



*Dacorum Borough Local Plan
1991 - 2011*

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

DEACONSFIELD ROAD (SEMPILL ROAD)



June 2005

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1. Local Plan Context:

- 1.1 The Dacorum Borough Local Plan was adopted by the Council in April 2004. Policy 10 of this Plan seeks to optimise the use of urban land. It aims to ensure that land assembly and planning deliver comprehensive and co-ordinated schemes which enhance the urban environment. Through this development brief the Council hopes to avoid a piecemeal approach to development and ensure the creation of a high quality residential environment.

2. Site Assessment:

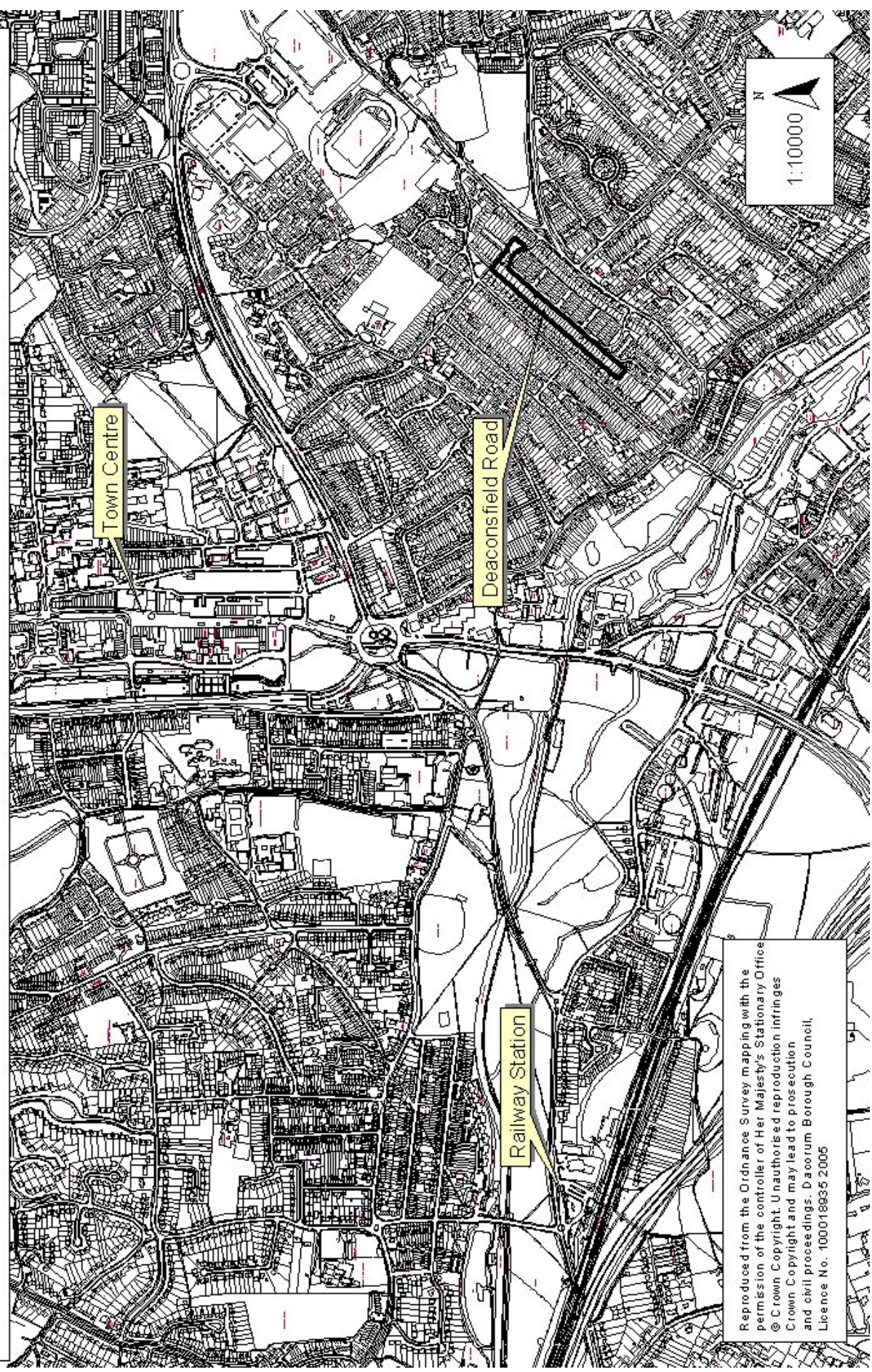
- 2.1 The site falls within a residential area of Hemel Hempstead, where appropriate residential development is encouraged (Figure 1). A number of planning applications have already been received for residential development (Figure 2).
- 2.2 Should further development opportunities arise on this site, the principles set out in this Development Brief will apply.
- 2.3 This residential area, known as Crabtree, is characterised by regularly spaced inter-war housing, based on a structure of parallel roads. This part of Hemel Hempstead has also been extensively infilled, resulting in pockets of more recent housing.
- 2.4 The immediate surrounding area features regularly spaced blocks of modern terraces (Sempill Road) and semi-detached housing (Deaconsfield Road and Ivory Court).
- 2.5 All of the properties fronting the southern side of Deaconsfield Road have long rear gardens.
- 2.6 Three trees within the site are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). No other trees within the site are considered to be of such significant amenity value as to warrant specific protection.
- 2.7 The land slopes downwards from Deaconsfield Road to Sempill Road, with the steepest gradients at the northern end of the site.

3. Key Aims / Objectives:

- **Secure a comprehensive and cohesive residential development that makes best use of urban land.**
- **Provide high quality small residential units, using materials sympathetic to the area.**
- **Limit the impact of development on existing residents, including those in Deaconsfield Road and Sempill Road.**
- **Create a new street frontage to Sempill Road, including provision of a footway.**
- **Secure an appropriate contribution to the provision of affordable housing in the area.**

Location Plan

Figure 1








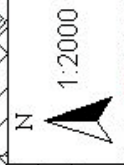
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Site Plan Deaconsfield Road (Sempill Road)

Figure 2

Key

-  Denotes approximate location of Council owned land at rear of Deaconsfield Road properties
-  Denotes approximate location of new footway (please refer to design survey for further information regarding its location)
-  Grass verge to be retained and improved through tree planting
-  Site boundary
-  Plots granted planning permission for residential development



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4. Development Principles:

Building Design:

- 4.1 Although the development of this site is anticipated to come forward in phases, each separate application must respect the design and layout of both existing and proposed dwellings.



Recent development to the rear of 34-46 Deaconsfield Road

- 4.2 The Council's preference is for semi-detached units. However, other dwelling types, such as short terraces, may be acceptable if appropriately designed.
- 4.3 Buildings should be a maximum of 2 storey.
- 4.4 External materials to be sympathetic and appropriate to the area.
- 4.5 Use of quality paving materials rather than tarmac for hard landscaping on frontages and driveways.
- 4.6 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have incorporated sustainable drainage practices into the design of each proposal i.e. by minimising areas of hardstanding and through the use of permeable paving.

Amenity Issues:

- 4.7 A minimum of 23 metres must be retained between the rear windows of existing properties and the rear windows of the new dwellings.
- 4.8 The rear gardens of both existing and proposed units should comply with Local Plan standards (i.e. not less than 11.5m in length). Flats will be expected to provide a private communal amenity area to the rear, at least equal to the footprint of the building.

- 4.9 Front gardens should be open-plan, or the boundaries delineated by low railings and/or low planting.
- 4.10 When assessing amenity issues, reference will be made to guidance from the Building Research Establishment¹.

Trees / Landscaping:

- 4.11 Rather than attempting to integrate inappropriate trees within the site, new trees that are more suited to a street environment should be planted.
- 4.12 Existing trees within the highway verge that contribute positively to the area should be protected.
- 4.13 Consideration should also be given to new tree planting within the broad highway verge. Suitable street tree species are:-
- Mountain Ash (*Sorbus* spp)
 - Hazel (*Corylus* spp)
 - Whitebeam (*Sorbus* spp)
 - Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp)
- 4.14 In order to ensure that new tree planting in the highway verge is both possible and sustainable, plans should be clearly annotated to show all necessary underground service infrastructure routed under the footway and/or vehicular crossovers.
- 4.15 Consideration will be given to the removal of the two trees within the highway verge that are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), subject to their appropriate replacement.
- 4.16 To ensure the future health of new tree specimens within this verge, buildings should be set back between 1.5 and 2m from the rear edge of the highway verge, or new footway where this is located at the rear of this verge (see Figure 2).
- 4.17 The mature Beech tree to the rear of 62 Deaconsfield Road is also covered by a TPO. This tree must be retained and protected during redevelopment. Planning permission has already been granted for the redevelopment of land to the rear of 62-66 Deaconsfield Road, for four 1-bed flats. No objections were raised to this scheme by the Trees and Woodland Officer due to the tree's location within the communal amenity area. The redevelopment of the rear of Number 60 Deaconsfield Road, into which the tree canopy extends, will only be permitted if redeveloped in conjunction with adjoining plot(s) to enable an appropriate layout to be achieved. To overcome the objections of the Trees and Woodland Officer this layout must provide sufficient distance between the tree canopy and any new buildings.

Highways Issues:

- 4.18 Direct access from Sempill Road.
- 4.19 The number of new access points should be minimised.

¹ 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice,' P Littlefair (1991).

- 4.20 Access points involving the crossing of highway land or land within the ownership of Dacorum Borough Council will require a financial contribution. This will be secured either through a section 106 agreement or as part of an easement payment (see section 5 and Appendix 1 for further details).
- 4.21 Existing crossovers serving garages to the rear of Deaconsfield Road may need to be relocated and/or reinstated if the plots are redeveloped for housing.



Existing access point across the highway verge

- 4.22 Double width crossovers will not be permitted to serve a single dwelling, but may be acceptable if required to serve a pair of semi-detached units.
- 4.23 Pedestrian visibility splays should be provided and maintained on both sides of all vehicle access points. These visibility splays should have dimensions of 2 m x 2 m, within which there will be no obstruction to the visibility between 600 mm and 2 m above the carriageway. Further advice can be obtained from the Highways Authority.

New Footway:

- 4.24 All planning applications must indicate the location of a new 1.8m wide footway, to be implemented by the County Council in their capacity as Highways Authority. The approximate location of this footway is shown in Figure 2. A more detailed plan is available from the Development Plans section of Dacorum Borough Council
- 4.25 Construction costs, calculated per sqm, will be borne by the developers.
- 4.26 A site survey undertaken on behalf of the Council showing the precise location and ground levels for this footway is set out in a separate advice note. Regard must be had to this survey when submitting a planning application.

Parking:

- 4.27 Two bed units will be expected to provide a minimum of one off-street parking space and three bed units two off-street parking spaces. These requirements are based on the maximum standards set out in the Local Plan and an assessment of site accessibility. These levels of provision are required to ensure that the new

development does not have a detrimental impact upon pedestrian and highway safety in Sempill Road and cause over-spill parking on the highway verge. Sempill Road is not of sufficient width to allow on-street parking on both sides of the highway.

- 4.28 Car parking should be arranged so as not to dominate the street scene and should be located behind the building line.
- 4.29 If the area of land to the rear between 120-122 Deaconsfield Road and rear of 97-103 St Albans Hill comes forward for redevelopment, alternative parking provision must be made on-site, to compensate for the loss of the garages.



Sempill Road is too narrow to accommodate increased levels of on-street parking

5. Financial Considerations:

Nature of Provision:

- 5.1 Developer contributions will be required towards affordable housing. Depending upon the location and type of development, contributions will also be required towards:-
 - construction of new footway
 - tree planting within the existing highway verge
 - access across Council-owned land
 - providing local childcare, youth and library facilities
- 5.2 The County Council have advised that the contribution required towards local childcare, youth and library facilities will be £550 (index linked) per new unit.
- 5.3 There is no main sewer in Sempill Road. Details of connections to one of several possible sewers in the immediate area will be subject to a planning condition.
- 5.4 Developers will be expected to ensure that there is adequate waste water capacity both on and off-site to serve the development, and that the development will not result in problems for existing or new users. Developers are recommended to contact Thames Water for further advice on this issue.

Affordable Housing:

- 5.4 To accord with the requirements of Policy 20 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan, each development will be required to provide a commuted sum towards the provision of affordable housing.
- 5.5 The precise level of this contribution will be decided through negotiations between the developer and the Head of Property and Asset Management.

Method of Payment:

- 5.6 In order to simplify these financial arrangements, where the Council retains ownership of a strip of land adjacent to the highway verge, these developer contributions will be combined together and secured through a single payment per site (negotiated by the Head of Property and Asset Management).
- 5.7 Elsewhere within the site contributions will be secured by means of a legal agreement (s106 agreement).
- 5.8 Further guidance on financial issues is provided in Appendix 1.

6. Planning Applications:

- 6.1 In addition to the standard forms and site plans, each planning application must also contain the following:
 - (a) A short statement indicating:
 - i. how the new development will fit in with any adjacent dwellings, in terms of layout, design and levels.
 - ii. whether the proposed development will result in the loss of off-street parking serving residents of Deaconsfield Road and, if so, what measures are being taken to mitigate these effects.
 - iii. the scope of the financial contributions to be provided.
 - (b) A cross section(s) showing site levels and the location of the new footway.
 - (c) A 'Sustainability Checklist' (see Appendix 1 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 for further information).

7. Further Information:

For further information please contact:-

- Laura Wood: Senior Planning Officer, Development Plans – 01442 228661 (*For initial advice on planning issues*)
- Peter Hamilton: Valuation & Estates Manager – 01442 228348 (*For advice on easements and developer contributions*)
- Colin Farrar: Head of Housing – 01442 228526 (*For advice on affordable housing issues*)

APPENDIX 1

ADVICE NOTE

Calculation of Developer Contributions

1.1 What is the role of this advice note?

- 1.1.1 The area covered by this Advice Note is shown on Map 1.
- 1.1.2 This guidance has been written to clarify the Council's approach towards affordable housing and other financial contributions that will be required as part of any residential development on this site.
- 1.1.3 The Council expects developers and builders to take account of policies within the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011, particularly the need for affordable housing, when acquiring land for housing development. The Council also expects advice on the development brief for Deaconsfield Road / Sempill Road, Hemel Hempstead to be followed.
- 1.1.4 Developers should take into account any other significant development costs associated with new residential development in this area, such as the provision of sewers. It will be assumed that these have been factored into calculations regarding land values.
- 1.1.5 Simply because there are abnormal development costs does not mean that appropriate developer contributions will not be required.

1.2 Nature of the financial contributions:

- 1.2.1 On this site, financial contributions will be required towards affordable housing provision. Depending upon the precise location and type of development proposed, contributions will be required towards:
- Securing access rights across Council-owned land
 - Connection to Council-owned sewers
 - Providing local childcare, youth and library facilities
 - Construction of a new pedestrian footway
 - Landscaping
- 1.2.2 The County Council have advised that contributions will not be required towards school facilities from this particular development area.

Deaconsfield Road (Sempill Road)

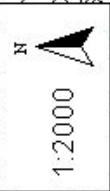
Key

Denotes approximate location of Council owned land at rear of Deaconsfield Road properties

Site boundary

Map 1

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2. AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRIBUTIONS

2.1 Affordable housing policy

- 2.1.1 Policy 20 of the Local Plan sets out the Council's general approach to affordable housing. This specifies that within Hemel Hempstead, affordable housing will be sought on sites of greater than 1 hectare or capable of accommodating 25 dwellings. However, the Policy clearly states that any attempts by developers to circumvent these thresholds by ignoring the potential for an amalgamation of small sites will be resisted. The rear gardens of Deaconsfield Road (even numbers) and adjoining land are considered to comprise a single potential development site, in the context of the Local Plan and are the subject of a development brief.
- 2.1.2 Policy 10 of the Plan reinforces the need to avoid site fragmentation. This policy allows for building development to be implemented in phases, provided each individual scheme does not frustrate the objectives of providing an appropriate level of affordable housing in accordance with Policy 20.

2.2 Development potential of the site

Size of Site:

- 2.2.1 The net potential developable area is estimated at approximately 1.05ha.
- 2.2.2 This calculation of site area assumes that the existing properties fronting Deaconsfield Road will retain a rear garden of at least 11.5 metres.
- 2.2.3 This site therefore exceeds the size threshold set out in Policy 20 of the Local Plan.

Capacity of Site:

- 2.2.4 Policy 10 (*Optimising the Use of Urban Land*) of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 states that new residential development should be designed to achieve the maximum density consistent with the character of the area, surrounding land uses and other environmental constraints.
- 2.2.5 The potential number of units will vary depending upon a number of factors – particularly the mix of dwelling types. However, it is considered that the potential development capacity of the sites is around 35 dwellings per hectare.
- 2.2.6 In addition to the Local Plan, the Council has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'Development in Residential Areas.' Deaconsfield Road falls within the Crabtree Character Area (HCA17). This advice states that in this part of Hemel Hempstead, new residential development should generally be of medium density (25-35 dwellings/ha).

2.2.7 There are a number of trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) between Deaconsfield Road and Sempill Road and these will impact upon the overall capacity of the site.

2.3 Method of affordable housing provision:

2.3.1 The Council's preference is for affordable housing to be provided on-site through 'design and build' schemes where possible. However, the Council will accept commuted sums where it is not considered practical or reasonable to provide affordable housing on site.

2.3.2 This commuted sum should cover the full cost of the land subsidy that would have been incurred by the developer / landowner if affordable housing had been provided on the site.

2.4 Level of affordable housing provision:

2.4.1 The methodology for calculating commuted payments is taken from the Council's Affordable Housing Advice Note.

CALCULATION:

- **open market land cost of the whole site *multiplied by***
- **normal proportion of affordable housing (i.e. a minimum of 20%)**

multiplied by

- **subsidy on the land element (taken as 60%)**

= Affordable Housing Contribution

2.4.2 Calculations will be made by the Council's Valuation and Estates Manager and will take into account any development appraisal provided by the applicant.

3. EASEMENT PAYMENTS

3.1 Location of Council-owned land:

3.1.1 Access to some of the land on the Sempill Road frontage can only be achieved by crossing a narrow strip of land that is currently in the ownership of Dacorum Borough Council. The extent of this strip of land is shown on Map 1.

3.1.2 Where an easement is required to cross Council-owned land a capital sum will be payable by the developers to secure access rights. This payment will

ensure that these rights are transferred from the Council to the new landowners in perpetuity.

- 3.1.3 The precise arrangements relating to these access arrangements will be set out in an easement agreement, drawn up by the Council's legal and estates departments.

4. METHODS OF SECURING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Introduction:

- 4.1.1 Two different approaches will be taken towards securing developer financial contributions.

- 4.1.2 Method 1 will apply where access is required across Council-owned land – understood to be land to the rear of numbers 38 to 122 Deaconsfield Road. Method 2 will apply to all other land covered by the development brief. These different approaches are outlined below.

4.2 Method 1 - Sites requiring access across Council-owned land

- 4.2.1 The Council would normally require two separate legal agreements to be drawn up for each site that comes forward for redevelopment. These would cover:-

(a) Payments for affordable housing, childcare, youth and library facilities; and if required, a new footpath / verge, with landscaping and connection to Council-owned sewers (through a Section 106 agreement).

(b) Access (through an easement payment).

- 4.2.2 In order to simplify these financial arrangements, the Council will combine all of the financial contributions together and secure these through a single payment per site (negotiated by the Head of Property and Asset Management). This approach was initially agreed by the Housing Portfolio Holder on 20 December 2004 and updated

- 4.2.3 Development cannot commence on-site until the necessary legal agreement is signed.

4.3 Method 2 - All other sites:

- 4.3.1 If an easement payment (to the Council) is not applicable, a section 106 agreement covering all relevant financial contributions will be required. This may include:

- Affordable housing
- Pedestrian footway

- Landscaping
- Local childcare, youth and library facilities