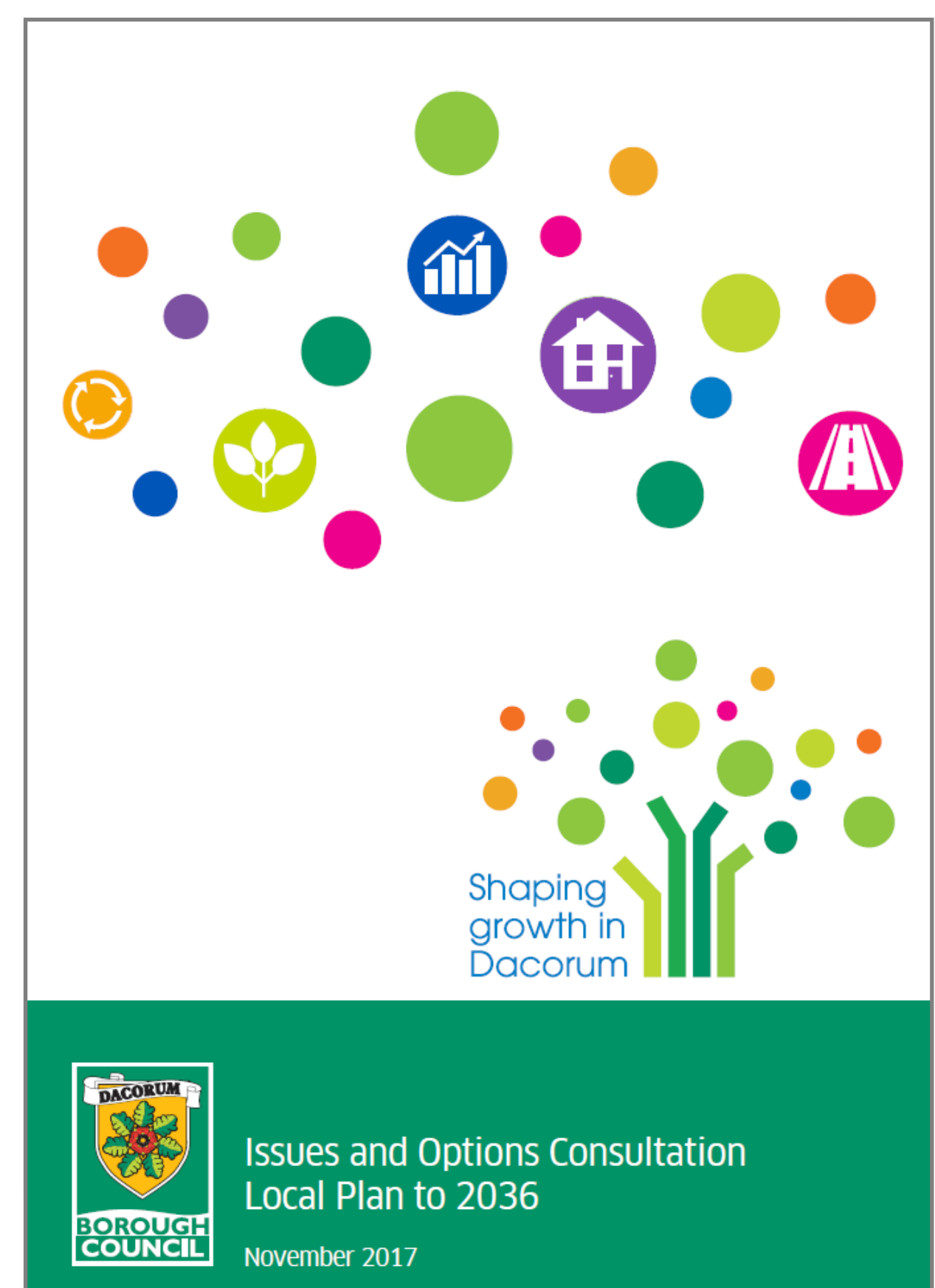
## What is this consultation about?

The Council has not yet made any decisions about what the new Local Plan should say or what development sites it should include. This is your chance to begin to influence the new planning strategy for Dacorum.

This consultation is about the planning **issues** we face as a Borough and the **options** we have for addressing these issues. This exhibition summarises what the consultation covers and explains how you can make your views known.

A key part of the consultation is to explore the growth needs of Dacorum and how far these needs should be met. The detail of actual development sites will evolve as work on the new Local Plan progresses.

We are also taking this opportunity to carry out a **'call for sites'** to allow anyone to put forward any land they think might have development potential. This will make sure that we have a clear and full picture on the options available.







# A vision for the new Local Plan

The Issues and Options document sets out a vision for what we feel the area should be like in 2036, with the new Local Plan in place. This vision must be supported by a series of objectives which relate to the different sections of the Local Plan. Our suggested objectives are set out below. We would like to know whether or not you agree with these or think some changes are needed.

## Sustainable Development

- To promote healthy and sustainable communities and a high quality of life.
- To mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- To promote social inclusion and cohesiveness, embrace diversity and reduce inequalities.
- To enable convenient access between jobs, homes and facilities, minimise the impact of traffic and reduce the overall need to travel.
- To promote the towns of Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring as the focus for homes, jobs and strategic services.
- To conserve and enhance the function and character of the villages and countryside.
- To ensure the effective use of existing land and previously developed sites.
- To create safe and attractive environments through high quality design.

## Strengthening Economic Prosperity

- To promote a vibrant and prosperous economy
- to strengthen confidence in Hemel Hempstead's role as a thriving sub-regional business centre and shopping hub.
- to develop Maylands Gateway as a hub for Envirotech business.
- to maintain commercial enterprise and employment opportunities in the market towns and large villages.
- to support rural enterprise.

## Homes and Community Facilities

- To provide a mix of new homes to meet the needs of the local population.
- To provide for a full range of social, leisure and community facilities and services.

## Looking After the Environment

- To protect and enhance Dacorum's distinctive landscape character, open spaces, biological and geological diversity and historic environment.
- To promote the use of renewable resources, reduce carbon emissions, protect natural resources and reduce waste.
- To protect people and property from flooding.
- To minimise the effects of pollution on people and the environment.

## Infrastructure and Delivery

- To ensure that all development contributes appropriately to local and strategic infrastructure requirements.
- To co-ordinate the delivery of new infrastructure with development.







# Planning for growth

The Issues and Options consultation **sets out the main planning issues which face Dacorum** under the following headings:



**Our towns, villages and countryside**



**Homes**



**Our Economy**



**Our Environment**



**Infrastructure**

After each issue we ask for feedback on whether you support the way we propose to address the issue in the new Local Plan, or whether you think we should take a different approach.



## Our towns, villages and countryside

In Our towns, villages and countryside section of the consultation we ask for your views on a number of issues, including:

- How should we distribute new development?
- What is the role and function of the Green Belt?
- What is the role and function of the wider Rural Area?
- How will we select development sites?
- How will people get around?
- How can we maximise the quality of new development?
- What other policies are required to help us control and guide new development?

**Some of the key issues are summarised alongside.**

We will continue to prioritise the use of 'brownfield sites' i.e. sites that have been previously developed. Within Dacorum a large number of these brownfield sites have already been developed, with **84% of new homes since 2006 having been built on such sites.**

However, the available supply of such land is decreasing and we will have to look increasingly towards 'greenfield' sites to accommodate new development. Greenfield sites are undeveloped sites and can be located in both urban areas and in the countryside.

Almost 85% of our Borough is countryside, with 60% of this area designated as Green Belt. However, this means that we have to balance conflicting Government policies which generally seek to protect the Green Belt from development, but also require us to plan for enough homes, jobs and supporting facilities to meet our future needs.

**We have been specifically told that we need to review our Green Belt boundaries as part of our new Local Plan** when looking at options for meeting our local housing needs.

The implications for the Green Belt will of course depend upon the scale and distribution of growth that is included in the final Local Plan.



# Homes

## In the homes section of the consultation we ask for your views on a number of issues, including:

- How many new homes need to be provided by 2036?
- What land is available for the new homes needed?
- What types of homes do we need to plan for?
- How should the delivery of housing sites be managed?

Some of the key issues are summarised below.

The Government is requiring all Councils to significantly increase new house building to help meet growing housing needs. This is the biggest challenge for our new Local Plan.

## How many new homes do we need to provide?

What is Dacorum's 'local housing need' for the new Local Plan (2013-36)? As the Issues and Options consultation document explains, it could be one of a range of figures, depending on how it is calculated:

Draft Government figure	<b>602 homes a year</b> 13,846 homes over the plan period
Locally assessed need	<b>756 homes a year</b> 17,388 homes over the plan period
Upper Government figure	<b>1,000 to 1,100 homes a year</b> 25,300 homes over the plan period

To put these figures in context, our **current Core Strategy has a target of 430 new homes a year** and we have broadly been meeting this rate of delivery for the last seven years. Whatever figure is finally agreed, it will represent a substantial increase in historic rates of building in the area.

Whilst we can try to set a new homes target in our Local Plan that is lower than our housing need, this is unlikely to be approved by the Government Planning Inspector and we would leave the area at **very high risk of speculative, ad-hoc development.**

In addition, we may be asked to meet some of the housing need not met from other nearby areas, including London.

## What land is available for the new homes?

We estimate that there is the **capacity to provide around 10,940 homes from existing and planned sites** that are consistent with existing planning policies. The following table shows how these new homes are spread across the Borough:

Location	Assumed housing capacity (2013-36)*
Hemel Hempstead	8,900
Berkhamsted	600
Tring	500
Bovingdon	90
Kings Langley	50
Markyate	200
Small villages and the countryside (combined)	600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,940</b>

*\* Some of these homes have already been built over the 2013-16 period (equating to 1,257 homes)*

Whilst we will keep this 10,940 figure under review, it is not expected to change dramatically. This means that if we are trying to meet our local housing needs in full, then we will **have to make up the difference through greenfield land from Green Belt sites around the edge of our towns and villages.**

We need to carefully consider what **type of homes we plan for.** This includes making appropriate provision for affordable housing, homes suitable for older people and sites for travelling communities. We also need to consider if we should allocate any plots for 'self-builders.'





## Our economy

In the economy section of the consultation we ask for your views on a number of issues, including:

- How many new jobs are needed in Dacorum by 2036?
- What additional sites should we set aside for office, industrial and warehousing development?
- What additional retail development is required and where should this be?
- What approach should the new Local Plan take towards tourism?

Some of the key issues are summarised below.

We estimate that there will be a need for an extra 10,900 jobs by 2036. Almost half of these jobs are predicted to be in office, industrial and warehousing roles. There is expected to be a *decrease* in demand for land for industrial uses of about 10 hectares, but this is cancelled out by a similar *increase* in demand for warehousing land. We are predicted to need about 13 hectares of land to provide for new offices.

The Issues and Options consultation suggests that to meet these needs, new employment provision could be made through making the best use we can of available land in the Maylands Business Park, especially the area within the Enterprise Zone, and creating new employment sites on greenfield land:

- south west of Kings Langley;
- east of the A41 at Two Waters Hemel Hempstead; and at
- Dunsley Farm, Tring.

Despite recent moves towards online shopping, there is still an important role for our town and local centres, and retail parks, and we need to ensure these continue to cater for our future needs. Depending upon the scale and location of growth chosen for the new Local Plan we may need to provide new retail facilities. For example, new local centres will be required if we allocate any major new housing developments.

We would therefore like your views on how we can best plan for the future employment and shopping needs of the area and where any new sites should be located to support these needs?



## Infrastructure

In the infrastructure section of the consultation we ask for your views on a number of issues, including:

- What are the area's physical infrastructure needs?
- What are the borough's social infrastructure needs?
- What are the area's green infrastructure needs?
- How will infrastructure be funded?

Some of the key issues are summarised below.

Infrastructure covers a wide range of services (provided by both public and private agencies). It includes:

**Physical Infrastructure** – roads, public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes/paths, electricity, gas, provision of clean water, sewerage and waste collection/disposal;

**Social Infrastructure** – schools, nurseries, further education, healthcare, emergency services, and social and community buildings; and

**Green Infrastructure** – the network of green space which connects towns, villages and the wider countryside. It can include green corridors, formal and informal open green spaces, sports and recreation facilities and waterways.

We are not responsible for the provision of most types of infrastructure, but rather we play an 'enabling' role – liaising with providers such as the water companies, local highway authority and health providers to ensure that appropriate provision is made.

We have developed our understanding of the infrastructure necessary to support different scales and types of development through discussions with infrastructure providers and through technical work (e.g. the Settlement Hierarchy Study and Infrastructure Delivery Plan).

How much and what new infrastructure is needed to support future development will depend on which growth option is chosen. Delivering infrastructure for scattered or small-scale growth can be very challenging compared to larger-scale growth which can provide facilities directly or make more sizeable financial contributions. A site's ability to support new infrastructure will be an important factor when considering whether or not it should be allocated for development within the new Local Plan.

However, Government rules state that the level of new infrastructure we can require a development to provide (either directly or through financial contributions) has to be in proportion to the actual scale and impact of that development. We also need to make sure that infrastructure contributions aren't set so high as to make the scheme unviable – as this means the development would not actually take place.





# Our environment

In the environment section of the consultation we ask for your views on a number of issues, including:

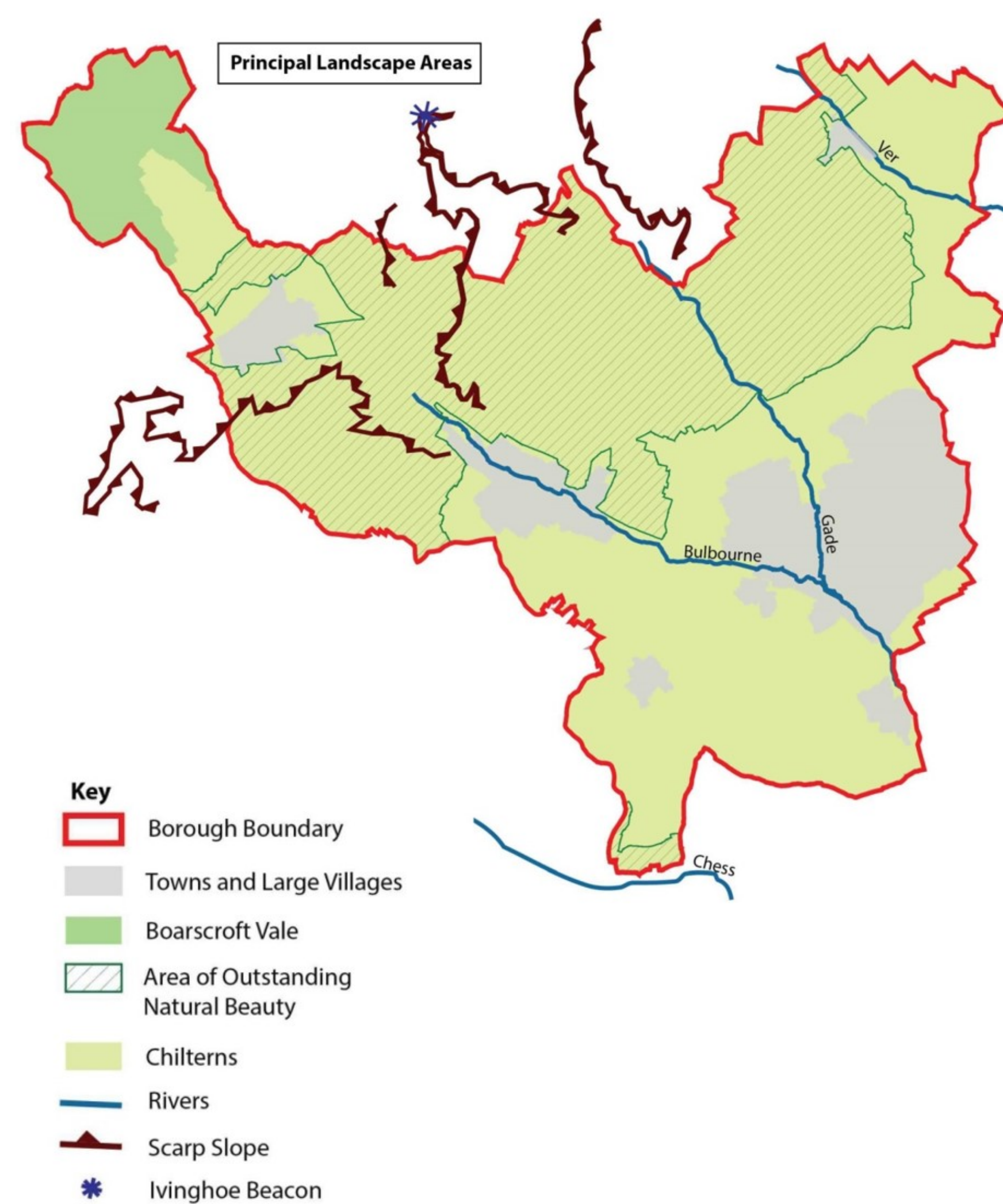
- How can we protect the natural environment?
- How can we protect the historic environment?
- How can we ensure natural resources are used efficiently and pollution and flood risk minimised?
- How can we reduce the impacts of climate change?

**Some of the key issues are summarised below.**

We need to consider a range of issues relating to the natural and historic environment which will inform the way the Local Plan is shaped.

We already have a clear framework for considering proposals which could affect key designations, such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Wildlife Sites, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.

However, we are asking for feedback on how this current approach could be improved and strengthened.



What steps can we take to minimise the effects of climate change and flood risk?

We propose to continue to avoid allocating development sites that lie within areas of high flood risk, such as next to rivers and canals. We have highlighted potential flooding issues when assessing sites through the Schedule of Site Appraisals that accompanies the Issues and Options consultation.

Government has recently withdrawn all national sustainable design and construction standards relating to housing which has made tackling the effects of new development on climate change an even greater task for us.

Do you have any ideas about what planning policies we could include that would help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make buildings more energy efficient?







# How this future growth could be accommodated

## How can we accommodate this future growth?

We know that planning for new homes can give rise to significant local concerns.

However, if we don't plan for enough homes we could be forced into accepting sites in unplanned locations, through developers winning appeals. We want to avoid this position and retain the ability to make important decisions locally.

When looking at growth, we also have to balance other linked factors such as providing jobs alongside the new homes, minimising the impact on the Green Belt and wider countryside, protecting the environment and ensuring there is supporting infrastructure in place.

## What levels of growth are we asking for feedback on?

We would like your feedback on the following three levels of future growth. These equate to our potential levels of 'local housing need'.

<b>OPTION 1:</b> Draft Government figure	<b>602 homes per year</b> Just over 13,800 homes over the 2013-36 plan period
<b>OPTION 2:</b> Locally assessed need	<b>756 homes per year</b> Just under 17,400 homes over the 2013-36 plan period
<b>OPTION 3:</b> Upper Government figure	<b>1,100 homes per year</b> 25,300 over the 2013-36 plan period

We would like to hear from you if you think that we should be considering a different level of growth – either higher or lower than these three options.

## How should future growth be distributed?

We suggest that, where possible, the following principles are used to help decide the best locations for new development:

### Locational Principles

- Maximise the use of brownfield land for development.
- Maximise the density of development, whilst ensuring it reflects local character.
- Support urban regeneration – particularly of Hemel Hempstead new town.
- Locate development at well-connected sustainable locations.
- Avoid areas at high risk of flooding.
- Respect the character of the existing settlement pattern and restrict urban sprawl.
- Protect the character and value of important landscapes, heritage and biodiversity.
- Ensure that new development can be served by necessary infrastructure.
- Locate development to help support delivery of a five year housing land supply, as required by Government.

Using these principles, together with information from technical studies, we have put forward three main distributions for growth:

<b>A</b>	<b>Focus on the three towns</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Greater focus at Hemel Hempstead</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Spread more evenly across the Borough</b>

The Issues and Options document, and associated Sustainability Appraisal, consider the pros and cons of each. We welcome your views over alternative distribution patterns and why you think these would be better.



Issues and Options Consultation  
Local Plan to 2036  
November 2017



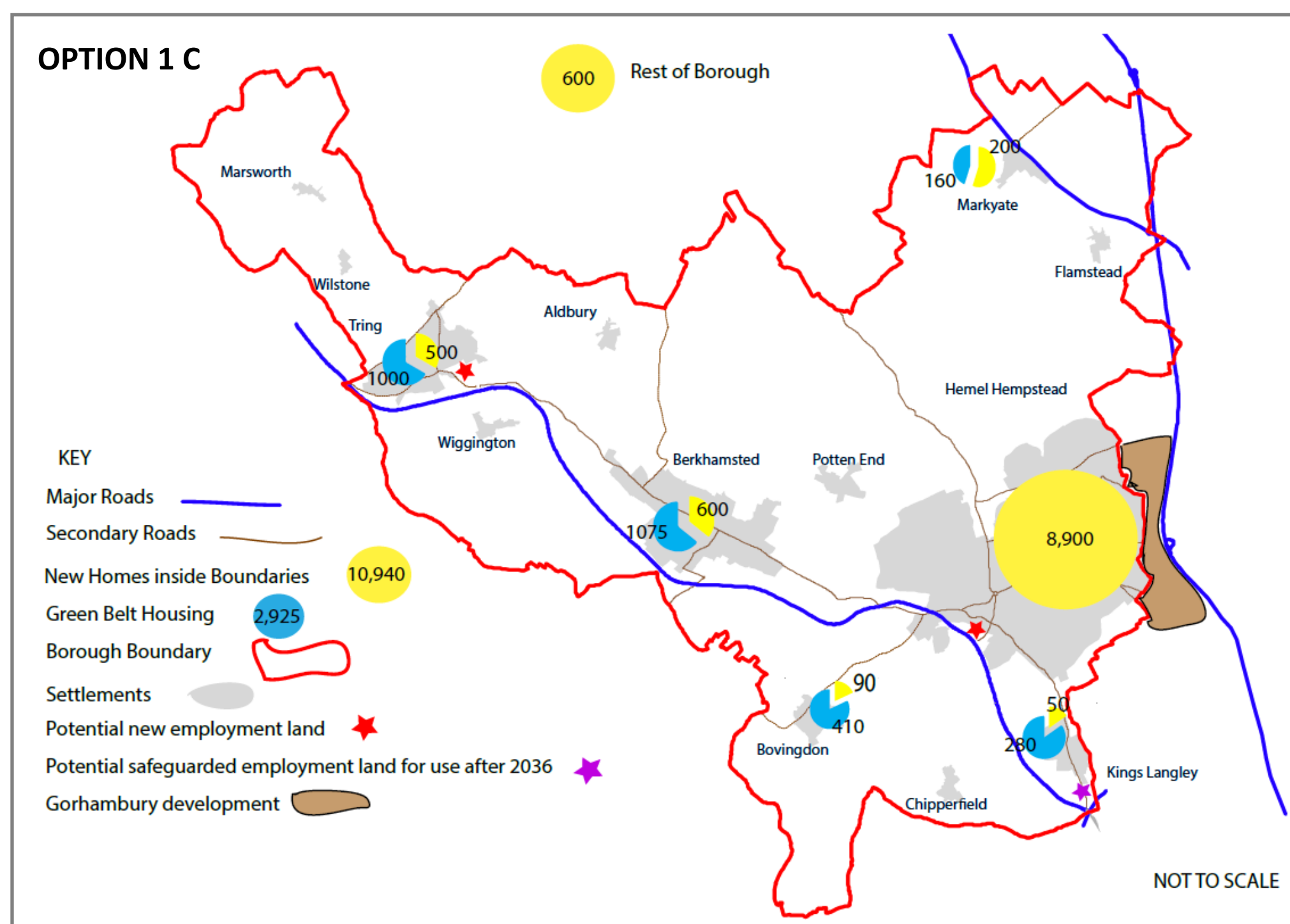
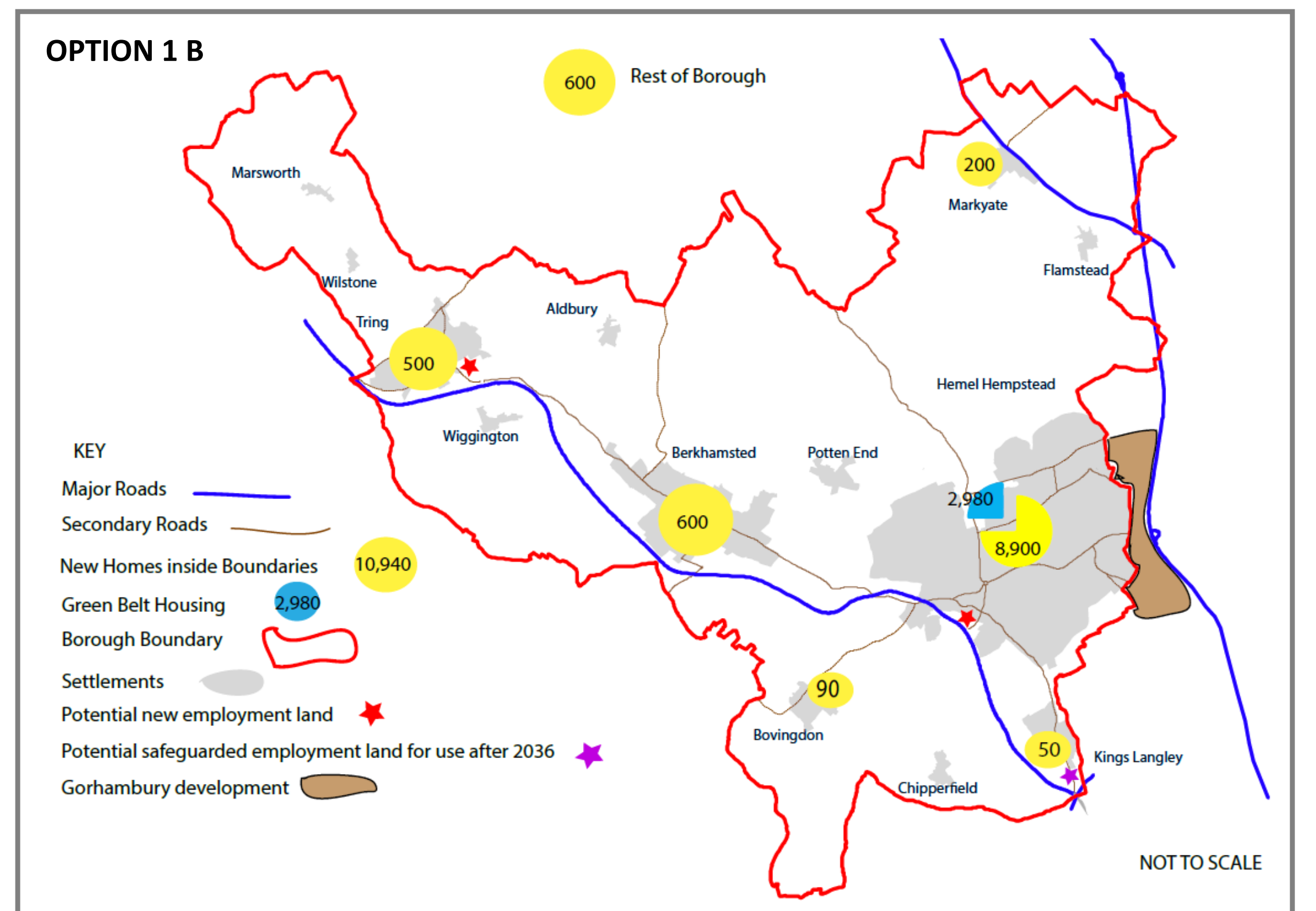
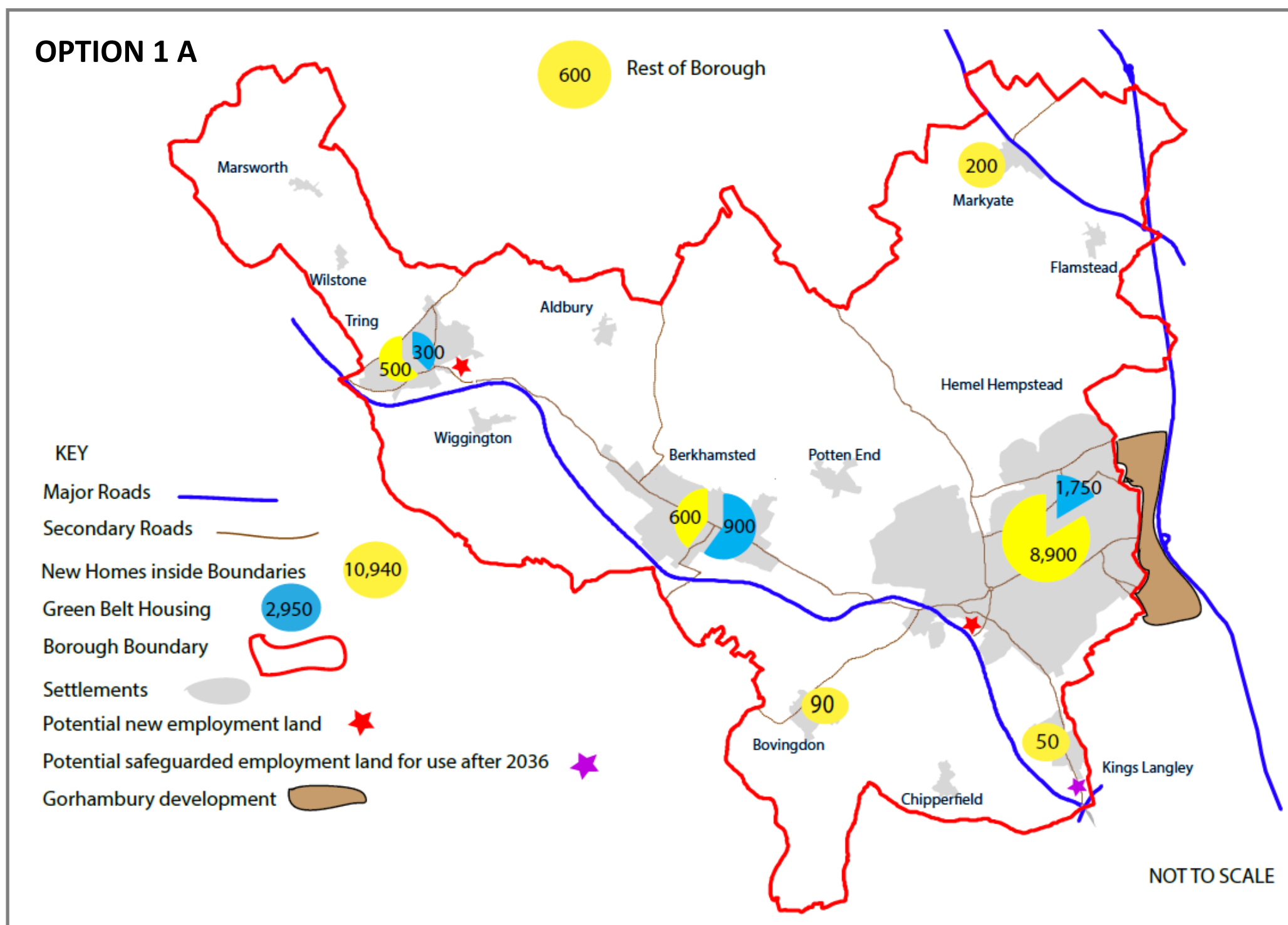
# OPTION 1

## Draft Government Figure

Option 1 requires a total of **just over 13,800 new homes**, with just under 3,000 of these needing to be provided in the Green Belt.

The following tables and maps summarise the implications for housing for the three ways this level of growth could be distributed.

	Option 1 A	Option 1 B	Option 1 C
Homes	This Option requires a total of just over 13,800 new homes	This Option requires a total of just over 13,800 new homes	This Option requires a total of just over 13,800 new homes
Towns	This Option would require the outward expansion of the three towns.	This Option would require the outward expansion of Hemel Hempstead only. There would be no need to expand the two market towns.	This Option would require the outward expansion of the two market towns. Hemel Hempstead would also grow, but through the use of existing and new sites within its current boundary.
Large Villages	There would be no need to expand Bovingdon, Kings Langley or Markyate outwards, with local needs being supported by existing and new sites within the village boundaries.	There would be no need to expand Bovingdon, Kings Langley or Markyate outwards, with local needs being supported by existing and new sites within the village boundaries.	This Option would require some outward expansion of the three large villages of Bovingdon, Kings Langley and Markyate.
Smaller Villages and countryside	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.





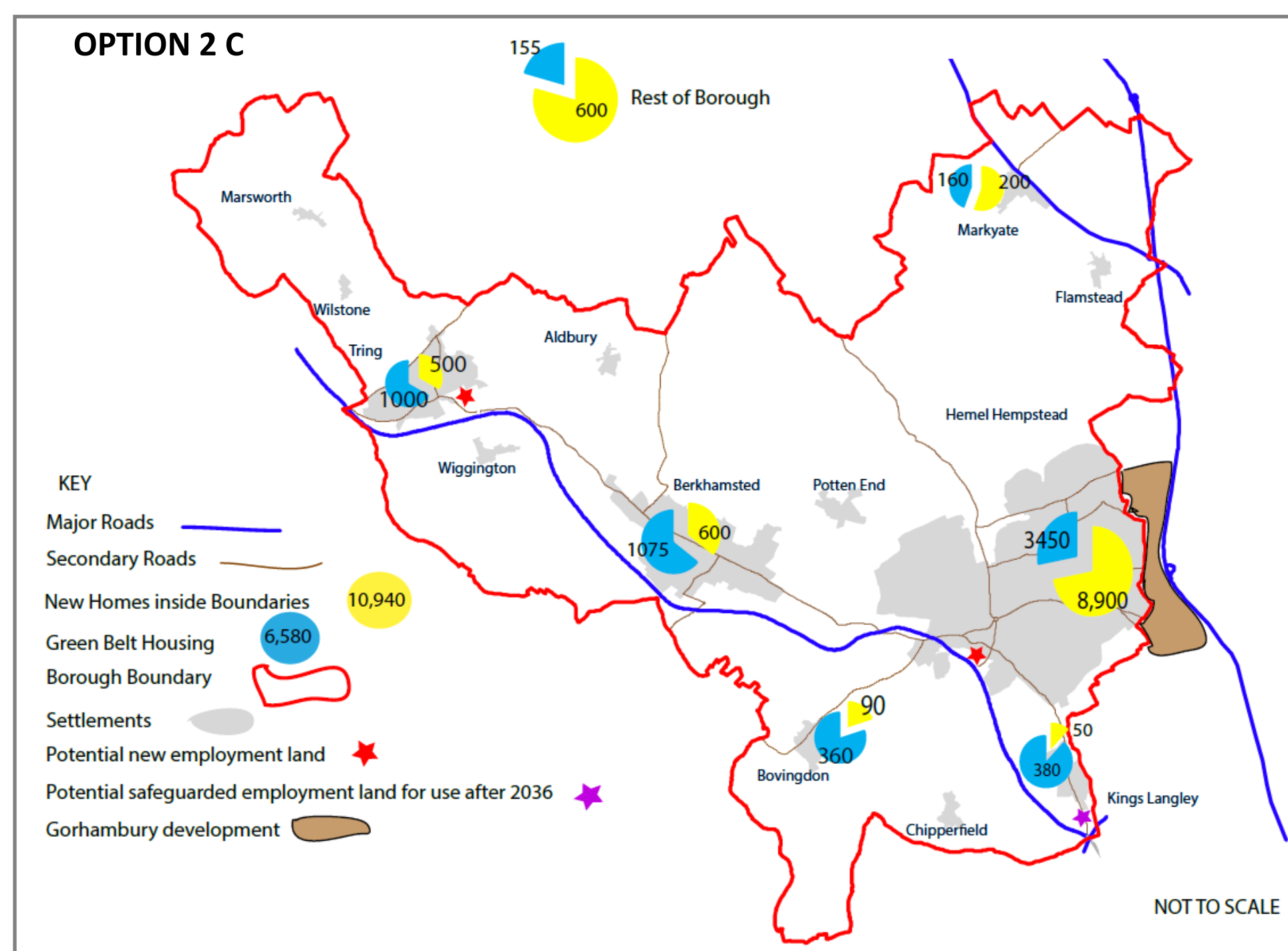
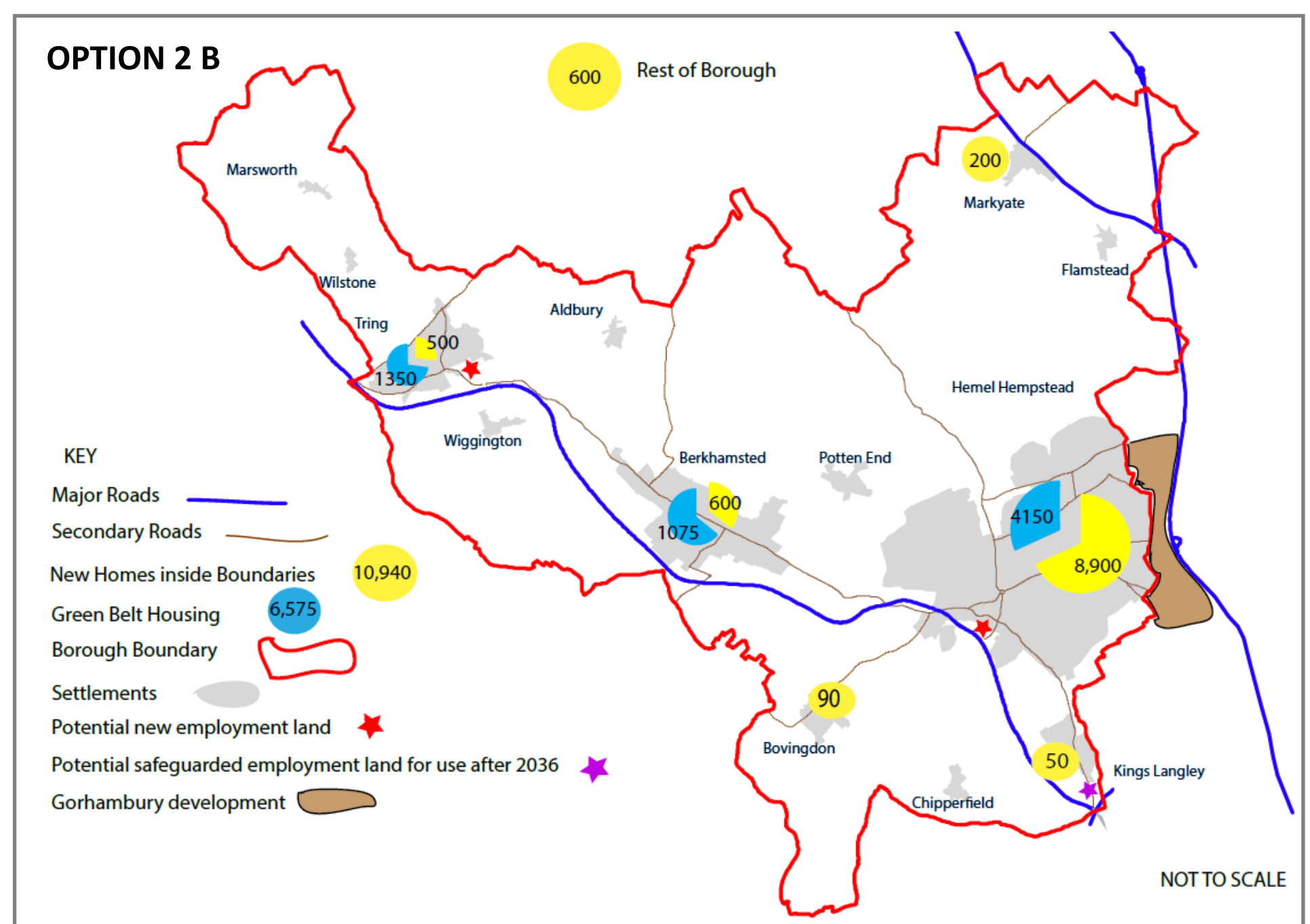
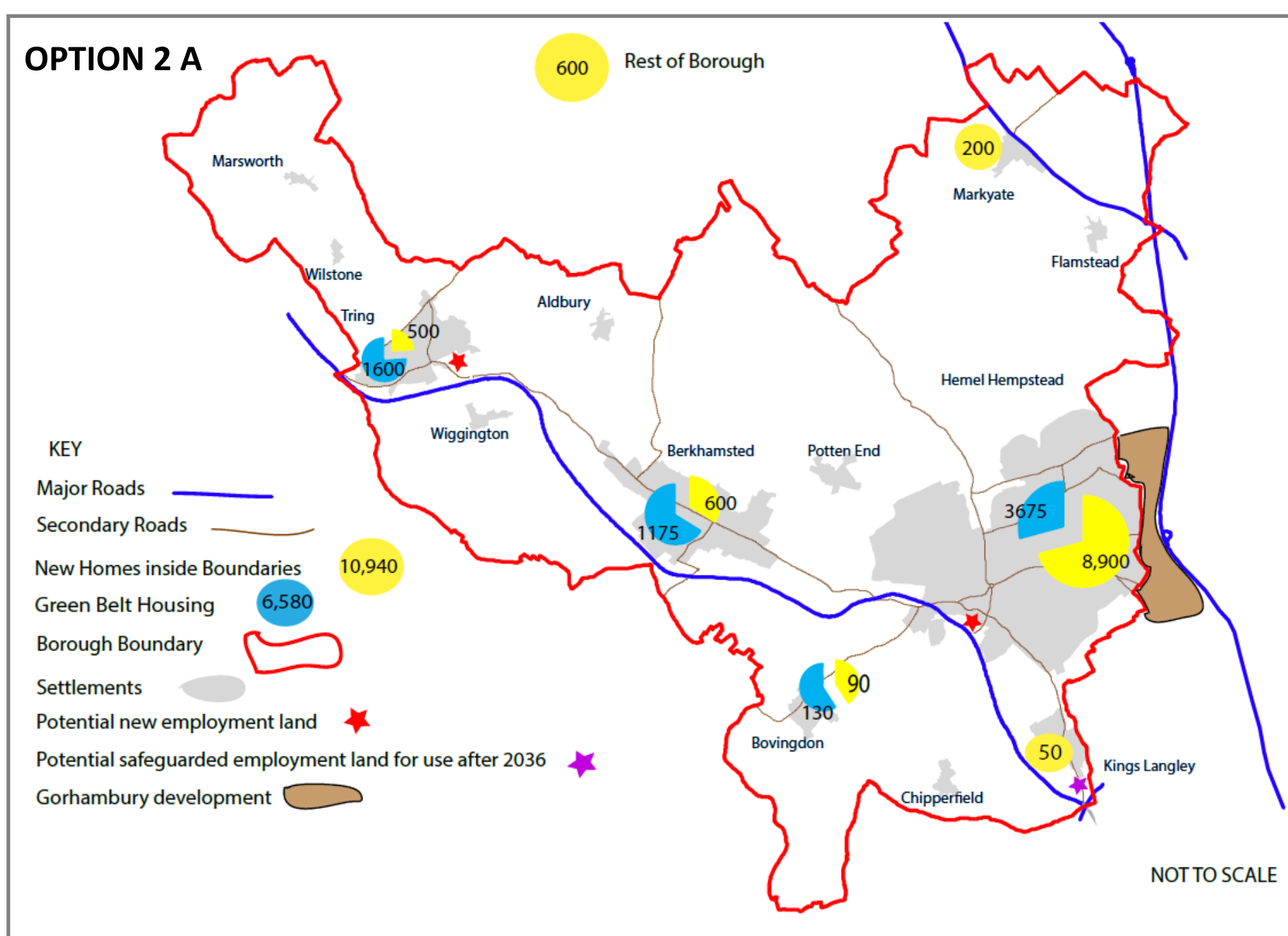
# OPTION 2

## Locally assessed need

Option 2 requires a total of **about 17,400 new homes**, with just under 6,500 of these needing to be provided in the Green Belt.

The following tables and maps summarise the implications for housing for the three ways this level of growth could be distributed.

	Option 2 A	Option 2 B	Option 2 C
Homes	This Option requires a total of about 17,400 new homes.	This Option requires a total of about 17,400 new homes.	This Option requires a total of about 17,400 new homes.
Towns	This Option would require a more significant outward expansion of the three towns than Option 1A	This Option would require a significant outward expansion of the three towns. Expansion at Hemel Hempstead would be larger than with Option 2A, while expansion at Berkhamsted and Tring would be somewhat smaller in scale.	This Option would require a significant outward expansion of the three towns. However, expansion would be smaller in scale than with Option 2A, particularly at Tring.
Large Villages	This Option would require a small extension to Bovingdon. There would be no need to expand Kings Langley or Markyate outwards, with local needs being supported by existing and new sites within the village boundaries.	Same as for Option 2A, except there would be no need to expand Bovingdon beyond its current boundaries.	This option would require expansion at Bovingdon, Kings Langley and Markyate. The expansion at Bovingdon would be larger than with Option 2A.
Smaller Villages and countryside	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.	Any housing sites in the small villages and countryside would be small scale and only meet very local needs.





# OPTION 3

## Upper Government figure

Option 3 requires a total of **25,300 new homes**, with 14,360 of these needing to be provided in the Green Belt.

This level of new homes would require all the Green Belt sites that are being promoted for development in the Borough. This includes some sites that are within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), or affected by other constraints that would need to be overcome, such as being in areas of flood risk. It may also require some further sites that may come to light as part of the current 'call for sites' process, and/or for sites to be built at a higher density than we have currently assumed.

Option 3	
Homes	This Option requires a total of 25,300 new homes.
Towns	This Option would require a more significant outward expansion of the three towns than any of the other suggested growth options.
Large Villages	This Option would require a much more significant outward expansion of Kings Langley and Markyate than with any of the other suggested growth options. Expansion at Bovingdon would be marginally higher than it would under Option 1C.
Smaller Villages and countryside	There would be the need for some new housing sites in the small villages and countryside.

