

## **Note by Cllr Monika Juneja, Lead Member for Planning & Governance**

Volume V of the Green Belt and Countryside Study (GBCS) was commissioned in order to assess in more detail a number of potential development options that were included within the Local Plan Strategy and Sites Issues and Options document. Alongside Volume V, we are also publishing the additional work related to Volume II and IV arising from the Joint Scrutiny Committee. This work, done by Pegasus, reviewed certain aspects of the previous volumes as a result of comments raised through the Issues and Options consultation and the Joint Special Local Plan Scrutiny Forum held on 4 March 2014. This looks in more detail at potential development areas around the urban edge and the inseting of villages. Any relevant change in approach has been reflected in Volume V as appropriate to ensure consistency.

It is important to observe that Potential Development Areas (PDAs) identified anywhere in the GBCS (Volumes I to V) have been identified by Pegasus as a result of an assessment of those areas of land that may be potentially developed without harming the main purposes of the Green Belt. It does not allocate land for development. Instead, these are decisions that we will make as a Council as we prepare our new Local Plan. We will need to consider the findings of the GBCS alongside a range of other evidence base documents to ensure that we plan for sustainable development. This includes assessing whether the land is available for development, as evidenced through our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). We are in the process of updating our SHLAA which will look at suitable, available and viable sites across the borough, including brownfield sites in the urban areas and villages. PDAs identified in Volume V will be considered in the SHLAA to see if they are available for development and deliverable over the plan period.

The GBCS forms part of our evidence base. It is not a plan or policy, nor is it a signal of political intent to develop on the Green Belt. Instead, it will help us demonstrate to an inspector what level of growth we can sustainably accommodate in our borough to help meet our future needs. Having a sound and up to date Local Plan is of paramount importance, as it will help us resist development elsewhere that we would rather not see.