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# Shaping Elmbridge

## A New Local Plan

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Ray Lee - Director  
Mark Behrendt, Planning Policy Manager

# Why are we here?



## Why we are preparing a new Plan

- Government position
- Housing needs
- Land supply
- What happens if we do nothing

## About the consultation document

- Approach
- Options
- Preferred Option

## Next Steps

# Government's position



The Government wants to build 1 million houses by 2020  
UK need identified as being between 232,000 and 300,000  
per annum

## **Sajid Javid – Secretary of State for Communities**

Government to publish a white paper outlining “some  
more radical measures to really boost housing supply”

“[local and national politicians] must be prepared to  
make difficult calls, even if they’re unpopular”

“Everyone agrees we need to build more homes. But too  
many of us object to them being built next to us. We’ve got  
to change that attitude”

## **Gavin Barwell – Housing and Planning Minister**

“My main role is to insist that every council in the  
country does not try to duck the hard decision of  
meeting the need in their area.”



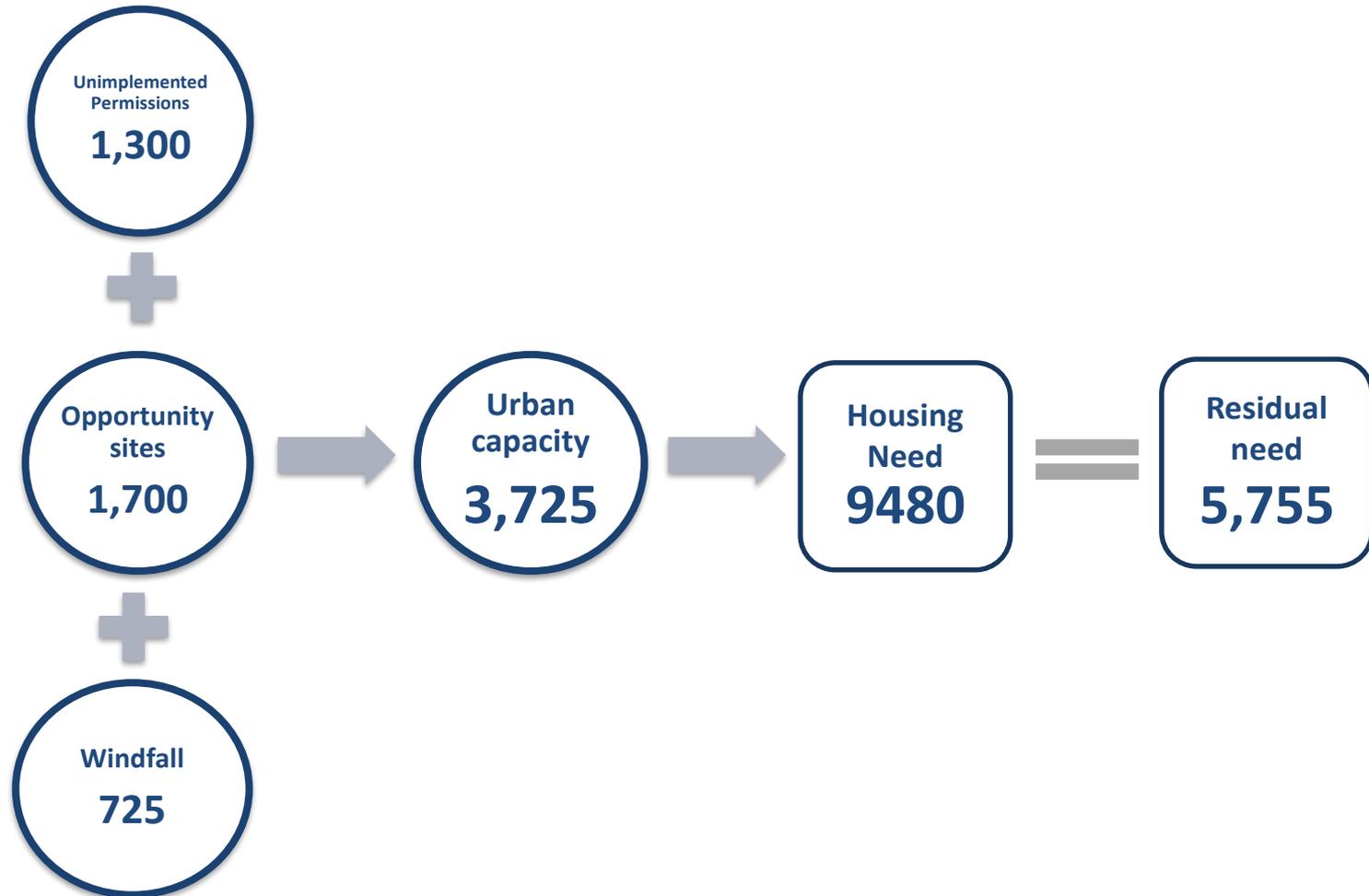
# If we don't plan positively?



- Government policy requires us to plan positively and to try and meet our development needs. Including considering amending Green Belt boundaries where such land no longer meets the purposes of Green Belt
- Government has powers to intervene directly and prepare plan or ask other agency to intervene
- Planning by Appeal – developers put in applications and appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on any refusal



# Housing need and land supply



# Cost of Housing

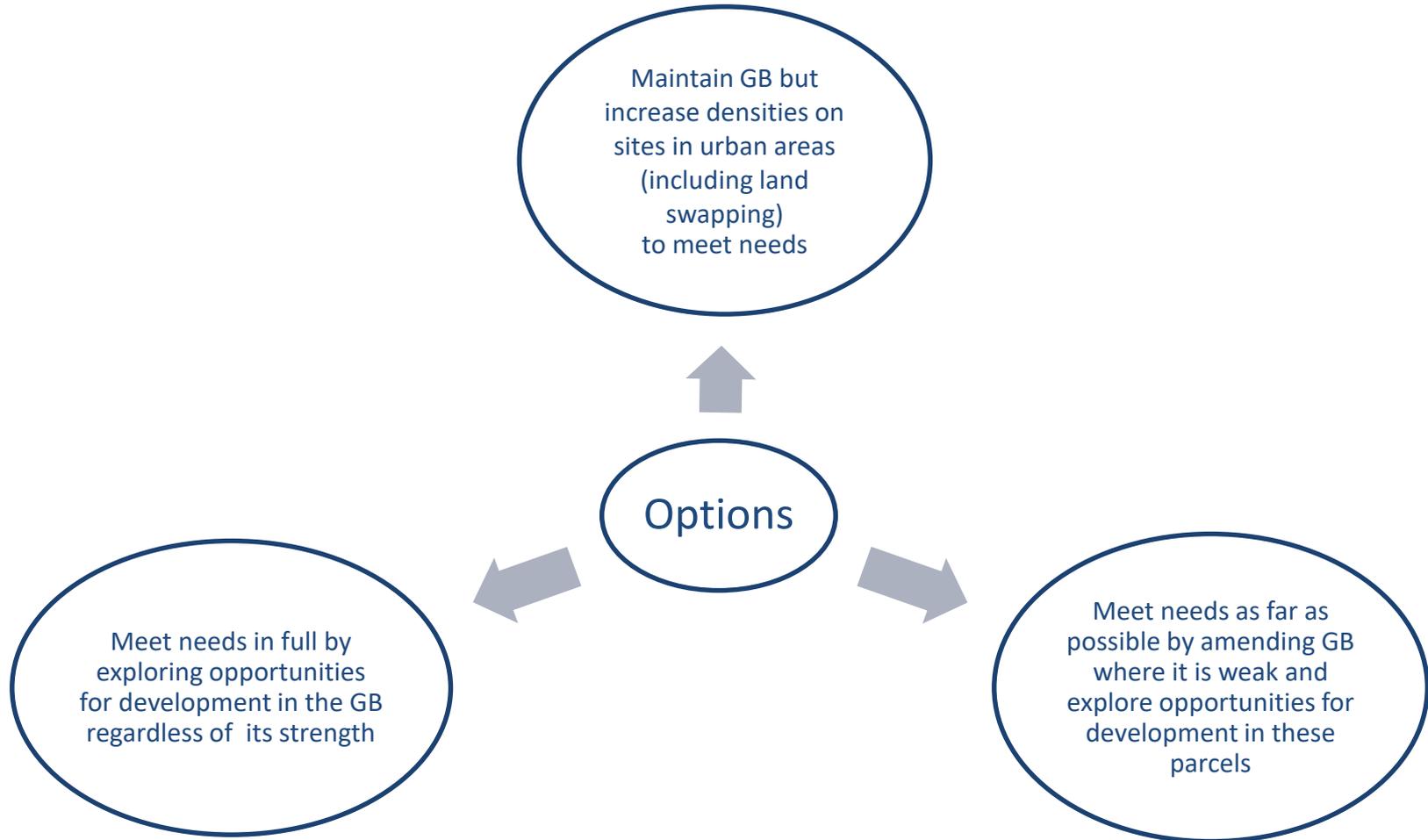


Key issue in Elmbridge is the cost of housing

- High average cost
- Prices significantly beyond local salaries
- Limited delivery of 2 and 3 bedroomed homes

Assessed need for affordable housing – 332 per annum

# Options



# Option 1



**Maintain existing Green Belt boundaries and deliver all development by concentrating it within the urban area – including developing open spaces and relocating these to the Green Belt**

## Benefits

- Seeks to meet needs in full
- Protects Green Belt by preserving current settlement boundaries
- Makes Green Belt work harder
- High density development would deliver smaller, potentially cheaper, market housing

## Disadvantages

- Limited number of appropriate sites in the urban area
- Changing character due to increased urbanisation of residential areas
- Reduces accessibility of open space to most urban parts of the Borough
- Development viability could impact on the delivery of affordable housing
- Difficulties in delivering infrastructure alongside development
- Places pressure on those areas that have historically taken most development
- Will not deliver the desired mix of houses and flats

# Options 2



## Option 2

**Seek to meet needs as far as possible by amending Green Belt where it is at its weakest**

### Benefits

- Protects the character of the urban area
- Protects 97% of the Green Belt ensuring boundaries endure beyond the plan
- Maintains existing settlement pattern whilst increasing in housing provision
- Larger sites enable infrastructure to be delivered alongside development
- Increase in the delivery of affordable housing and smaller units

### Disadvantages

- Will not meet housing needs in full
- Some loss of Green Belt
- Development may be in less sustainable locations on the edge of urban areas
- Increased pressure on highways
- Reliance on other Local Planning Authorities to meet residual needs

# Options 3



## Option 3

**Meet needs in full by amending Green Belt boundaries regardless of the strength with which it meets the purposes of Green Belt.**

### Benefits

- Protects the character of the urban area
- Meets housing needs in full
- Larger sites enable infrastructure to be delivered alongside development
- Increase in the delivery of affordable housing

### Disadvantages

- More significant loss of Green Belt
- Significantly increases the risk of settlement coalescence, encroachment into countryside and excessive sprawl
- Fundamental changes to the nature of the Borough and its settlement patterns
- Massive pressure on infrastructure in particular highways

# Amending Green Belt Boundaries



Only in Exceptional Circumstances through the preparation of a Local Plan

## What are Exceptional Circumstances?

- Significant unmet need for housing is not on its own an exceptional circumstances.
- Worst affordability in the South East and 4<sup>th</sup> worst in the country (including London)
- Delivery on small sites been skewed to larger houses
- Need to provide smaller units (2 & 3 bed)

# Approach to GB Review



## What is Green Belt?

Not an environmental designation or a landscape designation

National policy defines Green Belt as land that is kept permanently open in order to:

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

Review tested how different defined areas met these purposes



# Approach to GB Review



- Identify parcels - Parcels defined by permanent boundaries (Motorways, A and B roads, major watercourses, railway lines, reservoirs)
- Assess each parcel against 3 of the purposes of Green Belt
  - check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- Purposes of supporting urban regeneration and historic towns not assessed.
- Each purpose scored from 1 to 5
- No total score – each purpose equally important in terms of Green Belt

# Other Constraints



## Green Belt is not the only constraint

### Absolute constraints

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Ancient Woodland
- Flood Zone 3b (Flood Plain)
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Village Greens and Commons

### Local constraints

- Open Space for recreation
- Local Nature Reserves

# Our preferred option



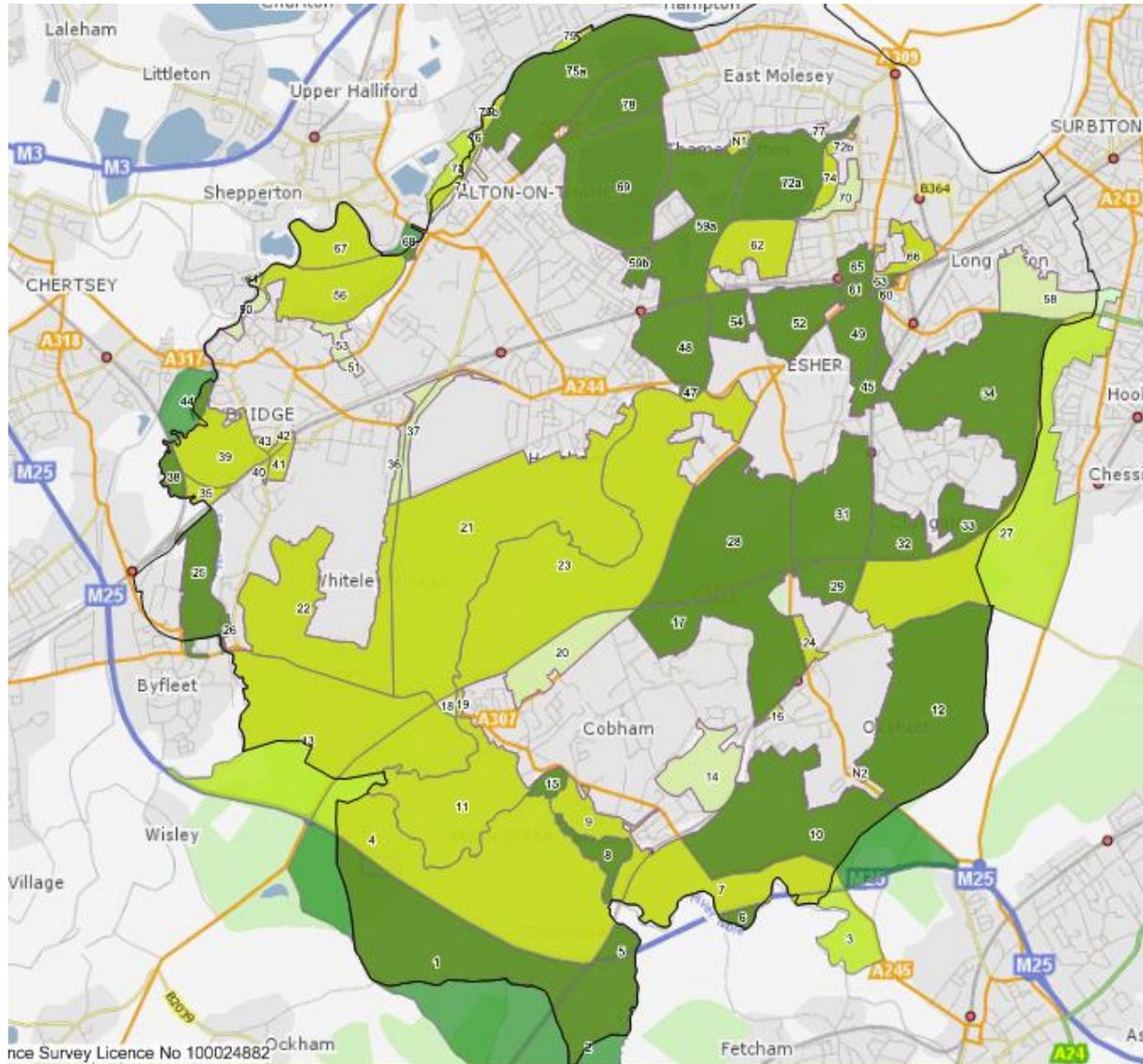
## Option 2 – why

- Balances government directive to increase housing whilst recognising constraints
- Limited release of Green Belt – 3% of total GB in Elmbridge
- Difficulties in delivering affordable housing and smaller homes - need to plan for next generation
- Strengthen remaining Green Belt
- Supports better infrastructure planning

## Where – 3 key areas identified

- Assessed as only weakly meeting purposes of Green Belt
- Not wholly constrained by absolute constraints (Flood Plain, SSSI)

# Review Results



	Strongly Performing
	Moderately Performing
	Weakly Performing

# Parcel 14



-  Green Belt Parcel 14
-  Village Green / Common
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Planning Application 2015/1222
-  1 Knowle Hill House
-  2 Watercut Copse
-  3 Faimile Park
-  4 War Memorial
-  5 Scout Camp

# Parcel 20



# Consultation and Next Steps



Consultation deadline extended by 2 weeks to 24 February 2017

We want to hear your views especially if you think there are other options

Prepare consultation statement setting out concerns and responses

Prepare Preferred Approach – More detailed plan including policies, allocations, infrastructure requirements and designations – Summer 2017

Pre submission – seek representations from anyone objecting to the final plan. These representations then submitted to Inspector alongside plan for public examination

# Summary



- If we don't someone else will – either the Government or developers through appeals
- By releasing some Green Belt we can plan positively and recognise there are limits
- Larger sites better for delivery of infrastructure – schools and other services can come forward on sites where required
- Strengthens rest of GB
- We can improve our delivery of smaller and more affordable housing
- All data on the website and available to view at the Civic Centre

# Questions

