



Woking Local Development Documents

Core Strategy
Publication document
July 2011

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) Statement of Representations Procedure

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 (Regulation 27)

The Core Strategy Publication Document represents the Council's chosen strategy for the Borough having considered other alternatives and all relevant matters. The Core Strategy is a key document that will provide the necessary framework for determining the scale of development until 2027, where it will broadly be located and the standard of quality that the development should achieve. It includes specific policies to address the key issues and challenges facing the Borough until 2027.

The Core Strategy has evolved through various stages with extensive public involvement. The Council has valued comments made by the public to date and has taken them into account before finalising the document for publication.

The Core Strategy Publication Document and its accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report is published for a period of nine weeks to give the public the opportunity to formally comment on the documents. Any representations made will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.

Representations can be made during the publication period which begins on 25 July 2011 and ends at 5pm on 23 September 2011.

The Woking Borough Core Strategy Publication Document, the Core Strategy Publication Document Sustainability Appraisal Report and other proposed submission documents are available for inspection at the following venues.

- Woking Borough Council, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, GU21 6YL. Monday to Friday 9am - 4.45pm.
- Woking, Byfleet, West Byfleet and Knaphill libraries. Please see www.surreycc.gov.uk for their opening times.
- On the Council's website, www.woking2027.info

Response forms are also available at these locations.

Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address of any of the following:

- that the Core Strategy DPD has been submitted for independent examination
- the publication of the recommendations of any person appointed to carry out an independent examination of the Core Strategy DPD
- the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD.

If you require this notification, please remember to specify this on the representation form and provide your contact address.



How to get involved and have your say



It is important that you are involved in the preparation of the Core Strategy. If you have views on any part of this document this is your **final chance** to tell us by making your formal representations. Accompanying this document is a representation form that we would like you to complete. This form is also available online at www.woking2027.info

Representations made at this stage should relate to one of the 'tests of soundness'. The box below sets out the tests. To be 'sound', the Core Strategy should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy. It must also satisfy the legal procedural requirements and be in conformity with regional planning policy. Meeting these requirements will be the Planning Inspector's main consideration. All comments on the Core Strategy should refer to these tests.

Tests of soundness

(i) Justified

To be 'justified' a development plan document needs to be founded on a robust and credible evidence base involving:

- evidence of participation of the local community and others having a stake in the area
- research/fact finding – the choices made in the plan are justified by the evidence. What is the source of the evidence? How up to date and convincing is it?
- the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives. Have the reasonable alternatives been considered and is there a clear audit trail showing how and why the preferred strategy/approach was arrived at?

(ii) Effective

To be 'effective' the development plan document needs to be:

- deliverable
- flexible
- able to be monitored.

(iii) National policy

The development plan document should be consistent with national policy. Where there is a departure, local authorities must provide clear and convincing reasoning to justify their approach.

At this stage people are encouraged to relate their comments to a test of soundness. The representation form has been designed to guide respondents to do this.

The publication period runs from Monday 25 July and closes at **5pm on Friday 23 September 2011**. Comments received after this consultation period cannot be taken into account. Please be aware that we are unable to accept anonymous or confidential responses.

If you require this document to be transferred to another format such as a large text version, Braille or a copy in Microsoft Word that can be used with an audio-reader, please contact the Planning Policy team and we will do our best to accommodate your needs. Our email address is planning.policy@woking.gov.uk and our telephone number is **01483 743871**.

What happens next?

At the end of the nine week consultation period in September, all of the responses received will be submitted to the Secretary of State in October 2011 along with the Core Strategy Publication Document, Proposals Map and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal report.



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Woking Borough Council has a statutory responsibility to prepare Local Development Documents (LDD) that will collectively replace the Woking Borough Local Plan (1999). The Core Strategy is a key LDD because it will provide the local strategic planning policy context within which all the other LDDs will be prepared. The Core Strategy has been prepared in a timely manner in accordance with the Council's adopted Local Development Scheme.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy covers the period up to 2027 but also ensures that its implementation will not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It has a geographical coverage of the whole Borough. Its policies and proposals are justified by robust and up-to-date evidence. There is a clear path for its implementation and an in-built mechanism for monitoring its performance. It builds in sufficient contingencies and flexibility to adapt to uncertainties.
- 1.3 The Core Strategy enhances the existing strengths and opportunities of the Borough to the benefit of everyone, but also addresses the weaknesses and threats that exist within it. For example, Woking Borough is nationally recognised for its work and commitment to environmental improvement and mitigation of the adverse impacts of climate change. It has made significant investment in an energy efficient infrastructure, which future development could be made to utilise and the Core Strategy includes policies to enable this to be achieved. Woking's community is relatively affluent. However, there are pockets of deprivation, which the Core Strategy seeks to address. In this regard, it sets out a locally distinctive policy to deal with pockets of deprivation at Sheerwater, Maybury and Lakeview Estate in Goldsworth Park. These areas have been identified by Woking and Surrey Strategic Partnerships for priority action and investment.
- 1.4 The Core Strategy contains an analysis of the current state of the Borough and the key challenges facing the area. It sets a clear vision of what the Borough will look like by 2027 and a clear sense of direction for how the vision will be achieved. It seeks to respond to the challenges facing local residents, workers and visitors and does so by taking into account national and international planning policies, regulations and directives.
- 1.5 Public involvement has been integral to its preparation and the aspirations of the local community as expressed in the Sustainable Community Strategy have been a key objective. The Council has valued and taken into account comments received from public consultation exercises. The Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.6 The social, economic and environmental effects of the Core Strategy have been assessed through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and appropriate mitigation measures are incorporated to overcome any adverse impact. A Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation has been carried out to complement the SA. The Core Strategy therefore strikes a good balance between the three strands of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental. The Council is confident that the implementation of the Core Strategy will help create a sustainable community in which people will choose to live, work and visit.



1.0 Introduction

What is the Core Strategy and what will it mean to the people who live, work and visit Woking Borough?

1.7 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act) sought to reform the planning system by making it simpler and speedier to prepare plans, and to put community involvement at the heart of plan-making. Woking Borough Council has taken the reform aims of the Act into account in preparing this Core Strategy. Of the Local Development Documents that the Council has committed to prepare, the following will be Development Plan Documents (DPD):

- Core Strategy
- Site Allocations DPD
- Development Management Policies DPD.

1.8 The timetable for the preparation of these DPDs is set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme, which can be found on the Council's website (www.woking.gov.uk).

1.9 The Core Strategy sets out the overall local strategic context for the preparation of the other Local Development Documents. It is visionary, proactive and based on robust evidence.

1.10 The Act makes the Sustainability Appraisal of Development Plan Documents a statutory requirement. In this regard, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report has been prepared to support the Core Strategy. The SA is published as a separate document, but its findings have been used to inform the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. The SA has been prepared as an integral part of the Core Strategy process.

1.11 The Core Strategy will affect the lives of people who live, work and visit Woking Borough in a variety of ways.

- It sets out the overall approach to managing development and change in the Borough.
- It identifies the broad location for new homes, jobs, community facilities and services and how they will be delivered.
- It sets the framework for the provision of affordable housing in the Borough.
- It sets out quality standards for design and sustainable construction that development has to meet to be acceptable in Woking Borough.
- It sets out a framework for securing the necessary infrastructure to support development, including transport, education, health, utilities, community facilities, open spaces and green infrastructure and how this will be delivered. Details of this are set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- It identifies Woking Borough's contribution towards minimising the adverse impacts of climate change and how it intends to meet its international and national obligations towards environmental improvement.
- It provides specific policy guidance to protect the Borough's diverse habitats, biodiversity, geodiversity, heritage, Green Belt and important built features such as listed buildings, historic landscapes, ancient monuments and Conservation Areas.
- Overall, it sets a framework for delivering the aspirations of the local community as set out in the Surrey and Woking Sustainable Community Strategies, and seeks to improve the well-being of the community.



1.12 The Core Strategy has been prepared to be in general conformity with National Planning Policy and all other regional and international requirements. This is one of the legal requirements that the Core Strategy has to meet to be judged sound.

How has the Core Strategy been prepared?

1.13 Five key principles underpin the preparation of the Core Strategy.

- Effective involvement of key stakeholders and the general public at all relevant stages of the process in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.
- Corporate approach to its preparation, hence the involvement of all service areas of Woking Borough Council with strong support of the Corporate Management Group.
- Robust, credible and up-to-date evidence to justify policies and proposals.
- Appropriate scrutiny and involvement of Councillors through relevant committees of the Council. In particular, a cross-party working group has been established to oversee the preparation of the Core Strategy.
- Efficient management of the process in accordance with the Local Development Scheme.

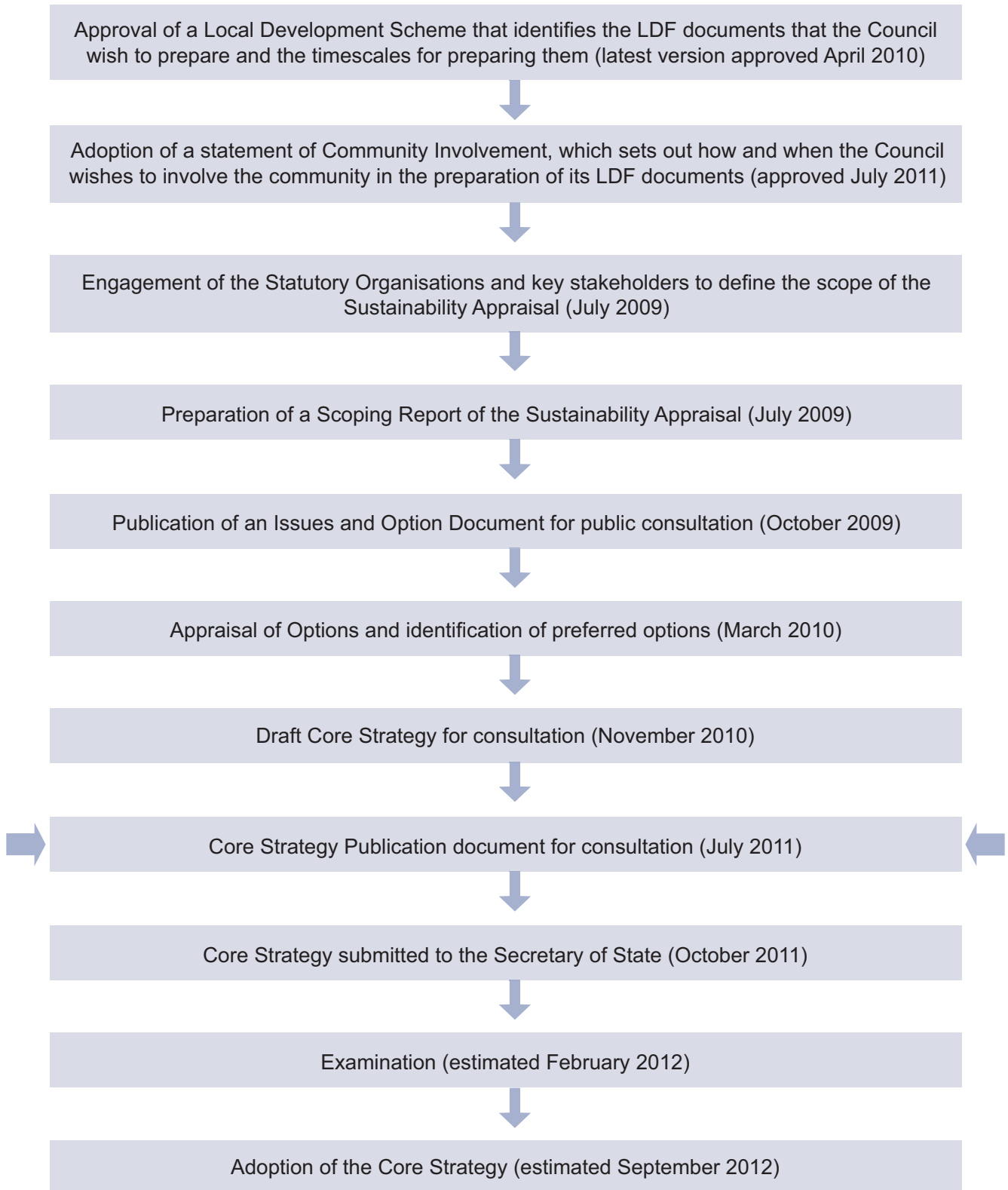
1.14 In the context of the above principles, a summary of the key stages for the production of the Core Strategy with timescales is set out in Figure 1 overleaf.

1.15 A Consultation Statement has been prepared as a separate document setting out the extent of public involvement in the Core Strategy process.



1.0 Introduction

Fig 1: Process for preparing the Core Strategy



The evidence base to inform the Core Strategy

- 1.16** An up-to-date evidence base is necessary to ensure that the policies of the Core Strategy are justified and deliverable. A great deal of information from a variety of sources has been used to inform the Core Strategy. Appendix 1 of the SA Report includes a list of this information. Other documents included in the evidence base are included as Appendix 1 of this document. Reference to the evidence base has also been made throughout the Core Strategy where relevant.

Context for the Core Strategy

Emerging changes to the planning system

- 1.17** The Government has proposed a number of changes to the planning system. These are either set out in the Decentralisation and the Localism Bill (the Bill) or in ministerial statements. The Bill is passing through Parliament and is anticipated to be enacted by the end of 2011 to be effective from April 2012. The Bill is driven by six key actions, which are to:

- lift the burden of bureaucracy
- empower communities to do things their way
- increase local control of public finance
- diversify the supply of public services
- open government to public scrutiny, and
- strengthen accountability to local people.

- 1.18** The relevant aspects of the Bill that have significant implications for the Core Strategy are:

- the abolition of Regional Strategies
- the duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development
- introduction of Neighbourhood Planning
- endorsement of the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to secure developer contributions towards infrastructure provision.

- 1.19** Since the publication of the Bill, there have been a number of ministerial statements, which local authorities are required to take into account as material considerations. These have been taken into account. A summary of the key proposals are below.

- Local authorities should prioritise growth and jobs. In this regard, the Secretary of State has written to local authorities setting out clear expectations in this regard.
- There is going to be a powerful new presumption in favour of sustainable development. This will be set out in the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (guidance will be provided about the definition of sustainable development).



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- There will be a legal requirement to carry out an economic viability assessment to justify the rate at which CIL rate is set.
- Businesses will be able to bring forward neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders.
- The national target on how much development should be on previously developed land is removed.
- A review of the Use Classes Order to make it easier to convert commercial premises to residential is now a subject of public consultation.
- The duty to co-operate will be strengthened.

1.20 There is no doubt about the Government's commitment to promote growth. It is also committed to the planned system and expects local authorities to set out their growth targets in their Local Development Documents (LDD). Local authorities are encouraged to speed up the preparation of their LDDs to provide the necessary framework to deliver the Government's objectives for growth. The policies of the Core Strategy Publication Document reflect the above national context and have been prepared expeditiously to provide the framework for the delivery of locally generated growth in the context of national planning objectives.

Neighbourhood plans

1.21 The Decentralisation and Localism Bill makes provision for Neighbourhood Development Plans. Neighbourhood plans are designed to empower local communities to take control in shaping the places they live and work in. There is no statutory duty for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans, only a right to do so if they wish. Organisations such as parish councils, wards, and neighbourhood forums may decide to prepare neighbourhood plans for their area. It is also proposed that businesses will be able to bring forward Neighbourhood Plans. It is a permissive regime and for that matter, local authorities are required to consider any request from local communities who wish to prepare neighbourhood plans. Once adopted, neighbourhood plans will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

1.22 The Core Strategy offers in-principle support for neighbourhood plans that meet the following requirements.

- Have regard to national planning policy.
- Have regard to the other development plan documents in the area.
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies and proposals in the Core Strategy.
- Be compatible with European Union Directives and obligations.
- There should be a clear definition of the geographical coverage to be covered by the neighbourhood plan.

1.23 Furthermore, the Bill sets out detailed requirements such as the number of people that can comprise a neighbourhood forum. These requirements will also have to be met.





1.24 The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans follows a process that is defined by the Bill. This will include:

- a geographical definition of the neighbourhood. The Local Authority will help with this
- the neighbourhood will have to apply to the Local Authority to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and there should be pre-application consultation preceding the application
- neighbourhood Plans will have to be submitted for Independent Examination and the Examiner will have to issue its report with recommendations
- if judged to be sound, a referendum will have to be carried out and the plan will be adopted if 50% or more of those voting are in favour
- It needs to be emphasised that Neighbourhood Plans cannot plan for less development than what is identified in the Core Strategy and/or the development plan for the area.

1.25 The Council will help to define the geographical scope of neighbourhoods, provide advice on the preparation of the plans throughout their key stages and validate plans to ensure that they meet all the necessary requirements.

Key implications of the revocation of the South East Plan on the Core Strategy

1.26 The Core Strategy had originally been prepared in the context of the South East Plan. However, the Council is fully aware of the Government's intention to revoke Regional Strategies and had taken that into account before the Draft Core Strategy was published for consultation. Specifically, the South East Plan contains spatial policies concerning the scale and distribution of new housing, priorities for new infrastructure and economic development, the strategy for protecting the countryside, biodiversity and the built and historic environment and tackling climate change and safeguarding natural resources. The Council had contributed to providing the evidence to justify the requirements of the South East Plan. This evidence has been tested at an Examination in Public and proven to be reliable. Some of the evidence used to inform the South East Plan has also been used to inform the housing target for the Core Strategy.

1.27 The Council therefore considers that the level of growth being planned for through the Core Strategy represents a reasonable and realistic target for the Borough. Furthermore, a great deal of the policies of the Core Strategy are justified by evidence collated at the local level.

- The South East Plan required Woking to provide for 5,840 net additional dwellings between 2006 and 2026 (an annual average of 292 per annum). Based on local evidence of past completion rates and future housing land supply, as identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and future direction of growth, it is considered that this level of housing provision is deliverable and justified. It should be noted that local evidence (Strategic Housing Market Assessment - SHMA) highlights a need for an additional 499 new affordable homes every year in the Borough and a total of 594 new homes every year when taking into account demand for market housing as well. This is around double the South East Plan requirement. Given the level of environmental constraints present in the Borough, it is considered that the provision of 292 dwellings per annum represents a reasonable level of housing growth for Woking that is deliverable. The SA Report assesses the impacts of alternative housing targets and provides further justification for the decision to adopt a target of 292 dwellings per annum.



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- The South East Plan identified Woking as a Regional Hub due to its importance as a centre of economic activity and in recognition of its importance as a transport interchange. This means that Woking is a focus for improvements to the transport network and for major retail and employment development and infrastructure improvements. The evidence and justification for this designation as a Regional Hub still stands and it is considered that the Council, through the Core Strategy, should continue to manage growth and emphasise the Borough's significance to the regional economy. In particular the Core Strategy will deliver sustainable development and achieve a sustainable and balanced community, for example, by reducing the need to travel through closer alignment of local labour supply and demand.
- Woking Town Centre is a Primary Retail Centre in the regional hierarchy and was identified as a Centre for Significant Change in the South East Plan. This means that it is expected to evolve significantly in terms of the range of town centre uses. This reflects the Council's current direction in respect of Woking Town Centre, and the proposed level of retail and commercial floorspace growth which can be supported by local evidence contained in the Town, District and Local Centres Study and Employment Land Review.

National planning policy

1.28 The Core Strategy takes account of national planning policy. This is primarily contained in Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Circulars and Regulations. It is not intended to list them or summarise their objectives. However, embedded in national planning policy is the overall goal of achieving sustainable development. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy provides useful evidence of how the Core Strategy contributes towards achieving this goal. In preparing the Core Strategy, care has been taken to ensure that it does not repeat national planning policy, because in itself, national planning policies are a material planning consideration when determining planning applications. The following is the link to the Department of Communities and Local Government website where the list of national planning policy documents can be found

www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/

It is expected that the Government will publish its National Planning Policy Framework towards the end of 2011. The Core Strategy will be updated to take into account its requirements.

Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan (2010 - 2020)

1.29 Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council have prepared Sustainable Community Strategies with their partners to demonstrate how they will work together to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of their respective areas. The over-arching Sustainable Community Strategy for Surrey is the Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan, which was published in April 2010. It covers the period up to 2020. The Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan includes a specific section that deals with a summary of the local priorities for Woking Borough. The Core Strategy provides a positive framework for delivering those aspects of the Community Strategy that have spatial implications.

1.30 Ten priorities are identified and are described in detail under the following themes.

- Children and young people.
- Safer and stronger communities.
- Health and well-being.
- Economic development.
- Housing, infrastructure and environment.





1.31 It also identifies the following specific aims for Woking Borough.

- Creation of a strong community spirit with a clear sense of belonging and responsibility to promote a clean, healthy and safe environment.
- A transport system that is accessible and has good links, recognising Woking's potential as a transport hub.
- Giving local people and key workers access to good quality and affordable housing.
- A community which values personal health and well-being.
- Providing opportunities and encourage people to participate in learning throughout their lives, so they progress and reach their full potential.

Woking Sustainable Community Strategy

1.32 This strategy sets out six key aims, which define the Woking Partnership's vision for the Borough. These are:

- a strong community spirit with a clear sense of belonging and responsibility
- a clean, healthy and safe environment
- a transport system that is linked and accessible, recognising Woking's potential as a transport hub
- access to decent affordable housing for local people and key workers
- a community which values personal health and well-being
- providing opportunities and encourage people to participate in learning throughout their lives so they progress and reach their full potential.

Surrey Waste Plan (2008)

1.33 Surrey County Council is responsible for the preparation of the Surrey Waste Plan. The Plan was adopted in May 2008 and sets out the planning framework for the development of waste management facilities in Surrey. Its provisions are a material considerations in planning decisions. In particular, the Proposals Map identifies sites that are safeguarded for waste purposes.

Surrey Minerals Plan (2011)

1.34 Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy and Primary Aggregates Development Plan Documents (DPDs) were adopted in July 2011. They form part of the Surrey Minerals and Waste Development Framework. The Plan provides the policy framework to guide minerals development in the county. It replaced the Surrey Minerals Local Plan 1993. The Proposals Map illustrates allocated sites within Woking Borough.

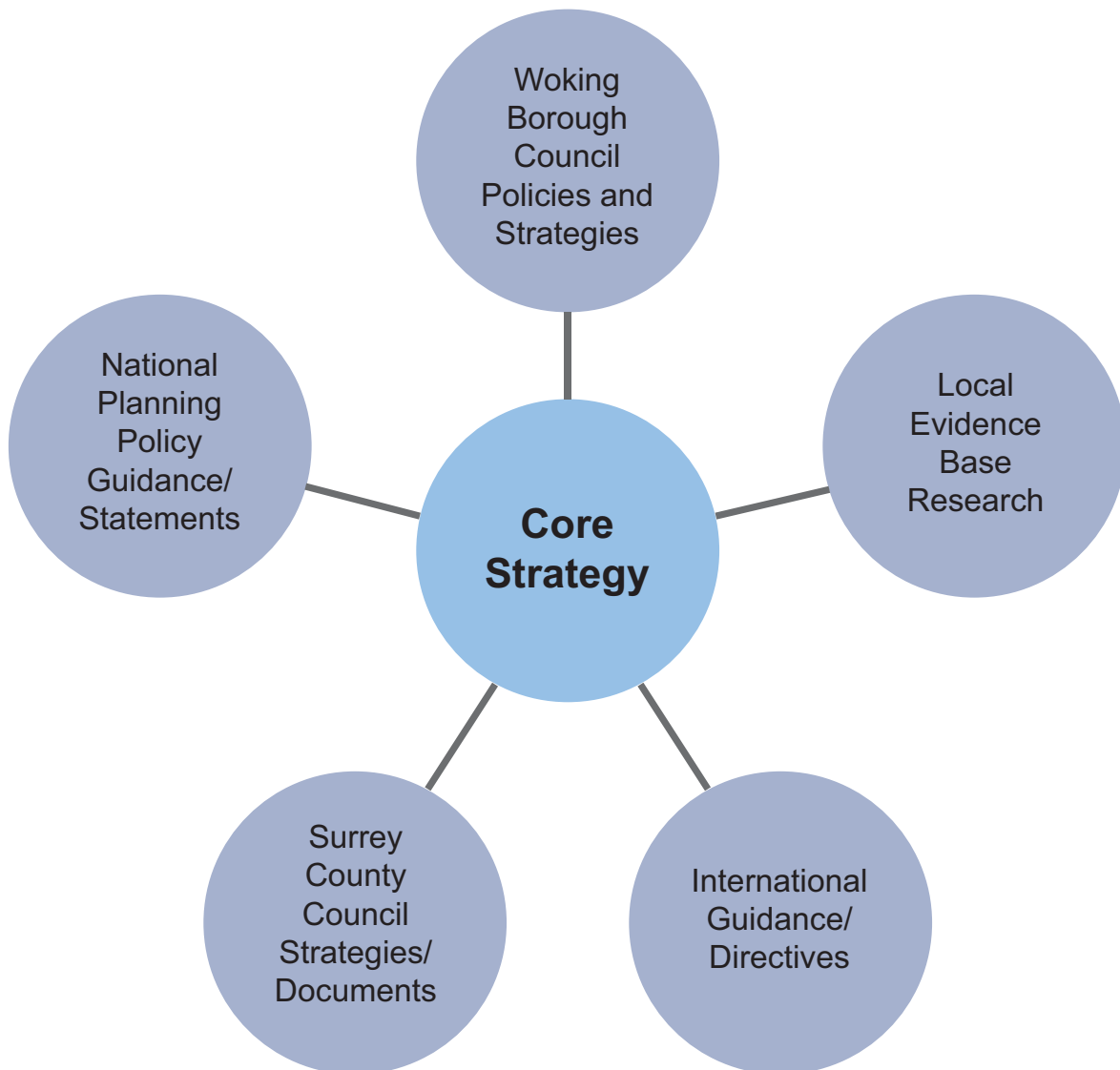


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Other plans and programmes

1.35 The Core Strategy is influenced by a significant number of other plans, strategies and programmes such as the Local Transport Plan produced by Surrey County Council. A review of these has assisted in identifying objectives, targets and indicators to monitor the performance of the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. Appendix 1 of the Sustainability Appraisal Report which supports the Core Strategy includes a list of these documents, the objectives and requirements that they seek to achieve and their relationship to the Core Strategy. A diagram showing the relationship between the key plans and the Core Strategy is set out in Figure 2 below:

Fig 2: Relationship between other key plans, strategies and programmes and the Core Strategy



Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

1.36 It is a statutory requirement to carry out a SA of the Core Strategy to assess its impacts on social, economic and environmental objectives. The SA has been undertaken as an integral part of the Core Strategy process. It has been an iterative process where outcomes have been fed back to inform the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. The process includes an appraisal of options to demonstrate that the preferred options chosen for the Core Strategy are the best when tested against reasonable alternatives. Furthermore, each policy has been appraised and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated within the Core Strategy to deal with any adverse impacts. The SA has been subject to public consultation and has been published as a separate evidence base to support the Core Strategy. Full details can be found at

www.woking.gov.uk/council/planningservice/ldf#sustainability_appraisal

Proposals Map

1.37 It is a statutory requirement to prepare a Proposals Map which should:

- identify areas of protection, including the Green Belt
- safeguarded sites identified in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework
- it also sets out the areas to which specific policies apply.

1.38 The Council has published a new Proposals Map alongside the Core Strategy.

1.39 It has been agreed with the Environment Agency that the Proposals Map should not include areas at risk of flooding. This information is contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and any future advice and/or new information that will be provided by the Environment Agency. This approach is necessary to enable the flood risk data to be updated when required. Users should contact both Woking Borough Council and the Environment Agency to confirm the most up to date information.



2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

2.1 The following spatial portrait provides an overview of the current state of the Borough and includes a description of the key characteristics of the area. It also sets out the key issues and challenges facing the Borough which have informed the development of the policies in the Core Strategy.

Geography

2.2 The Borough of Woking is located in north-west Surrey, about 40 km (25 miles) from London and is 6,400ha in area. Woking is the main town which is located in the centre of the Borough. Woking is a modern town which is currently undergoing renewal. The vast majority of the population lives in the main built-up part of the Borough which is dotted with smaller centres, known locally as “the villages”. West Byfleet in the east and Knaphill in the west are the largest centres with other key centres being Byfleet, Sheerwater, Horsell, Goldsworth Park, and St. Johns. A few small villages, of which the largest are Brookwood and Mayford, lie just outside the main built-up area.

2.3 Outside this main urban area, the remaining 60% of the Borough is Green Belt. Relatively little of the Green Belt land is in active agricultural use, the main uses are open spaces, playing pitches, golf courses, commercial nurseries and horse grazing. There is also a significant amount of low density residential property, and some industrial premises, in the Green Belt. The Green Belt also contains extensive heathland. The most significant areas of heathland, Horsell Common, Sheets Heath and Brookwood Heath, are designated as part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Sheets Heath also forms part of the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition there are six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) all or part of which are found within the Borough: Ash to Brookwood Heaths, the Basingstoke Canal, Colony Bog and Bagshot Heaths, Horsell Common, Smart’s and Prey Heaths, and Whitmoor Common (fragment only).

2.4 The Borough lies on the north bank of the River Wey, with water meadows and flat relatively fertile land by the river, and gently undulating sandy ground to the north and west, which form attractive local features. However, the land alongside the Wey and Hoe Stream is liable to flood and currently, around 3,500 properties in the Borough are located within such areas. Work is currently underway on the Hoe Valley Scheme, which is a comprehensive development proposal including a significant flood alleviation scheme for the area.

Key issues and challenges

- How to strike a balance between the need to protect and/or enhance the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation and the need to achieve growth to meet the needs of the community.
- The need to protect the purpose and integrity of the Green Belt from the growing pressure for further development that cannot all be accommodated within the urban area and/or on previously developed sites.





Historic development

- 2.5** The development of Woking as a major town only started with the coming of the railway in 1838. Until that time, the area now occupied by Woking Town Centre was open heathland and much of the rest of the Borough was occupied by nurseries, the most significant one being Slocock Nurseries. One of the main legacies of Woking as a heathland and horticultural area is the extensive tree cover. Woking Borough is mentioned in the Domesday Book and was originally a village on the River Wey, some two miles to the south of the current town centre. In Tudor times, it was the location for one of Henry VIII's royal palaces, remains of which can still be seen today in Old Woking.
- 2.6** Woking has developed into the large modern town we see today, over the last 150 years. Housing development, originally intended for wealthy London commuters, was built in areas such as The Hockering, Hook Heath, Pyrford and West Byfleet. Woking Town Centre grew into a Victorian commercial centre, with public buildings, shops and workers' housing. Large areas were used for horticulture to serve the London and local markets. In the 1950s, Sheerwater was developed as a London County Council housing and industrial estate, and many families relocated there from London. In the 1970s and 80s, Goldsworth Park was developed, as a major new community of around 5,000 homes. The population of Woking Borough has grown from under 5,000 in 1851 to over 92,000 today.
- 2.7** Major industrial estates have existed in Byfleet and Sheerwater for more than 50 years, and over the last 40 years, Woking Town Centre has become a major employment centre, with substantial office and retail development. Today, Woking has nearly as many people commuting into the Borough to work as those who commute out.
- 2.8** Redevelopment in Woking Town Centre over the last 40 years has resulted in the demolition of much of the original Victorian town centre. ChristChurch is the only listed building of historic interest. Elsewhere in the Borough, the original villages still contain medieval churches and many buildings of architectural and historic significance, as well as a number of conservation areas. Scheduled ancient monuments, sites of archaeological significance, historic gardens and areas of historic landscape interest all form part of Woking's cultural heritage and deserve appropriate protection for future generations to enjoy. There is a need to not only protect, but also to enhance such assets and their settings while responding to modern development pressures. A Character Study, which also looks at the Conservation Areas, has been undertaken to provide evidence about how some of these assets could be protected. The Heritage of Woking Study also provides additional information.

Key issues and challenges

- How to achieve a balance between the existing character of the area and the design of new development that incorporates high sustainable construction standards.
- How to ensure a design approach that is flexible to accept tall buildings in the town centre whilst retaining the general image of Woking.

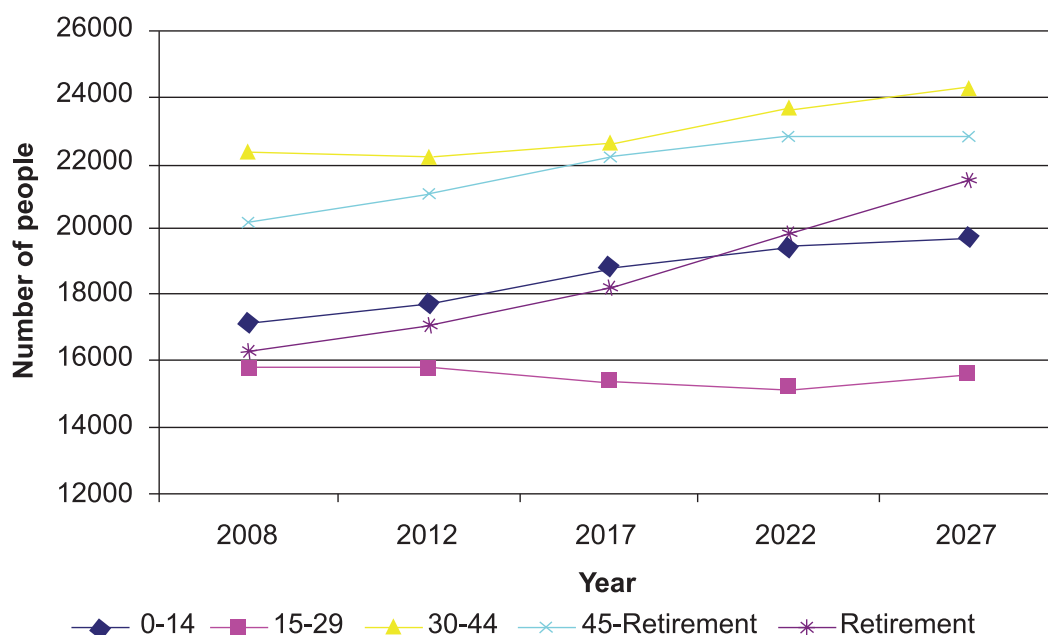


2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

Characteristics of the population

2.9 The population of Woking in 2009 was 92,400. The 2001 Census showed that Woking had a slightly younger population than England as a whole, with 20.6% under 16, compared with 20.2% nationally, and 14.6% over 65 compared with 15.9% nationally. These are relatively small differences, and in general, Woking is close to the national average. As shown in Graph 1 below, the number of people in all age groups is increasing over the plan period, with the exception of the 15-29 age group. In common with the nation as a whole, the forecast is for the proportion of older people to rise in the future. Compared to other age groups the number of people at retirement age has the steepest increase over the 20 year period. There is some spatial variation in the age profile. The youngest populations are found in the Goldsworth Park and Maybury and Sheerwater areas.

Graph 1: Projected age group populations in Woking, 2008-2027



Source: ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections, 2010.

2.10 In 2001, the proportion of residents from a black or minority ethnic background was 8.7%. This was the highest proportion in Surrey, but slightly below the average for England as a whole of 9.1%. This population, largely Asian and Asian British, mainly lives in Maybury and Sheerwater, where over 30% of the population is from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group.

2.11 Woking has relatively low levels of deprivation. The Borough as a whole is within the top 10% of least deprived local authority areas in the country. However, high levels of affluence in the Borough mask pockets of relative and absolute deprivation, with the Dartmouth Avenue and Devonshire Avenue area of Sheerwater being identified as within the 14% most deprived areas nationally and the most deprived area in Surrey.



Key issues and challenges

- The increasing rate of the elderly population and the need to plan to meet their needs.
- There are pockets of deprivation within the community that needs to be addressed.

Housing

- 2.12** In 2007, around 80% of homes in Woking consisted of houses, and almost 20% were flats and maisonettes. The single largest component was detached houses, which made up almost 29% of homes, which is well above the national average of 23%. The proportion of flats is around the average for England of 19%, however, more than half of all flats are in and around Woking Town Centre. In the remainder of the Borough, almost 90% of accommodation is made up of houses.
- 2.13** In 2001, 77% of homes were owner-occupied, compared with 69% in England as a whole. All parts of the Borough are dominated by owner-occupied housing. Even those areas where many homes were originally built as local authority housing now have a majority of owner-occupied properties, reflecting the impact of council house sales. The lowest proportion of owner-occupied housing is in Maybury and Sheerwater at 57%.
- 2.14** Information from the Land Registry shows that the average house price in the Borough at the end of 2010 was £345,674 which is consistently higher than the average of £274,326 for the South East and £232,628 nationally (Oct-Dec 2010). House prices in Woking fell a little in 2009 following the economic downturn (average of £301,082 in the fourth quarter of 2009) but had recovered by early 2010 and by the last quarter of 2010 were up 13.8% on last year. The difficulty in accessing mortgage finance coupled with the requirement for larger deposits and long-term affordability pressures has led to an inability for many potential first time buyers to purchase properties. The average earnings in the Borough during 2008 were £24,570; this is 13.6 times less than the average house price. The need for affordable housing for those who cannot afford to obtain housing on the open market is considerable. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment shows that there is a need for an additional 499 new affordable homes per annum. The majority of the unmet need is for family housing.
- 2.15** The Council has to plan for the housing needs of all members of the community; this includes the needs of groups with specific needs such as the elderly and Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.



2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

Key issues and challenges

- The urban area is surrounded by the Green Belt and other environmental designations such as the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation. The need to identify sufficient land that is available and suitable in sustainable locations to meet all types of housing need continues to be an issue.
- There is significant unmet need for affordable housing, which will have to be delivered in a period of severe public sector budget constraint and an economic downturn; The need to balance the priority to secure affordable housing with the viability of development schemes is challenging.
- The need to meet the accommodation needs of the elderly as the rate of the elderly population continues to grow.
- The need to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in sustainable locations.
- There is significant need for family homes, in particular, affordable family homes that cannot all be met in high density flatted accommodation in the main urban centres.

The economy

- 2.16** Woking's economy is generally buoyant, and predominantly made up of the service sector. The percentage of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants in Woking in March 2011 was 2.1% compared to 2.6% for the South East and 3.8% for England (Office for National Statistics). Economic activity rates in Woking in Oct 2009 – Sept 2010 were 81.3% compared to 79.3% for the South East and 76.3% for England (ONS). Woking has a highly skilled resident workforce compared to national and regional averages and wage levels are also comparatively high.
- 2.17** There were 45,700 employees in Woking in 2008. The number of jobs in the Borough had been increasing steadily, but has levelled off since 1999, in common with much of the South East. The largest sector of Woking's economy is financial and business services (37.6%). This is significantly higher than the national average of 22% and includes considerable representation from the IT and telecoms sectors, as well as financial services.
- 2.18** The representation of other sectors tends to be at or below the national average. The manufacturing sector, and the public administration, education and health sectors are particularly under-represented. In the case of manufacturing, this reflects the position in much of the South East. As far as public administration, education and health are concerned, this is due to the fact that Woking has no university education facility or major hospital within the Borough boundary.
- 2.19** The biggest concentration of jobs is in Woking Town Centre, principally in retail and office jobs. The other main employment centres are in the business parks and industrial estates in Sheerwater and Byfleet. Unlike some other parts of Surrey, there are relatively few large modern out of town business parks and Woking Town Centre remains the single most important employment location. The vacancy rate for employment floorspace (including retail) in Woking in 2004/5 according to ODPM data was 10% which is around the average for the South East. However, local surveys of vacancy of employment uses identified a rate of around 23% in 2004/5 and 19% in 2009¹.



- 2.20** Woking's major hotel, the Holiday Inn, is located in Woking Town Centre. There are also several smaller budget hotels. These hotels cater mainly for business visitors. The main conference and meeting venue, H.G. Wells Conference and Events Centre, is also in Woking Town Centre.

Key issues and challenges

- How to ensure that there is sufficient land at sustainable locations to meet modern business needs.
- How to control the loss of employment land to alternative uses at a period when the Government's economic agenda is pro-growth.
- How to set a positive framework to support business start ups and small businesses.
- How to deal with unallocated employment sites within the Green Belt without compromising its openness.

Retail offer

- 2.21** Woking Town Centre is the focus of retail floorspace in the Borough. Woking has over 80,000m² of retail floorspace, making it the second largest shopping centre in Surrey after Guildford. It has two covered shopping centres, The Peacocks and Wolsey Place, which provide the majority of the floorspace. Woking Town Centre provides for the majority of shopping needs in the Borough, although local residents do shop further afield, particularly in Guildford. There is also an edge of town centre food store - Morrisons, which provides for the needs of residents in the locality. The second largest shopping centre in the Borough, West Byfleet, has around 15,000m² of floorspace.
- 2.22** Out of town retail parks are relatively limited in Woking. There are small retail parks at Byfleet, and Oriental Road Woking, and a larger retail park just outside the Borough at Brooklands.
- 2.23** Supermarkets at West Byfleet, Goldsworth Park and Knaphill provide for local convenience shopping. Knaphill and West Byfleet also have a range of other shops. The remaining local centres, including Byfleet, Horsell, Kingfield, St. Johns and Sheerwater, provide for basic local needs. Vacancy rates in all the centres are low.

Key issues and challenges

- How to define the boundaries of the town centre and its shopping area to reflect its functionality and focus of activities.
- How to define the hierarchy of centres in the Borough to reflect their status and functionality.



2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

Leisure and community facilities

- 2.24** Woking is generally well provided for in terms of open space provision. There is very good access to large areas of semi-natural green space from all parts of the Borough, with around 500ha of heath, woodland and canal and river banks with public access. Nowhere in Woking is more than 2km from a large accessible green space.
- 2.25** Provision of playing pitches and children's play areas is generally adequate, although there are some local shortages which need to be addressed. There are 11 golf courses, which are one of the main occupiers of land in Woking's Green Belt.
- 2.26** Woking Town Centre's New Victoria Theatre is one of the largest and most successful theatres in the South East region. This is part of the Ambassadors complex which also hosts a smaller community theatre and a multi-screen cinema. There is an exhibition space called The Lightbox in the town centre. The town centre's evening economy has grown in recent years, but still provides for a mainly local catchment. In addition to the cinema and theatre, Woking has a number of leisure facilities. The Big Apple family entertainment complex includes ten pin bowling, laser quest, and children's soft play with a Gala Bingo on the upper floors.
- 2.27** Woking Leisure Centre and Pool in the Park are within walking distance from Woking Town Centre and provide opportunities for indoor sports and swimming. There is a range of public and community halls serving most local areas, and some joint-use arrangements to enable public use of school sports facilities.
- 2.28** Generally, public satisfaction with leisure and community facilities is high at around 80%, and there are no major gaps in public provision. However, it is difficult for community and faith organisations to find sites for larger premises. Some local organisations have outgrown their existing facilities and are actively looking to relocate. The price of land in the urban area makes this difficult to achieve.

Transport and accessibility

- 2.29** Woking has the second busiest railway station in Surrey, after Guildford, and has excellent connections to London Waterloo. Other stations serve the local areas at Byfleet and New Haw, West Byfleet, Brookwood and Worplesdon. The bus network is focussed on Woking Town Centre. Most bus routes tend to run at 30-minute intervals during the day with limited evening and weekend services.
- 2.30** Public transport accessibility to Woking Town Centre is generally acceptable, however, accessibility to key facilities such as St Peters Hospital and further and higher education colleges is less good, and some parts of the Borough are beyond the Government's guideline travel time by public transport to these facilities. The Council is already working in partnership with the County Council and other stakeholders as part of Transport for Woking and with promoters of the Gateway project to ensure the development of an integrated interchange facility in the vicinity of the Rail Station. Woking has been designated a Cycle Town.
- 2.31** The M25 motorway passes through the Borough but there is no junction. The nearest junctions (10 and 11) are both more than four miles from Woking Town Centre and more than three miles from the nearest major employment area at Byfleet. The A320 runs through the Borough and provides a good link with the M25, Guildford and Chertsey. There is peak hour traffic congestion, particularly in Woking Town Centre and in the Monument Road area.



2.32 Woking Town Centre is well served by car parks. There are around 9,000 non-residential parking spaces, around 5,000 of which are public pay car parks, the rest are private business spaces. Currently, all-day parking in Woking Town Centre costs £8, and short stay parking £2.20 for two hours. These rates are broadly comparable to other similar town centres in the area. Small car parks serve the local centres and employment areas. These are generally free of charge apart from in West Byfleet where a modest charge is made.

2.33 Car ownership in Woking is very high. Only 15% of households do not have a car, compared with 27% nationally. Only the ward of Maybury and Sheerwater has above the national average of households without a car, at 28%. In total, there are 1.4 cars for every household in Woking, compared with 1.1 nationally. Not surprisingly, the private car is the dominant means of transport in Woking. In 2001, almost 70% of people working in Woking drove to work.

Key issues and challenges

- How to accommodate the proposed growth identified in the Core Strategy without significantly exacerbating the existing situation. In particular, how the Core Strategy will encourage a modal shift from car based travel to environmentally friendly alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- How to strike a balance between the need to meet the parking needs of local businesses and residents and managing the level of congestion in the area. In particular, how to achieve the balance without undermining local economic activity.

Cross-cutting issues

2.34 The following issues cut across many topic areas.

Climate change

2.35 The Council has long been committed to protecting the environment and is committed to tackling the adverse impacts of climate change. The Borough has one of the most extensive decentralised renewable and low carbon energy infrastructures in the UK. Its work on this is nationally recognised. Over the last two decades, the Council has been at the forefront of a radical programme of investment in LZC (low or zero carbon) energy for which it has received national and international acclaim including the Queens Award for Enterprise (2001) and Beacon authority awards for Sustainable Energy (2005/06) and Tackling Climate Change (2008/09). In 2009, the Council received Carbon Trust Standard certification for its carbon reduction programmes, and has also been the subject of numerous case studies and best practice examples, including the Carbon Trust, Audit Commission and environmental organisations.

Woking Leisure Centre and Pool in the Park are within walking distance from Woking Town Centre



2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

- 2.36** The Council intends to build upon this success and continue its position as a leading authority on climate change. However, introducing some of these environmentally sustainable measures into development schemes could be expensive. The challenge is setting a framework that encourages renewable and low carbon energy generation and the delivery of high standards of sustainable construction of buildings, without compromising the viability of schemes. The Council has a network of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) stations in which the waste heat generated from the production of electricity is used for heating and cooling rather than wasted. The Council has set up Thameswey Limited, which is an independent company to help deliver its climate change objectives.
- 2.37** The security of water as an important resource is a key issue. Balancing demand and supply in the long-term, to meet the community's need, would require management of the competing pressures of economic growth, risk of pollution, climate change and environmental protection. There is presently a high per capita daily consumption of water in the Borough that needs to be managed.
- 2.38** To avoid development in an area at risk of flooding is an important consideration of the Core Strategy. There are some areas of the Borough that are liable to flooding. This situation should not be exacerbated by further growth identified in the Core Strategy.

Key issues and challenges

- Woking is recognised for its work to tackle the adverse impacts of climate change. Setting a framework that encourages renewable and low carbon energy generation and the delivery of high standards of sustainable construction of building without compromising the viability of schemes will be a significant challenge.
- The security of water supply as an important resource against a background of growth.
- There are some areas liable to flooding. Planning to avoid development in a flood zone and/or ensuring that further growth does not exacerbate the existing situation is an important issue for consideration.

Infrastructure and services

- 2.39** The Core Strategy demonstrates how development will be supported by appropriate and adequate infrastructure. The definition of infrastructure is wide ranging in this regard and it includes transport, education, health care, social and community facilities, parks and open spaces, green infrastructure, public services and utilities. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been prepared to set out how and when the necessary infrastructure will be provided to support the growth identified in the Core Strategy. The mechanism for securing funding to deliver the infrastructure is a key issue. The Council will continue to consider appropriate delivery mechanisms taking into account the latest Government advice.

Key issues and challenges

- How to ensure that the delivery of infrastructure and services keep pace with development.



Cross boundary issues

2.40 Woking Borough Council will proactively work with its neighbouring authorities and other stakeholders to discuss and address common issues of cross boundary significance. It is difficult to predict all cross boundary issues that may emerge during the life of the Core Strategy. However, Woking Borough Council offers an in-principle support to work with its partners if any issues emerge. There are existing examples of partnership groups such as Planning Working Group and Surrey Planning Officer's Society to facilitate partnership working. At this stage two key cross boundary issues are relevant to the implementation of the Core Strategy. These are as follows.

- **The strategic protection of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)** - The SPA in Woking Borough covers part of Horsell Common, Brookwood Heath and Sheets Heath. Together with the nearby Wealden Heaths SPA and the Ashdown Forest SPA, the Thames Basin Heaths form part of a complex of heathlands in Southern England that support important breeding bird populations. The need for the strategic protection of the SPA to conserve its integrity is an objective the Council shares. It proactively works with the other Surrey local authorities and Natural England to strategically monitor and mitigate any adverse impacts on the SPA. A Joint Strategic Partnership Board, of which Woking Borough Council is a member, exists to coordinate actions to deal with SPA matters.
- **Mitigation of traffic movement** – At the moment, there are no major transport schemes of cross boundary significance to Woking Borough. However, the Council will work with others to ensure that the transport impacts of development with cross boundary implications are fully assessed and mitigated. Transport for Woking and Transport for Surrey partnership groups have been established to coordinate transport matters across Woking and Surrey respectively.

Analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Borough

2.41 Based on a review of the available evidence, including the spatial portrait and the key challenges facing the Borough, an analysis, known as a SWOT analysis, has been used to define the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) that exist within the Borough. This is set out in Table 1 overleaf, and has been used to inform the objectives of the Core Strategy.



2.0 Spatial portrait and key issues and challenges facing the Borough to 2027

Table 1: SWOT analysis of the Borough

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excellent physical access links to nearby areas by rail and road, including to London, Gatwick, and Heathrow airports. ● A successful, thriving local economy with a range of global businesses. ● Residents are highly educated with higher than national average earnings. ● Good quality open space within and around the Borough. ● Strong labour market. ● Low levels of unemployment. ● Unique and important physical and natural assets such as listed buildings and European status habitats. ● Well established local resident groups who are willing to participate in the decision making process. ● Proactive and ambitious Council, which is willing to lead on innovation and work in partnership with others to deliver key projects. ● Well established Local Strategic Partnership. ● Good health enjoyed by residents. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of affordable housing. ● Pockets of congestion. ● Increasing size of elderly and dependant population. ● Pockets of deprivation. ● Borough is constrained by sensitive environmental designations. ● Several areas are liable to flood. ● Cultural dependency on car use. ● Lack of dependable public transport services in some areas.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investment in efficient energy infrastructure. ● A good local framework for mitigating the impacts of climate change. ● Well established partnerships and partnership working. ● Good relationship between transport and economic hubs. ● Proximity to London. ● Proximity to two international airports. ● Enterprise and innovation culture. ● Compact urban area where most places are easily accessible to the town centre by walking or cycling with opportunities to reduce car travel. ● Woking is a Cycle Town with opportunities for investment in cycling. ● Opportunities exist for efficient use of land, in particular, previously developed land. ● Opportunities for high technology industries to complement existing ones such as McLaren. ● The Council owns land that can be used to aid development, such as Wolsey Place. ● The Council own Thamesway Limited, which is an independent company to facilitate good quality development and good practice. ● Scope to improve infrastructure through the infrastructure delivery plan and developer contributions. ● Scope to enhance biodiversity and important habitats through strategies to mitigate impacts on Special Protection Areas. ● Scope to improve the railway station and its environs. A Transport for Woking Partnership Group, including Network Rail and South West Trains who are committed to station and service improvements. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development pressures on biodiversity and geodiversity are increasing. ● Increasing levels of car use and its consequent implications on climate change. ● House prices are higher than national average, which is a deterrent to first time buyers and job seekers. ● Shortage of land for development. ● Global economic circumstances and implications on public sector investment to create the necessary environment for local businesses to thrive. ● Increasing threat of the impacts of climate change. ● High levels of car use and the consequent threat of poor air quality. ● Global competition. ● New global knowledge economies. ● Development land and pressures for housing development. ● Staff recruitment and retention difficulties. ● Continuous increase in carbon footprint and waste production. ● Complacency of economic position. ● Risk of increased energy and food prices and the uncertainties in their supply.



3.0 Spatial vision, objectives and strategy

- 3.1** The spatial vision of the Core Strategy paints a clear picture of where the community would like the Borough to be by 2027. It encapsulates the aspirations of the local community as expressed in the Surrey and Woking Sustainable Community Strategies. It is compatible with the visions set out in the Surrey and Woking Sustainable Community Strategies and is fully endorsed by the Woking Partnership, which is the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough. It provides a sense of focus and direction for the policies and proposals that form the path for delivering the Core Strategy. It enhances the strengths and opportunities that exist in the Borough and addresses its weaknesses and threats.
- 3.2** The preparation and delivery of the Core Strategy involved all service areas of the Council. The business managers and the Corporate Management Group have therefore signed up to the spatial vision and are committed to its delivery.

Spatial vision, objectives and strategy

Woking will be a Borough of high environmental quality and standards where people choose to live, work and visit, an exemplar in the achievement of sustainable growth.

Woking will be a regional focus of economic prosperity centred on a vibrant, enhanced town centre that provides a good range of quality shops, jobs, cultural facilities, services and infrastructure to cater for the Borough's needs, surrounded by distinct communities anchored by attractive district and local centres providing convenient access to everyday shops, services and local community facilities.

Woking will be a sustainable community where the benefits of growth and prosperity are shared throughout the Borough without pockets of deprivation.

New development in the Borough will be well designed to respect the character of the area. New housing development will help to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

A green Borough where people will have easy access to good quality green spaces and infrastructure for recreation and leisure.

The Borough will have a balanced and sustainable multi modal transport system that links homes, jobs and key services and by doing so improves the overall health and well-being of all residents.

- 3.3** To deliver the vision, the following clear and deliverable objectives are set in no particular priority order. These objectives will ensure that policies and proposals that flow from them are specific to the delivery of the overall vision. They also have a direct bearing in tackling the threats and weaknesses that exist in the Borough.
- 1)** To enable a **diverse range of development** such as offices, housing, shops, leisure and cultural facilities in Woking Town Centre to enable its status as a centre of regional significance to be maintained. Development will be of high quality and high density to create an attractive environment for people to live, do business and visit.
 - 2)** To enable **attractive and sustainable development** of the **district and local centres** to provide convenient access to everyday shops and local services, local community facilities, parks and open spaces.



3.0 Spatial vision, objectives and strategy

- 3) To enable the provision of well **designed homes of different types, tenures and affordability** to meet the needs of all sections of the community. This will be in sustainable locations and at densities that maximise the efficient use of urban land without compromising the distinctive character of the local area.
- 4) To protect the **integrity of the Green Belt** and to harness its recreational benefits for the community.
- 5) To enable a **buoyant local economy** with good quality offices, business parks and industrial areas, which meet the needs of modern business. This will mainly be encouraged in Woking Town Centre, West Byfleet District Centre and the employment areas.
- 6) To lead the way in **high quality sustainable development** that **minimises the adverse impacts of climate change**. This will be achieved through maximising opportunities for implementing renewable energy technologies, maximising the efficient use of energy and water in buildings and managing waste effectively.
- 7) To **maintain and improve air and water quality** and manage effectively the impacts of noise and light pollution.
- 8) To encourage the **high quality design of buildings, neighbourhoods and the public realm** that creates a **sense of place** where people feel safe to spend time and interact without fear of crime.
- 9) To ensure that the **provision of community infrastructure**, including key services and facilities, **keeps pace with growth** of the Borough. This will include schools, healthcare, water supply, drainage and flood alleviation, leisure, green infrastructure and community facilities.
- 10) To work in partnership with Surrey County Council and other stakeholders with an interest in transport provision to **deliver a transport system** that **enables people to access key services, facilities and jobs** by all relevant modes of travel. In particular, by encouraging the use of public transport and creating a safe environment for people to walk and cycle to the town, district and local centres.
- 11) To provide an **integrated and effective transport interchange** that has an improved Woking Railway Station as a focus.
- 12) To **preserve and enhance the cultural, historic, biodiversity and geodiversity** features of the Borough and make them accessible to the benefit of residents.
- 13) To **significantly reduce both absolute and relative deprivation** in Sheerwater, Maybury and the Lakeview Estate in Goldsworth Park.



A spatial strategy for Woking

- 3.4** The challenge for the Core Strategy is to plan and distribute development in a sustainable manner and to ensure that each of its elements is well integrated functionally and physically to create a sustainable community for Woking. The vision for the Core Strategy sets out the kind of sustainable community that is envisaged by 2027. However, the path to achieve this vision rests with the strength of the underlying spatial strategy to deliver it. In this regard, the spatial strategy set out below provides a clear direction of how the vision for the Core Strategy will be delivered. It provides the context for the rest of the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy.

CS1: A spatial strategy for Woking

The Core Strategy will make provision for the delivery of the following scale of uses between 2010 and 2027.

- 4,964 net additional dwellings, with an overall affordable housing provision target of 35%
- 28,000m² of office floorspace and 20,000m² of warehousing floorspace within the same period
- 93,900 m² of additional retail floorspace.

Most of the new development will be directed to previously developed land in the town, district and local centres, which offers the best access to a range of services and facilities. The scale of development that will be encouraged in these centres will reflect their respective functions and nature. The hierarchy of centres is defined in Table 2. The impacts of developments will be fully assessed to ensure that they do not adversely impact on sensitive environmental designations such as the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the Green Belt and other important built and natural features such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Ancient Monuments. It is a clear objective of the Core Strategy to protect and/or enhance these assets. Development will be located to take full account of the relative risk of flooding in the Borough.

Woking Town Centre will be the primary focus of sustainable growth to maintain its status as an economic hub with a flourishing, diverse and innovative economy and a transport hub which provides transport services, links and communication linking people to jobs, services and facilities. The town centre is designated as a centre to undergo significant change and the provision of a range of shops, cultural facilities, jobs and housing to meet locally identified needs and the needs of modern businesses will be encouraged. Town centre uses as defined in PPS4: Planning for sustainable economic growth, will be acceptable in principle, subject to the requirements of the policies of the Core Strategy.

In the town centre, well designed, high density development that could include tall buildings and which enhances its image will be encouraged, but without compromising on its character and appearance and that of nearby areas.

Development located in the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres to provide housing, jobs and convenient access to everyday shops, services and local community facilities will also be encouraged. This must be well designed to enhance their unique and distinctive characters and attractiveness. Uses that will provide convenient access to the everyday needs of the community, including jobs and housing will be encouraged at the District and Local Centres but at a scale that will not compromise their character and/or functionality.



3.0 Spatial vision, objectives and strategy

Whilst the preference is for the location of most new development to be in the main centres, infill development and/or redevelopment of previously developed land in the built-up area of the Borough will be acceptable in principle, subject to a full assessment of impacts where relevant and appropriate mitigation measures introduced to make the proposal acceptable. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Employment Land Review (ELR) provide the evidence of the existence of such sites.

The ward of Maybury and Sheerwater and Lakeview Estate of Goldsworth Park are identified as Priority Places for specific actions to address pockets of deprivation in the areas.

A Site Allocations Development Plan Document will be prepared to allocate specific deliverable sites for the proposed development.

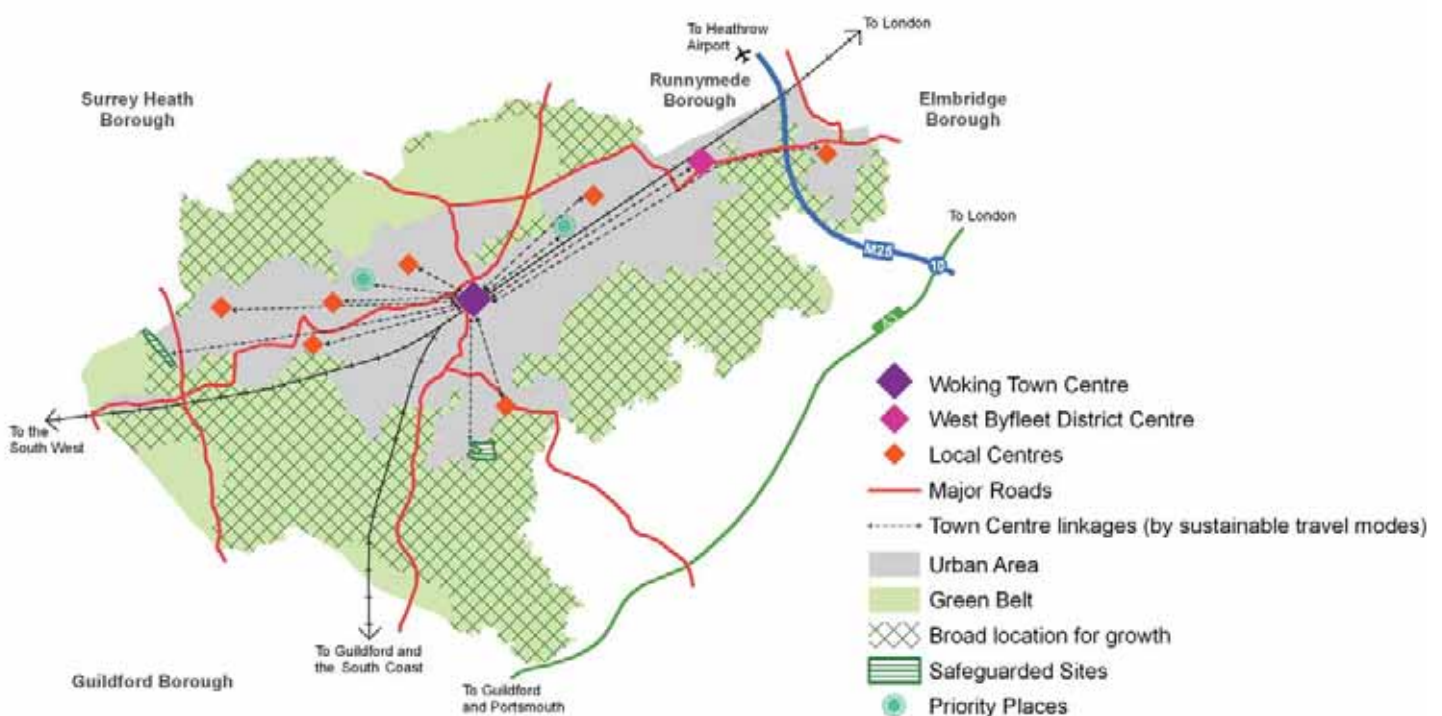
The Green Belt and Woking Town Centre are identified as broad locations for the future direction of growth. A review of the Green Belt boundary will be carried out to ensure that the release of Green Belt land for development does not undermine its purpose and integrity.

Details of how the overall strategy will be delivered are set out by the rest of the policies of the Core Strategy.

The Council will work proactively with its partners to seek the comprehensive delivery of all elements of the Core Strategy and the infrastructure requirements to support it.

Figure 3 is a diagram showing areas identified for growth.

Figure 3: Areas identified for growth



Reasoned justification

- 3.5** At the heart of the spatial strategy for the Core Strategy is the key objective to achieve sustainable development, which will create a sustainable community in Woking where people will choose to live, work and visit. The delivery of this objective will require a clear strategy, which is not only about the quantity of development that is planned to meet housing and employment needs, but also about where the developments are located and how the developments functionally relate with each other. Consequently, the need to concentrate most new development in sustainable locations where facilities and services are easily accessible by all relevant modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport is paramount. The town, district and local centres are the most sustainable location for new development in this context because they offer a range of services and facilities that will enable this objective to be achieved.
- 3.6** The strategy seeks to provide a good synergy between transport infrastructure and economic growth of the town centre.
- 3.7** Land is a limited and finite resource in Woking. Its efficient use is central to the strategy to deliver the vision for the Core Strategy. The strategy therefore seeks to maximise the efficient use of land by concentrating most new development on previously developed land at high densities. However, it recognises that there are limited types of uses and local needs, which by their nature can best be met on Greenfield land outside the main centres. Examples of this are housing for the elderly and the need for family homes. If Greenfield land is to be used for development outside the confines of the main centres, the strategy will require good integration of the development with the wider community.
- 3.8** The built-up area of the Borough is surrounded by the Green Belt and other unique habitats and species of European significance. There are also a number of listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Ancient Monuments and historic landscapes in the Borough. The spatial strategy ensures that development is sensitive to conserving and enhancing the assets and heritage of the Borough without stifling creativity and innovation. Furthermore, it seeks to ensure that development does not adversely impact on these assets.
- 3.9** Some areas of the Borough are liable to flooding. The flooding that occurred in 2000 is a clear reminder of its effects. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out to inform decisions about the location of development. Development will be directed away from areas liable to flood. The strategy will also ensure that development does not exacerbate incidents of flooding in the Borough.
- 3.10** Woking is generally an affluent community. The Council is concerned to ensure that this does not mask the pockets of deprivation that exist within the Borough. The Ward of Maybury and Sheerwater and the Lakeview Estate of Goldsworth Park are identified as Priority Places where specific types of development will be targeted to address the underlying causes of deprivation in the areas.
- 3.11** The Core Strategy identifies sufficient sites to deliver 10 years of its housing target. The Green Belt and Woking Town Centre are identified as broad locations for future direction of growth to identify sufficient sites to meet the housing target for the last five years of the period of the Core Strategy.
- 3.12** The Council is committed to prepare a Site Allocations DPD to allocate specific sites to meet the proposed development. The timetable for the preparation of the document is set out in the Council's adopted Local Development Scheme.
- 3.13** Proposed developments in the Core Strategy will achieve their functional purpose if their end users are satisfied with their outcomes. The strategy will ensure that public involvement will be central to its delivery.



3.0 Spatial vision, objectives and strategy

Hierarchy of centres

3.14 Different centres in the Borough perform different functions in meeting the needs of the Borough as a whole and their immediate surroundings. To regulate the amount and manage the location of development and reflect the wider functions of centres in the Borough, the main centres will be categorised as set out in Table 2 below. A Town, District and Local Centres Study has been carried out to provide evidence and justification for this categorisation.

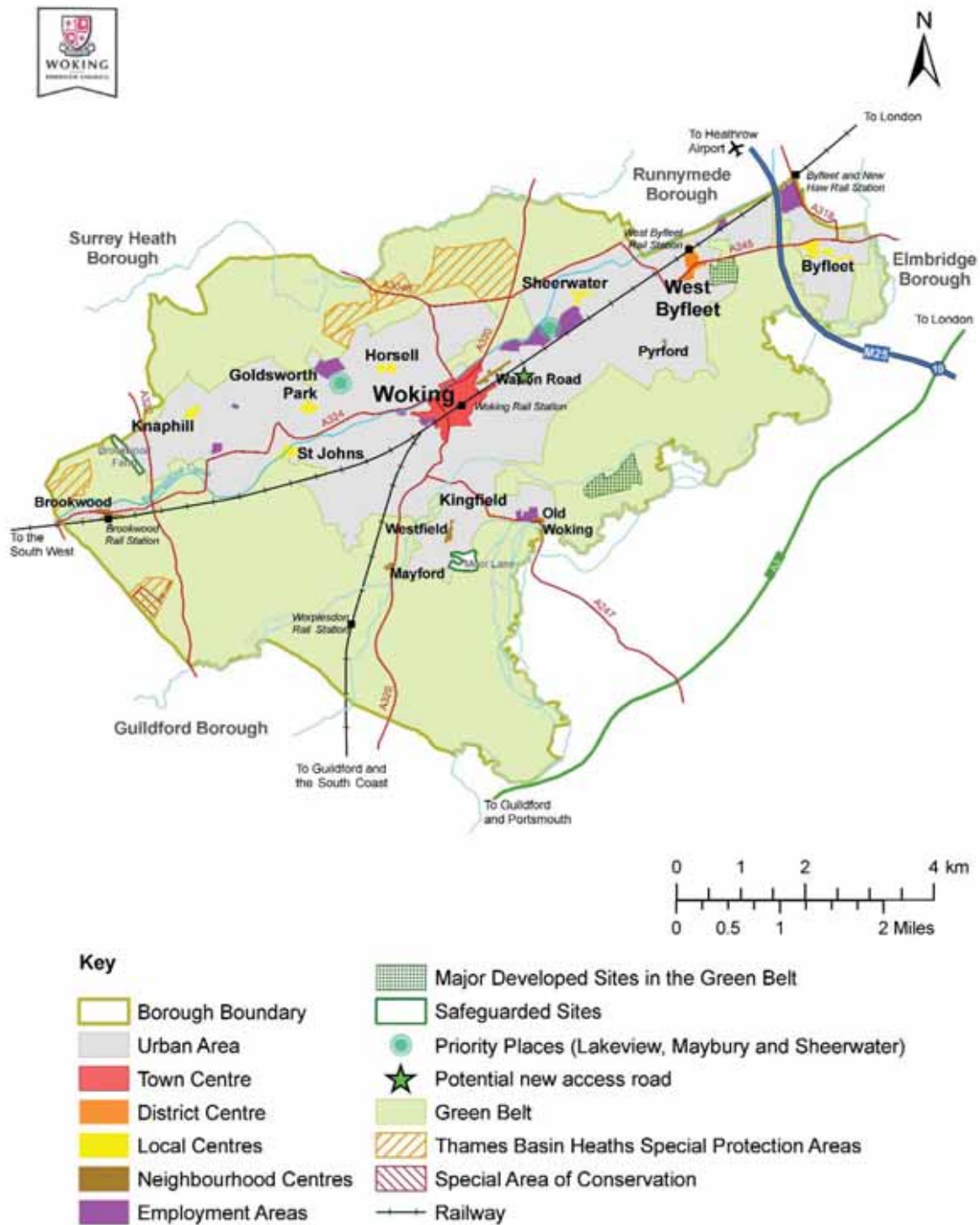
Table 2 Hierarchy of Centres

Hierarchy	Location	Function
Town Centre	Woking	The Borough's principal centre, an important location for shopping, offices, entertainment, cultural and community activities and a key transport interchange. Serves the whole Borough. Has a primary role within the regional economy.
District Centre	West Byfleet	The second largest centre in the Borough with a primary role to serve the needs of Byfleet, West Byfleet, Pyrford, some small centres just outside the Borough Boundary and the rural hinterland surrounding it. A transport interchange that connects the area with both Woking and other parts of the region.
Local Centres	Byfleet, Goldsworth Park, Horsell, Kingfield, Knaphill, Sheerwater, St. Johns	Local centres vary in size. Goldsworth Park is anchored by a supermarket but others provide only a basic level of convenience shopping. Primarily provide a local convenience and service function for the surrounding residential areas. Serve the day-to-day needs of the residents in the immediate surrounding area.
Neighbourhood Centres	Brookwood, Mayford, Old Woking, Pyrford, Walton Road, Westfield	Vary in size. Serve the day-to-day needs of the residents in the immediate surrounding area.
Shopping parades	Anchor Hill, Barnsbury, Blackbridge Road, East Hill, Gorsewood Road, Guildford Road, Hermitage Road, Maybury, Maybury Road, Oriental Road, Rydens Way, Wych Hill.	Of purely neighbourhood significance. Provide a basic level of convenience shopping within walking distance of the majority of homes within the urban area.

3.15 The role, function and specific proposals for these centres are set out in the Woking, West Byfleet, and Local and Neighbourhood Centres policies. Map 1 is a Key Diagram of Woking Borough showing the hierarchy of centres and other key figures. Appendix 3 includes Insert Maps showing the geographical boundaries of the Town Centre, District Centre and the Local Centres.



Map 1: Key diagram of Woking Borough showing the hierarchy of centres and other key features



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4.0 Planning for places

Woking Town Centre

- 4.1** Woking Town Centre² is an important centre of economic activity and key interchange on the rail network. It is the largest centre in the Borough and a primary centre in the context of the South East. The Core Strategy evidence base identifies potential for significant additional commercial and residential development in Woking Town Centre over the plan period, as set out in the policy. Investment of an appropriate level and scale will be promoted to enable the town centre to grow and evolve significantly, enhancing its retail offer and role as a thriving employment centre. Development of a dynamic and successful town centre is central to the achievement of sustainable development in the Borough.
- 4.2** Policy CS2 applies to all development in the town centre, including retail, business, residential, leisure, arts, culture, tourism and community facilities. In accommodating new growth, the Council will require best practice in urban design to ensure developments of the highest standard along with quality in the public realm and better access to public transport.

CS2: Woking Town Centre

The Council will support the development of the town centre as the primary centre for economic development in the Borough and as a primary economic centre in the South East. The Town Centre is the preferred location for town centre uses³ and high density residential development. New development proposals should deliver high quality, well designed public spaces and buildings, which make efficient use of land, contribute to the functionality of the centre and add to its attractiveness and competitiveness.

The Council will facilitate the delivery of the following specific proposals at the town centre. The timetable set out to deliver the proposals is indicative and any proposal which brings forward the redevelopment of the town centre in a comprehensive manner will be considered on its merits.

Development type and indicative amount	When
Housing 2010-2027 = 2,500	Over the life of the Core Strategy
Employment Approximately 27,000m ² of additional office floorspace to be provided in the town centre as part of mix-used developments ⁴	Over the life of the Core Strategy
Retail Potential for up to 75,300m ² of additional A class floorspace including 67,600 of A1 retail made up of 59,300m ² of comparison and 8,300 m ² of convenience floorspace	2012 – 2016 17,500m ² of A1 retail including 10,800m ² of comparison and 6,700m ² of convenience floorspace. 2016 – 2021 26,200m ² of A1 retail including 25,400m ² of comparison and 800m ² of convenience floorspace 2021 – 2027 up to 23,900m ² of A1 retail. Up to 23,100m ² of comparison and 800m ² of convenience floorspace
Social, community and transport infrastructure	The proposed development will be supported by adequate infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The list will be reviewed regularly to see if intended objectives are being achieved.



² Woking Town Centre boundary is defined on the Proposals Map.

³ As defined in PPS4.

⁴ Up to 15% of this provision could be accommodated within the Butts Road/Poole Road employment area, which lies adjacent to the town centre boundary.

The proposals will be achieved through:

1. mixed-use high density redevelopment of existing sites
2. refurbishment of outmoded sites
3. intensification of existing sites
4. change of use of existing employment uses where this will not undermine the delivery of the proposed development set out in the policy and the other objectives of the Core Strategy
5. safeguarding of existing office floorspace where there is evidence to justify that.

The primary shopping area comprises primary and secondary frontages and will be the main focus, particularly at ground floor level, for A1 retail uses. A1 retail uses will therefore be protected within the primary frontages. The Council will consider favourably change of use proposals to other A Class uses within secondary frontages if it can be determined they would not have significant harmful effects on the frontage, crime and disorder and the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Employment Land Review and the Town, District and Local Centres Study provide sufficient justification of the need for the proposed development and the town centre's capability to accommodate the proposed level of growth.

A Site Allocations DPD will identify specific sites to deliver the proposals. The policies of the Development Plan for the area and the available evidence base will inform decisions about any proposal that will come forward in advance of the Site Allocation DPD.

The town centre will also be the preferred location for other town centre uses as defined in PPS4 including hotels, other overnight accommodation, and cultural and entertainment facilities. Proposals for such uses will be permitted where it can be demonstrated there is a need for the development and the proposals deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy and do not undermine the delivery of the specific proposals set out above.

The loss of existing cultural and entertainment facilities within the town centre will be resisted, unless there is no demand for such facilities or demand can be met from alternative provision within the town centre either through new or co-located facilities. The Council recognise the importance to the well-being of the community of adequate community facilities and social and community infrastructure and will seek to safeguard existing facilities and promote new ones where appropriate, as set out in policy CS19.

The Council will support improvements to the market to help ensure that it remains attractive and competitive, providing the community with wider consumer choice.

The town centre, as a focus for economic growth, is significantly influenced by Woking's role as a transport hub. The Council will work with partners to continue to improve public transport and cycle facilities in the centre.

Given Woking Town Centre's importance to the future prosperity of the Borough, an Area Action Plan will be developed which will set out in detail how the proposed development will be managed to create the vision envisaged for the town centre.



4.0 Planning for places

Reasoned justification

- 4.3** Mixed-use, high density development within town centres makes the best use of urban land in the most sustainable locations, and helps to reduce the use of private cars and create sustainable communities. The boundary of the town centre (as shown on the Proposals Map) has been revised inwards so that development and investment is focused in the heart of the town, maintaining its compact nature and making the best use of land closest to the station.
- 4.4** The Peacocks Shopping Centre opened in 1992 and contains over 70 stores including anchor stores Debenhams, Next, TK Maxx and H&M. Work to modernise and extend the front of the centre was completed in 2010. The improvements form the first phase of a proposal to improve the connectivity between the Peacocks Centre and Wolsey Place as well as the retail environment around Town Square. Wolsey Place, Woking's original shopping centre, offers over 60 stores including Sainsbury and Boots. Work on revitalising the entrance and providing just under 1,000m² of new floorspace is about to start.
- 4.5** Plans are also underway to redevelop part of the secondary shopping area in Woking Town Centre in a project known as Woking Gateway. An agreement between property company Carisbrooke and the Council was signed in June 2009, enabling Carisbrooke to establish proposals to transform the area. The proposed site runs from Albion House in the east to Cawsey Way in the west, encompassing High Street to the south and Commercial Way to the north. A planning application has yet to be submitted but is likely to comprise a mix of residential, leisure, office and retail space along with public transport facilities and public spaces.
- 4.6** Woking Town Centre is the economic hub of the Borough providing 70% of its office floorspace. However, in 2009 22% of this floorspace was vacant, mainly due to the significant number of outmoded offices within the centre which do not adequately cater for modern business needs. In order to retain and attract businesses to Woking Town Centre and enhance its role as a business location, the majority of further office development required in the Borough over the plan period will be accommodated in the town centre and the Council will support the redevelopment of outmoded stock.
- 4.7** Woking Town Centre provides a strong cultural and entertainment offer and is an ideal location for the development of further facilities to strengthen this offer. There is also potential to broaden the appeal of the evening economy, for example with more high quality restaurants. The Town, District and Local Centres Study identified that residents are likely to increase their expenditure on leisure by 26%, more than twice the national average, between 2009 and 2026. Increasing the cultural and entertainment offer is in line with the Council's Cultural Strategy and will benefit the quality of lives of residents as well as boosting the economy.
- 4.8** Woking Town Centre is the preferred location for hotels and other overnight accommodation to cater for business and other visitors to the Borough, because of its strong public transport links, concentration of businesses, and entertainment and cultural facilities. Applications for lower density overnight accommodation in locations elsewhere in the Borough with good access to sustainable forms of transport will be considered on their merits.



- 4.9** To capitalise on Woking's excellent transport links and motivated by the Government's wish to promote an integrated transport network, Woking Borough Council is working in partnership with key stakeholders from the transport industry and local organisations, to promote Woking rail station as a transport hub of regional significance. An improved and upgraded public transport system for the area and improved traffic flows to other parts of the region will further add to Woking Town Centre's reputation as a well-connected business centre.

Delivery strategy

- 4.10** As the town centre is expected to undergo significant change, the Council will prepare an Area Action Plan. The Council will work with Surrey County Council, Network Rail, South West Trains and other key stakeholders through Transport for Woking and Cycle Woking to deliver transport improvements.
- 4.11** The Council will also work with retail and business membership organisations such as the Woking Town Centre Partnership and Woking Chamber of Commerce and Surrey Chambers of Commerce, to assist and encourage retailers and businesses.

Monitoring and review

- Number of net additional dwellings completed within the town centre boundary.
- Net change in office floorspace permitted and completed in the town centre and the Poole Road/Butts Road area.
- Net change in A1 retail floorspace permitted and completed in the town centre.
- Percentage of new A1 retail floorspace located in the primary and secondary shopping frontages.
- Net change in hotel bed spaces within Woking Town Centre and the rest of the Borough.
- Change in vacancy rates in the primary shopping frontage, secondary shopping frontage and rest of town centre.

Key evidence base

- Town, District and Local Centres Study, September 2009, produced by Roger Tym and Partners.
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010 update.
- Economic Viability Assessment 2010 produced by Adams Integra.
- Employment Land Review (incorporates Employment Position Paper (January 2010), and Market Appraisal (April 2010) produced by Lambert Smith Hampton.
- Surrey Hotel Futures, September 2004, produced by Tourism Solutions and ACK Tourism.
- Transport Assessment, 2010, produced by Surrey County Council.



4.0 Planning for places

West Byfleet District Centre

- 4.12** West Byfleet is the second largest centre in the Borough. Due to its size, range of uses and accessibility it has been designated as the only District Centre in the Borough. It has good accessibility, benefiting from a mainline railway station on the London to Portsmouth line and frequent bus services into Woking Town Centre. There are a good range of services within the centre including a library, a modern health centre, four hairdressers, an optician, four banks, a travel agent, four estate agents and two chemists. West Byfleet has a reasonable retail offer including a medium-sized supermarket, two convenience stores, a butcher, and florist. West Byfleet benefits from a number of restaurants which are particularly popular in the evenings.
- 4.13** The retail ranking of the centre declined between 1998 and 2008 and it has been suffering a relatively high vacancy level although this is starting to improve. The physical environment of part of the centre is outdated.
- 4.14** West Byfleet District Centre contains the second highest concentration of office floorspace in the Borough. However, in 2009 the vacancy rate for commercial office space was 25%, and over the last decade a number of planning permissions have been granted for the redevelopment of outmoded office units to residential, particularly along Pyrford Road.
- 4.15** Two areas of West Byfleet are defined as Conservation Areas, as indicated on the Proposals Map. West Byfleet has a community feel which is enhanced by the centre having two primary schools and two churches. It also benefits from a large recreation ground, which includes children's playground, and multi-use games area.

CS3: West Byfleet District Centre

High density mixed-use development will be encouraged within West Byfleet District Centre as indicated on the Proposals Map. All new development should be well designed and integrated, and enhance local character.

The Council will facilitate the delivery of the following specific proposals at the district centre. The timetable set out to deliver the proposals is indicative and any proposal which brings forward the redevelopment of the district centre in a comprehensive manner will be considered on its merits.

Development type and indicative amount	When
Housing 2010-2027 = 170 units	Over the life of the Core Strategy
Employment 1,000 to 1,500m ² of additional office floorspace to be provided as part of mix-used developments	Over the life of the Core Strategy
Retail Potential for up to 13,000m ² of additional A class floorspace including 12,500m ² of A1 retail made up of 10,500m ² of comparison and 2,000m ² of convenience floorspace	Over the life of the Core Strategy

Town centre and residential uses will be acceptable in principle subject to the following requirements.

1. A1 retail uses will be focused in the Primary Shopping area.
2. The change of use of A1 retail uses will be permitted where this would not have significant harmful effects on the Primary Shopping area, crime and disorder or the vitality and viability of the centre.



3. In the Primary Shopping area residential and office development should be provided above ground floor level in order to retain active frontages.
4. The Council will safeguard office floorspace within West Byfleet District Centre and support office redevelopment where it does not result in an overall loss of office floorspace.
5. The Council recognise the importance to the well-being of the community of adequate community facilities and social and community infrastructure and will seek to safeguard existing facilities and promote new ones where appropriate, as set out in policy CS19.

The Council will work in partnership with service providers, to ensure that access to and within the area is improved for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.

Reasoned justification

4.16 The Town, District and Local Centres study did not consider that West Byfleet had the physical capacity or catchment to achieve anywhere near as much retail development as Woking Town Centre. Development of this scale would not be appropriate in a district centre. However, it is considered that there is the potential to considerably expand the current floorspace, as set out in the policy. Development of this scale would help the vitality and viability of the centre which is suffering from the effects of the economic downturn.

4.17 The level of additional office development identified is modest as the market appraisal of employment floorspace in the Borough found limited demand for office development within West Byfleet and recommended that the volume of office stock should not increase significantly. In this regard, it is considered that only a small increase in floorspace may be achieved, mainly as part of any redevelopment of Sheer House and its immediate surroundings. This would improve the quality of office provision in the centre, and together with completion of the Broadoaks scheme, assist in improving the profile of the centre as a business location.

Delivery strategy

4.18 This policy will be implemented through the development management process.

4.19 The Council will also work with business membership organisations such as Woking Chamber of Commerce and the West Byfleet Business Association to assist and encourage business.

Monitoring and review

- Number of net additional dwellings completed.
- Net change in A1 retail floorspace permitted and completed in West Byfleet District Centre.
- Net change in other A class floorspace permitted and completed in West Byfleet District Centre.
- Net change in office floorspace permitted and completed in West Byfleet District Centre.
- Change in vacancy rates in the centre.

Key evidence base

- Town, District and Local Centres Study, 2009 produced by Roger Tym and Partners.
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010 update.
- Employment Land Review (incorporates Employment Position Paper (January 2010), and Market Appraisal (April 2010) produced by Lambert Smith Hampton.

4.0 Planning for places

Local and neighbourhood centres and shopping parades

- 4.20** With the exception of Woking Town Centre and West Byfleet District Centre, Woking Borough is made up of a network of local and neighbourhood centres, known locally as the “villages”. The hierarchy of centres is set out in Table 2.
- 4.21** Local Centres all have primary schools and churches which give them a focus and sense of community. They vary in size from Byfleet and Knaphill (in the east and west of the Borough respectively) which are the largest, to Sheerwater and Goldsworth Park which are the most compact. There is a train station in Brookwood (a Neighbourhood Centre) but none of the local centres have a train station so private car, bus and cycling are the predominant means of transport to the town centre and the rest of the Borough. However, those living nearby often walk into the centres.
- 4.22** On the whole neighbourhood centres are smaller with a more limited retail offer but all have a church, primary school or public house providing a focal point. The neighbourhood centres and shopping parades provide a more limited range of functions and only basic services; however they can be essential to meeting everyday local needs.

CS4: Local and neighbourhood centres and shopping parades

Local and neighbourhood centres and shopping parades, as indicated on the Proposals Map, will retain town centre uses wherever viable, in order to meet the day-to-day needs of the local community. Local centres are considered appropriate for a low level of retail growth in order to fulfil their function as local service centres, as set out in the table below. Knaphill is the largest of the local centres and is considered to have the potential to achieve a modest amount of development. The figures are set out separately for Knaphill but combined for the other local centres.

Development type and indicative amount	When
Housing 2010-2027 = 250 units	Over the life of the Core Strategy
Retail Local Centres Potential for up to 3,200m ² of additional A class floorspace including 2,600m ² of A1 retail made up of 900m ² of comparison and 1,700m ² of convenience floorspace Knaphill Potential for up to 3,000m ² of additional A class floorspace including 2,400 of A1 retail made up of 700m ² of comparison and 1,700m ² of convenience floorspace	Local Centres Over the life of the Core Strategy Knaphill Over the life of the Core Strategy



Mixed use development with a small amount of retail will be encouraged in local centres provided it accommodates local needs, contributes to the vitality and viability of the centre and is appropriate to the role and function of the centre in the hierarchy. Floorspace is expected to meet the needs of those living locally and not a wider catchment.

The change of use of A1 retail premises to other town centre uses will only be permitted where:

- (i) the floorspace is vacant
- (ii) the unit is not an anchor unit
- (iii) the change of use is not considered harmful to the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole
- (iv) existing facilities which provide for people's day-to-day needs are protected.

In neighbourhood centres and shopping parades the Council will seek to protect and retain local shops and other small scale economic uses such as post offices, petrol stations and public houses, because of the importance of these uses for meeting the everyday needs of those living locally. Proposals for development in these centres must relate to the scale, role and function of the centre in the settlement hierarchy and will be determined on individual merit, taking into account the requirements of PPS4.

No retail growth figures have been set out for the Neighbourhood Centres but they are considered appropriate for a small amount of retail growth in order to fulfil their function of meeting day-to-day needs.

The role and function of the Local and Neighbourhood Centres will be protected by the Council and out of centre development that threatens their vitality and viability will be strongly resisted.

The change of use of office premises will only be permitted where:

- (i) the floorspace is vacant
- (ii) the proposed use accords with policies in the Core Strategy
- (iii) with the exception of self-contained ground floor premises, detailed evidence is provided to show the premises have been actively marketed without success for at least 12 months.

Where applications are put forward for the redevelopment of office premises to alternative uses, evidence will be required to show that there is a lack of demand for office use in the local centre.

Reasoned justification

4.23 The Council does not consider that the Local Centres have the physical capacity or catchment to achieve significant retail development but considers that there is potential over the plan period for modest growth as set out in the policy above. With the exception of Knaphill, it is not considered appropriate to plan for a specific amount of floorspace in any of the centres but that any application should be determined on individual merits taking into account how the proposals relate to the role and function of the centre in the wider hierarchy. Additional floorspace development is only expected to meet local needs and not that of the wider catchment. Allowing limited expansion of existing shops can be key to maintaining their viability.

4.24 National guidance in the form of PPS4: Planning for sustainable economic growth promotes town and other centres as important places for communities and the Government wants new economic growth and development for main town centre uses to be focused in existing centres to ensure their vitality and viability.



4.0 Planning for places

4.25 Anchor units include supermarkets, convenience stores and post offices. It is not appropriate to define a size in terms of square metres as this will vary depending on the size of the centre but they are likely to be the largest units in any centre.

4.26 The local centres listed below provide varying quantities of B use employment floor space which collectively serve a useful purpose in the context of the local micro economies and assist in creating a mix of uses within the centres.

4.27 Local centres addressed by this policy:

- Byfleet
- Goldsworth Park
- Horsell
- Knaphill
- Sheerwater
- St Johns.

Delivery strategy

4.28 This policy will be implemented through the development management process.

Monitoring and review

- Number of net additional dwellings completed by centre.
- Net change in A1 retail floorspace permitted and completed in local centres, neighbourhood centres and shopping parades.
- Net change in other A class floorspace permitted and completed in local centres, neighbourhood centres and shopping parades.
- Net change in office floorspace permitted and completed in local centres.
- Local Service Provision Audit to be undertaken every two years.

Key evidence base

- Town, District and Local Centres Study, 2009 produced by Roger Tym and Partners.
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010 update.
- Employment Land Review (incorporates Employment Position Paper (January 2010), and Market Appraisal (April 2010) produced by Lambert Smith Hampton.



Priority Places

- 4.29** The Core Strategy seeks to achieve a sustainable community for Woking and improve upon the well-being of its people. It sees sustainable communities as places where people want to live, work and visit now and in the future. A place that meets the diverse needs of its residents, and that is sensitive to the environment. Sustainable communities are safe, inclusive and well planned places that offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.
- 4.30** Woking is a relatively prosperous Borough. However, small pockets of deprivation exist where disadvantaged communities, often home to the most vulnerable people in society, do not benefit from the surrounding affluence. The Council is committed to working with partners to ensure that resources are targeted in order to bring about positive changes in these areas.
- 4.31** The Surrey Strategic Partnership, of which Woking Borough Council is a member, has identified the ward of Maybury and Sheerwater as one of four 'Priority Places' in the county which will be subject to multiple interventions by county-wide and local partners in a coordinated manner in order to deliver its targets. The area has around 3,500 households. The need to address areas of deprivation is a key part of the spatial vision and objectives of the Core Strategy.
- 4.32** The ward of Maybury and Sheerwater is comprised of six sub areas. The Devonshire Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue area of Sheerwater being identified as within the 14% most deprived areas nationally, and the most deprived area in the county⁵. It is ranked the most deprived area in the county for health deprivation and disability, income and employment, and ranked fourth in the county for education, skills and training levels. The underlying issues in Maybury and Sheerwater are complex, and vary between the different sub areas. There are a number of Council and Partnership papers that set out these issues in detail.
- 4.33** In addition to the identification of Maybury and Sheerwater as a Priority Place, at the local level, through the work of the Woking Partnership, the Lakeview Estate area of Goldsworth Park has also been identified as a Priority Place to which resources should be targeted. The Lakeview Estate is the second most deprived area in Woking Borough and falls within the 28% most deprived areas nationally. Although levels of deprivation are not as acute as in Maybury and Sheerwater, the Lakeview Estate experiences some specific socio-economic issues, particularly relating to having one of the highest concentrations of socially rented family accommodation in the Borough, and a high number of single parent households. The Lakeview Estate is a small geographical area, home to around 630 households in a relatively high density development. Therefore, the application of this policy has a wider reach than just the Lakeview Estate and extends to the Goldsworth Park area generally, where the local social and community infrastructure that serves Lakeview is located.



4.0 Planning for places

CS5: Priority Places

The Council will work with partners to target resources to the Borough's Priority Places.

- The ward of Maybury and Sheerwater.
- The Lakeview Estate area of Goldsworth Park.

The objectives for these areas are set out in the Priority Places Action Plan⁶. The Council will take a proactive approach to achieve these objectives by working with its partners to implement a number of schemes which will make a positive contribution towards addressing the challenges in these areas.

Maybury and Sheerwater

Housing

The Council will enable the provision of around an additional 250 new homes in Maybury and Sheerwater between 2010 and 2027. In Maybury, these homes will primarily be provided through the redevelopment of poor quality housing stock and outmoded and outdated employment floorspace⁷. In Sheerwater, these new homes will primarily be provided by bringing forward land in the Council's ownership for redevelopment.

The Council will seek to redress the current tenure imbalance in Maybury and Sheerwater by requiring new affordable dwellings in the area to be family homes (2+ bedrooms) and giving priority to the intermediate rent and shared ownership tenures.

Employment

The Council will safeguard land within the existing employment areas in Maybury and Sheerwater for B uses and encourage proposals that create new opportunities for local employment within them. In the Forsyth Road employment area redevelopment of vacant sites will be encouraged for B uses, unless redevelopment is for an alternative employment generating use which contributes to the aims of this policy and would not jeopardise the B use led nature of the employment area.

The Council will promote local labour agreements with developers to enable local people in the Priority Places to secure employment and skills development.

Retail

The Council will seek to increase the choice of retail offer in Sheerwater and will support in principle the development of a convenience retail outlet in Sheerwater, subject to an assessment of the full impacts of such a proposal on the vitality and viability of the existing shopping parade and other local convenience stores. It will work with partners to achieve this, making use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers if necessary.

The vitality of the shopping parade in Sheerwater will be protected and enhanced to ensure that the community has a genuine choice of shopping and services. The loss of existing retail units will be resisted in both Maybury and Sheerwater.

Accessibility

In order to improve accessibility into and out of the Maybury and Sheerwater area, the Council will work with Surrey County Council to bring forward proposals for a new access road through Monument Way East and Monument Way West, as indicated on the Proposals Map. This is expected to be delivered within the period of the Core Strategy.

⁵ Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2007 (CLG).

⁶ Woking Borough Council Priority Places Action Plan includes objectives for Maybury and Sheerwater and the forthcoming Lakeview Action Plan, written by Lakeview Community Action will include the objectives for Lakeview.

⁷ On sites outside the employment areas.



The Council will work with Surrey County Council and public transport providers to:

- seek improvements to bus services from Sheerwater
- improve the existing cycle network through Maybury and Sheerwater including the provision of secure cycle parking facilities in key locations
- assess the role of parking provision around the shopping parade in Sheerwater to increase trade and protect local businesses
- promote investment in a local community transport scheme to increase access to services e.g. doctor, dentist and community centre.

Infrastructure

The Council will channel developer contributions to deliver infrastructure in Maybury and Sheerwater in line with policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery. Priority infrastructure items are detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Public realm and design

The Council will seek to improve the image of Maybury and Sheerwater by promoting high quality design, the enhancement of open spaces and other public amenity areas. Development proposals will be expected to have built-in natural surveillance that designs out crime and fear of crime, creates direct, safe routes to neighbouring communities and nearby retail and commercial facilities, and provide a safe environment.

Lakeview

No significant development is planned for the Lakeview Estate over the Plan period. The key partnership interventions in the area are based on skills, training and education provision and improving access to health services. The Council will therefore seek to assist in the delivery of the objectives for the area by channelling developer contributions to deliver infrastructure in the Lakeview Estate and its local vicinity in line with policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery. Priority infrastructure items are detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The Council will resist the loss of existing retail convenience stores in the vicinity.

Existing community facilities will be protected and the provision of additional social and community infrastructure will be encouraged.

The Council will continue to work with Surrey County Council to improve the existing cycle network through Lakeview including the provision of secure cycle parking at key locations.

Details of the interventions for both Priority Places are set out in the Priority Places Action Plan.

Reasoned justification

- 4.34** Spatial planning has a key role to play in the creation of sustainable communities, and in this instance, the reduction of both relative and absolute deprivation in our Priority Places. However, this Core Strategy is just one element of a wide range of positive interventions by partner organisations required to deliver the objectives of our Priority Places. The Council is committed to working with key partners and the local community to realise aspirations.



4.0 Planning for places

Maybury and Sheerwater

Housing

- 4.35** Housing issues in Maybury and Sheerwater are complex. There is a high level of one bedroom social rented accommodation in the Dartmouth Avenue and Devonshire Avenue area of Sheerwater. In Maybury, the issues are slightly different where there is an ageing housing stock and a large number of socially rented dwellings.
- 4.36** The Council's SHLAA has identified developable land to provide around an additional 250 new homes in the area by 2027. The Council will therefore seek to bring these sites forward in order to increase housing choice and also to redress the existing tenure imbalance. In Maybury, these homes will primarily be provided through the redevelopment of poor quality housing stock and outmoded and outdated employment floorspace outside of the designated employment areas. In Sheerwater, these new homes will primarily be provided by bringing forward land in the Council's ownership for redevelopment.
- 4.37** The Council will seek to redress the existing tenure imbalance in Maybury and Sheerwater by requiring new affordable dwellings in the area to be family homes (2+ bedrooms) and secured in the intermediate rent and shared ownership tenures. In addition to this, the Council has recently reviewed its Housing Allocations policy.

Employment

- 4.38** A significant proportion of the population within Maybury and Sheerwater suffers from low skill levels and below average educational attainment as well as high levels of income and employment deprivation. The Priority Places Action Plan identifies a number of positive interventions to:
- improve educational attainment of local school children
 - increase the numbers of children staying on at school after 16 and entering higher education
 - increase access to and uptake of adult education, particularly basic literacy, numeracy and ICT
 - reduce unemployment and numbers of people claiming long-term illness/disability benefits.
- 4.39** Examples of planned/ongoing interventions include working with local schools to improve take up of higher education through the national Aim Higher programme; working with Connexions to promote and increase uptake of services for people not in employment, education or training; increase provision and take-up of English language courses, literacy and numeracy for adults; setting up a job/skills club in Sheerwater to help local people secure employment opportunities; and provision of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for vulnerable young people.
- 4.40** In order to address income and employment deprivation in these areas through spatial planning, the Council will seek to provide opportunities for local employment. In particular, the redevelopment of office accommodation to provide more flexible mixed B class uses will be encouraged. A considerable amount of office development was constructed at the western end of the Forsyth Road Industrial Estate in the late 1980s/early 1990s. These developments have been suffering from high vacancy rates for some time with a rate of 61% recorded in 2009. The market appraisal of employment sites undertaken by Lambert Smith Hampton identified a number of weaknesses in this area's suitability as an office location and recommended that consideration should be given to the re-use/redevelopment of these offices for more appropriate mixed B class uses. This would enable both the employment potential of the area to be maximised, as well as creating job opportunities more aligned to local skills.



- 4.41** The Council will work with its partners to promote local labour agreements with developers which enable local people in the Priority Places to secure employment and skills development. Agreements should link where possible to existing skills/employment initiatives already planned or in place in the area.

Retail

- 4.42** The Council acknowledges the limited retail choice in Sheerwater and Maybury and, in accordance with PPS4: Planning for sustainable economic growth, the Council recognises that additional weight should be given to meeting deficiencies in deprived areas. PPS4: Planning for sustainable economic growth encourages the provision of shopping, leisure and local services which provide a genuine choice to meet the needs of the whole community. Car ownership in this area is low and public transport is limited so not all members of the community can easily access the retail offer in the town centre and in West Byfleet, despite their relatively close proximity. An additional retail convenience store would enhance consumer choice for those living in Sheerwater and Maybury. However, the existing retail and service provision also needs to be protected.

Accessibility

- 4.43** With low levels of car ownership and limited public transport, the Maybury and Sheerwater area suffers from poor access to a wide range of retail, employment, healthcare and community facilities. To address the issue of isolation, the Council will work with key stakeholders, through Transport for Woking, to improve accessibility into and out of the area, using a variety of transport modes.
- 4.44** One of the main accessibility issues is the road access into Sheerwater. At present the one way system running east and west from Monument Road restricts access to and from Woking Town Centre and creates congestion, particularly at peak times. The proposed new access road through Monument Way East would be subject to a feasibility study and an assessment of the traffic impacts on the surrounding road network and signal points. The Council will liaise with Surrey County and the Highways Authority to advance this proposal.
- 4.45** Maybury and Sheerwater are within easy cycling distance to the town centre if the necessary infrastructure is provided. As part of the Cycle Woking programme, the Council will look to increase the connectivity of the Borough's cycle network by extending existing cycle routes and providing additional secure cycle parking facilities at key locations in Maybury and Sheerwater to encourage cycle use. This approach would offer an alternative and more sustainable mode of transport to the car and increase accessibility to key local services. The Council will also work with Surrey County Council and bus providers to improve bus services.
- 4.46** There is scope to increase parking provision around the shopping parade in Sheerwater to increase trade, protect local businesses and enhance the vitality of the parade. This will be investigated to assess the impact on highway safety and existing land uses, and highway orders will be reviewed to enable this to be achieved.



4.0 Planning for places

4.47 Improvements to transport infrastructure, in combination with new retail development and the creation of new employment opportunities in the employment areas, will have the additional benefit of increasing passing trade to the Sheerwater Parade (and shops in Walton Road), leading to an increase in the vitality and viability of the area.

Infrastructure

4.48 The Council will channel developer contributions raised to deliver infrastructure in Maybury and Sheerwater in line with policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery. Priority infrastructure items are described in detail in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Public realm and design

4.49 It is widely accepted that the quality of the environment in a neighbourhood affects the standard of living and the health and well-being of local people. The Council will therefore seek to improve the built environment in Maybury and Sheerwater by promoting high quality new development, with safe and attractive streets and public spaces. The quality of public open space in the area is generally poor, as spaces are unattractive, lack play facilities and feel unsafe due to limited opportunities for passing surveillance.

4.50 The Council will work with partners to seek to improve the built environment of Maybury and Sheerwater.

- Promoting the highest quality of design of new development and maximising the potential and setting of historic assets in Maybury.
- Explore establishing a safe network of paths, parks and avenues to reduce barriers to movement, both real and perceived, to promote access to shopping parades.
- Enhancement of public open space in each neighbourhood, continue to improve security and access through lighting, new planting, realigning footpaths, local policing and Neighbourhood Watch.
- Maximise the potential of green space. Continue to improve the facilities on offer through replacing play equipment, providing activities for teenagers and creating new facilities.
- New development proposals should strive to promote a sense of place and help transform the image and identity of Sheerwater and Maybury.
- Reducing barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement.
- Refurbishment of the shopping parade on Dartmouth Avenue.
- New developments should be designed so there is natural surveillance to reduce crime and fear of crime.



Lakeview

Infrastructure

- 4.51** The Council will target developer contributions raised through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to deliver infrastructure in Lakeview in line with policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery. Priority infrastructure items are described in detail in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 4.52** Lakeview is within easy cycling distance of the town centre if the necessary infrastructure is provided. The Cycle Woking programme will enable the Council to increase the connectivity of the borough's cycle network by extending existing cycle routes and providing additional secure parking at key locations in Lakeview to encourage cycle use. This will offer an alternative and more sustainable mode of transport to the car and increase accessibility to key local services.

Delivery strategy

- 4.53** The successful delivery of the above measures will depend on effective partnership working and strong governance arrangements. Woking Borough Council, the Woking Partnership and Surrey Strategic Partnership are all committed to providing the necessary support to deliver these priorities.
- 4.54** Overall governance for the delivery of the Priority Places Action Plan will be provided by the Priority Places sub group of the Woking Partnership, which in turn reports to the Surrey Strategic Partnership. In addition, the Delivery Management Group of the Surrey Strategic Partnership is responsible for ensuring that the resources of the key partners are aligned in order to achieve the objectives of the Partnership.
- 4.55** The Council will ensure that, through the annual service planning process, the resources of the Council are aligned to enable the direction of resources to the Priority Places.
- 4.56** The Council will consider using its Compulsory Purchase powers if necessary to enable key projects to be delivered.
- 4.57** In accordance with the Implementation and Delivery Plan, the Council will use its CPO powers and other means to assist with site assembly where it is necessary to do so.

Monitoring and review

- 4.58** The effectiveness of Policy CS5: Priority Places will be measured by the following indicators and targets.
- Achievement of targets set out in the Woking Partnership Priority Places Action Plan.
 - Periodic evaluations of infrastructure projects through the Annual Monitoring Report and the updating of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
 - Regular monitoring of corporate strategies, including the play strategy and housing strategy to monitor progress against wider corporate objectives.
 - The Council, with the Surrey Strategic Partnership and the Woking Partnership, will keep under review the outcomes of future publications of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in order to ensure that the Borough's priority communities are identified.



4.0 Planning for places

Key evidence base

- Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan, 2010.
- Woking Community Strategy, 2006.
- Priority Places Action Plan, 2010.
- Draft Maybury Local Community Action Plan, 2008.
- Sheerwater Local Community Action Plan, 2008.
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (CLG).



5.0 Borough wide policies

Green Belt

- 5.1** The Metropolitan Green Belt covers approximately 60% of the area of the Borough. The extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Proposals Map. Government policy sets the following relevant objectives for the Green Belt – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It is a significant spatial issue in defining the extent of the built-up area and in constraining patterns of harmful development in the Borough. The Green Belt plays a key role in providing recreational opportunity, securing the quality of the Borough’s landscape setting, and in contributing to the special identity of the area.

CS6: Green Belt

To ensure the Green Belt continues to serve its key functions, it will be protected from harmful development. Within its boundaries, strict control will continue to apply over inappropriate development, as defined by Government policy currently outlined in PPG2: Green Belts.

Broadoaks, Parvis Road, West Byfleet and the Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works, Carters Lane, Old Woking are designated as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt. This designation will allow limited infilling and redevelopment of the sites, without compromising the integrity of the Green Belt. The suitability of any scheme will be measured against the requirements of PPG 2 Green Belts and other Core Strategy policies. The policy is not intended to change the existing use of the sites.

Mayford Village is designated as an infill only settlement within the Green Belt on the Proposals Map. Within the village infill development will be permitted where:

- (i) it is for a purpose acceptable in PPG2 Green Belts
- (ii) it is on land which is substantially surrounded by existing development and which forms a gap within a built up frontage
- (iii) the proposed buildings would be used either for residential purposes or for another use which would not be harmful to residential amenity
- (iv) for residential development, proposals are in accordance with the policies applied to new and replacement houses in the urban area.

The Green Belt has been identified as a potential future direction of growth to meet housing need, in particular, the need for family homes between 2022 and 2027. A Green Belt boundary review will be carried out in 2016/17 with the specific objective to identify land to meet the development requirements of the Core Strategy. The Council will ensure that any release of Green Belt land for development will not undermine its overall purpose and integrity. It will also ensure that it will not have any significant adverse effects on the SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be carried out as part of the review to determine whether there is a need for an Appropriate Assessment.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Reasoned justification

5.2 New development is inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it is essential for:

- agriculture
- cemeteries
- outdoor recreation
- extensions to dwellings that would not result in disproportionate additions to the original building.

5.3 The relevant criteria for judging the suitability of development are set out in PPG2: Green Belts. It is not intended to repeat the requirements of PPG2 because they are material considerations when determining planning applications.

5.4 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt are existing large developed sites within the Green Belt, where infilling and/or redevelopment may not be inappropriate development in principle. Two sites are designated as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt at Broadoaks, Parvis Road, West Byfleet and the Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works, Carters Lane, Old Woking. Both fulfil the criteria for a Major Developed Site as set out in PPG2: Green Belts. The geographical boundaries of both sites are defined on the Proposals Map.

5.5 Land at Broadoaks, Parvis Road, West Byfleet was designated as a Major Developed Site in the current Local Plan, and it is intended that it will have the same status in the Core Strategy. The retention of this site for quality office premises is important to the employment strategy of the Core Strategy as no other similar sites are available within the Borough.

5.5 The Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works, Carters Lane, Old Woking is a new Major Developed Site. It has a substantial footprint of development; containing some buildings and the infrastructure required for a sewage treatment works. Any redevelopment proposal for the site should not be significantly larger than the existing structures' footprint. It has been designated for the purposes of a sewage treatment works and not for any other use.

5.6 Whilst infilling and/or redevelopment is acceptable in principle at these sites, any such development must be contained within the defined boundaries and their impacts fully assessed in accordance with criteria in PPG2: Green Belts.

5.7 Mayford Village is a small and compact community where limited development within the village boundaries would not have an adverse effect on the character of the Green Belt. Within the village, only infill residential development will normally be acceptable. New build business or industrial developments will not be allowed as they are likely to result in an unacceptable effect on the primarily residential character of the village and Green Belt.



5.9 The latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (November 2010) identifies sufficient sites to meet ten years housing land supply. The Green Belt and Woking Town Centre have been identified as future directions of growth to meet housing land supply between 2022 and 2027. This is necessary to ensure that the Core Strategy is meeting the requirements of national guidance set out in PPS3: Housing which requires the Core Strategy to identify sufficient sites to meet fifteen years housing land supply.

5.10 A review of the Green Belt boundary will be carried out in 2016/17, to evaluate where it is appropriate to release any land in the Green Belt for housing purposes and the size and scale of the release. The Council is committed to ensuring that the release of Green Belt land for development will not undermine its purpose. It is expected that the review will include an assessment of the landscape, transport and ecological impacts of development of the identified sites. The Site Allocations DPD will be reviewed to take account of the outcome of the Green Belt Review when it is completed.

Delivery strategy

5.11 The policy will be delivered through development management decisions. The Core Strategy policy and national planning policy (PPS2: Green Belts) will provide the framework against which planning applications will be determined.

Monitoring and review

- Number and type of planning permissions granted consent in the Green Belt.
- Number of developments in the Green Belt demonstrating very special circumstances.
- Major Developed Sites – the percentage of development which has taken place within the defined boundaries and the percentage outside the defined boundaries.

Key evidence base

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 Green Belts (updated 2001).
- Housing Land Supply Position Statement (2010).
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009 and 2010).



5.0 Borough wide policies

Biodiversity and nature conservation

5.12 For the purpose of the Core Strategy, biodiversity describes the entire living natural environment of plant and animal life. It encompasses the whole variety of habitats, species, and their ecosystems.

5.13 The Government's vision for conserving and enhancing biodiversity is set out in 'Working with the Grain of Nature: A Biodiversity Strategy for England.' It has a broad aim that planning, conservation, regeneration and development should have minimal impacts on biodiversity and enhance it wherever possible. The document sets out a number of key principles to be considered in development plan policies, including:

- use of up-to-date information to underpin plan policies
- plan policies should aim to maintain, restore and enhance or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interest
- spatial distribution of development should take a strategic approach to the conservation, enhancement, and restoration of biodiversity and geology
- policies should promote a design approach that incorporates beneficial biodiversity and geological features within development
- schemes where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geological interest should be permitted
- where opportunities arise designated sites should be linked to other open spaces as part of the green infrastructure for the area.

5.14 The Core Strategy will apply these principles in local planning decisions.

5.15 In Woking Borough, the following key environmental designations of either international, national, regional or local significance exist that need to be maintained, conserved and/or enhanced because of their biodiversity or geodiversity interest.

- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR).
- Ancient Woodlands.

5.16 The designations listed above are illustrated on the Proposals Map. The designated areas provide important habitats to a variety of important species. The habitats and the species within them, both flora and fauna comprise the biodiversity of the area.



CS7: Biodiversity and nature conservation

The Council is committed to conserving and protecting existing biodiversity assets within the Borough. It will require development proposals to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features and also explore opportunities to create and manage new ones where it is appropriate. This will include those habitats and species listed in the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Any development that will be anticipated to have a potentially harmful effect or lead to a loss of features of interest for biodiversity will be refused.

The Council will pay particular consideration to the following hierarchy of important sites and habitats in the Borough.

1. Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) (European).
2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (National).
3. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), and other Ancient Woodland not identified in 1 and 2 above (Local).

These sites are identified on the Proposals Map.

Within locally designated sites development will not be permitted unless it is necessary for appropriate on-site management measures and can demonstrate no adverse impacts to the integrity of the nature conservation interest.

Development adjacent to locally designated sites will not be permitted where it has an adverse impact on the integrity of the nature conservation interest that can not be mitigated.

The Council will encourage new development to make positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, where appropriate, and the creation of linkages between sites to create a local and regional biodiversity network of wildlife corridors and green infrastructure. It will seek to retain and encourage the enhancement of significant features of nature conservation value on development sites.

Any development with potential impact on the SPA or the SAC will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment to determine the need for Appropriate Assessment.

Reasoned justification

Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation

5.17 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are protected by the EU Habitats Directive. The designations provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's bio-diversity. The key conservation objective of the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC is to protect and enhance wet heath, depressions on peat substrates and dry heath. The designation of SAC is also part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species. These internationally important sites of nature conservation value are to be given the highest degree of protection. There will be a presumption against any new development that will damage a SAC.

5.18 Potential damage to the SAC and the SPA arising from applications for development within the SAC/SPA or located outside their boundaries but with the potential to affect features within them will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking account of local circumstances, including the nature and scale of the application. Issues to be considered include whether the development would:



5.0 Borough wide policies

- cause changes to the coherence of the SAC/SPA such as presenting a barrier between isolated fragments
- cause reduction in the area of the protected habitat
- cause change to the physical quality of the environment or habitat
- cause ongoing disturbance to qualifying species or habitat
- alter species composition.

5.19 The effective avoidance and/or mitigation of any adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of the development.

5.20 Judgements will often be based on existing information. However, where this is unavailable or inadequate, further work will be necessary to confirm whether an application will have a significant impact.

National and regional designations

5.21 The majority of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are within the Metropolitan Green Belt. There is no conflict between protecting them and implementing the Core Strategy, because they are not the preferred locations for development.

5.22 SSSIs are sites of national importance because they support distinctive flora and fauna creating a distinctive landscape of value in the Borough. SNCIs are of county importance and are a non-statutory designation but are afforded protection in the planning process. There is a programme of reviewing SNCIs to provide up-to-date information on their current state. LNRs are a statutory designation, allocated because of their local nature conservation and educational importance. All of these designations are illustrated on the Proposals Map.

5.23 It is important that the landscape of the Borough is conserved and enhanced, but this must be integrated with the need to accommodate change, to address social or economic objectives and meet the needs of the communities. Harm to these environmental designations should be minimised, and opportunities should be taken to bring about improvements where possible.

Biodiversity

5.24 The important habitats and species within the Borough form the biodiversity of the area. In the Woking area the most common examples of protected species are bats, badgers and newts. The aim of the Core Strategy is to protect, enhance and ensure effective management of biodiversity.

5.25 Where development is proposed that would affect sites or features of nature conservation importance, appropriate mitigation and management measures will be taken to ensure that this is prevented or minimised.



New biodiversity proposals should be appropriate to the local landscape character. Any creation, habitat restoration or enhancement schemes should be based upon existing habitats and landscape features. New development can promote biodiversity with sensitive design and landscaping. The Council will require prior assessment of the development site by the developer to provide information on species and features of the landscape important to Woking's biodiversity. The Council will apply a design approach that enhances biodiversity where it is possible to do so.

5.26 The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing green corridors, links and stepping stones for wildlife, river valleys, waterways and open space networks because they provide important sources of habitat and biodiversity. Opportunities will be taken to link designated sites and other green spaces to create integrated wildlife corridors. The Council is committed to avoiding habitat fragmentation and increasing connectivity. River corridors will be protected by the incorporation of undeveloped buffer zones. Policy CS17 Open Space, Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation deals with this matter.

5.27 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) are part of the South East Biodiversity Strategy (SEBS) which aims to be a clear, coherent and inspiring vision and framework that guides and supports all those who can impact biodiversity in the region. BOAs identify the most important areas for wildlife conservation in Surrey, where targeted conservation action will have the greatest benefit. The main aim within BOAs is to restore biodiversity at a landscape scale through the maintenance, restoration and creation of BAP priority habitats.

Delivery strategy

5.28 The condition of SSSIs will be monitored to ensure they are not declining.

5.29 The Council will support the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan which provides specific habitat and species targets and the Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs).

5.30 The Council will work with the Surrey Wildlife Trust to carry out a rolling programme of SSCI surveys.

Monitoring and review

- Number, area and condition of regionally or locally designated wildlife sites.
- The total area designated for sites of national and regional importance, or a decline in their condition.
- The enhancement and creation of Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat.
- Status of Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.
- The percentage of major applications incorporating measures to protect and enhance biodiversity.

Key evidence base

- Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan, 1999.
- Biodiversity & Planning In Surrey, November 2010 (Surrey Wildlife Trust and Surrey Biodiversity Partnership).
- Habitats Regulation Assessment, June 2011.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

5.31 In March 2005 the Government designated areas of heathland within the Thames Basin Heaths as Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) under European Directive 79/409/EEC (transposed into the UK Habitats Regulations). It has been identified as an internationally important habitat for three rare species of ground nesting birds; the Dartford Warbler, Nightjar and Woodlark. It covers areas of heathland which extend across 11 Local Authority areas in Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire and comprises a network of 13 sites. Three of the designated sites that make up the SPA are located, or part located in Woking Borough; part of Horsell Common, Sheets Heath (Brookwood) and part of Brookwood Heath. In addition close to Woking Borough are Chobham Common, Ockham and Wisley Common and Whitmoor Common which are also designated as TBH SPA. The delivery of this policy is set out in the TBH Delivery Framework by the TBH Joint Strategic Partnership and its partners.

The designation provides increased protection to a variety of rare birds and habitats and is a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. The designation of SPA is part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species. These internationally important sites of nature conservation value are to be given the highest degree of protection.

The SPA is shown on the Proposals Map.

CS8: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas

The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area is a European designated site which is accorded priority protection and conservation by Woking Borough Council.

New residential development which is likely to have significant effect on its purpose and integrity will be required to demonstrate that adequate mitigation measures are put in place to avoid any potential adverse effects. The measures will have to be agreed with Natural England who will help take a strategic approach to the management of the SPA.

The Council will take a precautionary approach to the protection and conservation of the SPA and development will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that this will not give rise to a significant adverse effects upon the integrity of the SPA.

The Council will ensure that no sites are allocated or granted planning consent for (net) new residential development within the 400 metres exclusion zone of the Thames Basin Heath SPA because the impacts of such development on the SPA cannot be fully mitigated. New residential development beyond 400m threshold but within 5 kilometres of the SPA boundary (in a straight line) will be required to make an appropriate contribution towards the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). Details of how the contribution will apply are set out in the Council's Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2010 – 2015.

An applicant may wish to provide SANG as part of development. Where that is the case, all relevant standards including standards recommended by Natural England should be met and a contribution will have to be made towards SAMM.

A minimum of 8 hectares of SANG land (after discounting to account for current access and capacity) should be provided per 1,000 new occupants.



Development of fewer than 10 dwellings should not be required to be within a specified distance of SANG land provided it is ensured that a sufficient quantity of SANG land is in place to cater for the consequent increase in residents prior to occupation of the dwellings.

Any proposal with potential significant impacts (alone or in combination with other relevant developments) on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment.

Reasoned Justification

- 5.34** The TBH SPA contributes significantly to Woking's landscape character and wildlife value. In considering whether or not a development is likely to have an adverse effect on the SPA, the Council will adopt the precautionary principle and assume harm will occur until it is demonstrated to be otherwise.
- 5.35** Natural England, the Government's Advisor on issues concerning the natural environment, consider that the intensification of residential development up to a distance of 5 kilometres away from the SPA would result in a range of pressures with potentially adverse effects on the protected habitat. As a consequence, within 400 metres (linear) of the SPA it is not considered possible to avoid or mitigate the impacts of new development, and as such there will be a presumption against new residential development within this zone. Between 400 metres to 5 kilometres (linear) from the SPA, mitigation is required. Without mitigation, planning applications for new residential development within 5 kilometres of the SPA will be refused.
- 5.36** The mitigation is provided in the form of a financial contribution towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The purpose of SANG is to attract informal recreation users, such as walkers and dog walkers away from the SPA. SANGs will provide alternative open spaces for use by future occupants of development and existing residents to avoid the potential harm caused by more visitors to the SPA. SANG land can be new open space, or the improvement of existing open space to increase its capacity for informal recreation.
- 5.37** As part of the SPA mitigation, Natural England requested that all Local Authorities affected by the SPA designation collect a contribution per dwelling, in addition to the above SANG financial contribution, towards the SAMM of the SPA. This SAMM contribution will be used to implement an identified programme of works to mitigate the impacts of the proposed developments.
- 5.38** The policy does not cover commercial and industrial development and, in cases where it is considered that such proposals could impact on the SPA, advice will be sought from Natural England.
- 5.39** Information about SANG land and financial contributions is set out in greater detail in the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy 2010-15 (known as the Avoidance Strategy). This document explains how avoidance may be achieved, the standards required and funding arrangements. The Avoidance Strategy is a living document which will be updated as new avoidance and mitigation measures are identified. This document will eventually be incorporated into a Supplementary Planning Document.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.40 The effective avoidance and/or mitigation of any adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of the development.

5.41 Judgments will often be based on existing information. However, where this is unavailable or inadequate, further work will be necessary to confirm whether an application will have a significant impact.

Delivery strategy

5.42 This policy will be delivered by the Borough Council working with Natural England and other Local Authorities which share the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, to maintain an up to date Avoidance Strategy and ensure a consistent and coherent approach to mitigation.

5.43 Woking Borough Council will continue to be a member of and contributing to the Joint Strategic Partnership Board (a forum of Local Authorities affected by the TBH SPA and other interested groups, to develop a joint agreed approach to avoidance and mitigation measures).

Monitoring and review

- No decrease in the total area designated of international importance, or a decline in their condition.
- Status of the three protected bird species in the SPA.
- The amount and type of SANG land available as set out in the Council's TBH SPA Avoidance Strategy.

Key evidence base

- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2010-15.
- Habitats Regulation Assessment, June 2011.
- PPG17: Open space, Sport and Recreation Audit (2008).



Flooding

- 5.44** Flooding has implications for Woking Borough, not only in terms of the constraint it places on the location of new development, but it is also an issue which relates to climate change. This threatens the livelihood of residents and local businesses, the floods of 2000 being a reminder of that.
- 5.45** Flooding within the Borough originates from a number of sources. The most serious are river, surface water flooding and sewer inundation. With advice from the Environment Agency, the Council has undertaken a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA - available on the Council's website) in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the source and level of flood risk within the Borough and provide a basis against which to apply the PPS25: Development and flood risk sequential approach to development. This document will be used to inform the Site Allocations DPD. It has also been used to inform the preparation of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and contains advice for developers on undertaking Flood Risk Assessments. In addition, it takes on board other relevant plans and strategies relating to the management of flood risk.
- 5.46** Water quality impacts on wildlife in and around water, public health and the appearance and amenity of watercourses.

CS9: Flooding

The Council will determine planning applications in accordance with the guidance contained within PPS25: Development and flood risk. The SFRA will inform the application of the Sequential and Exceptional Test set out in Annex D of PPS25.

The Council expects development to be in Flood Zone 1 as defined in the SFRA. Applications or allocations within Flood Zone 2 will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternatives in areas at lower risk. The Council will not encourage development in Flood Zones 3a and 3b. However, it accepts that this is possible in exceptional circumstances. Development proposals in Flood Zones 3a and 3b will be required to be accompanied by a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment to demonstrate that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere or exacerbate the existing situation.

The Council will require all significant forms of development to incorporate appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) as part of any development proposals. If this is not feasible, the Council will require evidence illustrating this.

A Flood Risk Assessment will be required for development proposals within or adjacent to areas at risk of surface water flooding as identified in the SFRA. To further reduce the risk from surface water flooding, all new development should work towards mimicking greenfield run-off situations.

Proposals which relate specifically to reducing the risk of flooding (e.g. defence/ alleviation work) will be supported so long as they do not conflict with other objectives of the Core Strategy for example, those relating to landscape and townscape character.

In areas at risk of flooding, proposals (including flood compensation proposals) with implications for biodiversity will be carefully considered for all levels of ecological designation. Where the development proposals are demonstrated to adversely affect an SPA, SAC or RAMSAR site, permission will not be granted.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Reasoned justification

5.47 The Council has undertaken a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in order to identify sufficient land with housing potential to meet its development requirements. The current assessment highlights that there is sufficient land outside of Flood Zone 3a or 3b to meet the Borough's housing requirements. In addition, and in accordance with the sequential approach, Flood Zone 2 will only be considered if sufficient housing land supply cannot be identified in Flood Zone 1 to meet the housing target and all suitable alternatives have been considered. It will not be necessary to permit development in Flood Zone 3a or 3b. However, applications for replacement properties in these locations will be considered providing that there is a similar or reduced built footprint and measures to reduce flood risk will be expected.

5.48 Applicants will be required to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment for development proposals within or adjacent to areas at risk from surface water run off. The SFRA identified areas of potential risk, although circumstantial evidence will be considered on a case-by-case basis. National policy (PPS25: Development and flood risk) also requires Flood Risk Assessments for all development proposals in Flood Zones 3a, 3b and 2 as well as all development proposals of one hectare or above in Flood Zone 1. Where there is potential for other sources of flooding, a Flood Risk Assessment should be considered to investigate the level and impact of the risk and propose mitigation measures in accordance with the advice in PPS25 and the Council's SFRA. Applicants will be encouraged to recognise the benefits that undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment can bring to a development, even if not required.

5.49 A sequential approach to development will be applied for Flood Zones 3a and 3b.

5.50 In managing surface water run-off from development sites, applicants should work towards replicating greenfield run-off situations. In order to achieve this, priority should be given to prevention of surface water run-off (e.g. through minimising paved areas, keeping drains clear, general maintenance), followed by source control measures. On-site solutions such as infiltration devices, filter strips should then be sought and only if these will not satisfactorily deal with the run-off should off-site solutions be considered (such as discharge into water courses). These requirements are complemented by Building Regulations and considerable guidance is also available via CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association).

Delivery strategy

5.51 The policy will be delivered in the following ways:

- Working with the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council, and the water authorities to keep the SFRA updated, showing the latest known position on flooding and areas at risk.
- The Council will continue to collect information on flooding incidents affecting properties, business premises and the transport network, which will be fed into updates of the SFRA.
- A Surface Water Management Plan is being prepared with Surrey County Council. The plan aims to identify viable options to manage the risk of surface water flooding, for the benefit of Woking and Byfleet and its people, both now and in the future.

Monitoring and review

The following indicators will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

- The number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency / Water Authority advice and for what reasons.
- The number of new properties in Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b.
- The number of new developments incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs).

Key evidence base

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2009, produced by Capita Symonds.

Housing provision and distribution

- 5.52** Housing provision is integral to the creation of a sustainable community in Woking. To achieve this aim, the Council will ensure that there are sufficient homes built in sustainable locations that people can afford and which meet the needs of the community. The main urban areas will therefore be the focus for new housing development.
- 5.53** The Council will make provision for the delivery of 4,964 net additional dwellings in the Borough between 2010 and 2027 (an annual average of 292 per annum).
- 5.54** The Council has undertaken a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)⁸ which identifies land that has potential for residential development in the Borough. The results of the SHLAA are used to demonstrate a rolling five-year housing land supply and to identify sites that are likely to come forward for residential development over the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

CS10: Housing provision and distribution

The Council will make provision for 4,964 net additional dwellings in the Borough between 2010 and 2027 in accordance with the following distribution:

In areas at risk of flooding, proposals (including flood compensation proposals) with implications for biodiversity will be carefully considered for all levels of ecological designation. Where the development proposals are demonstrated to adversely affect an SPA, SAC or RAMSAR site, permission will not be granted.

	Indicative number of dwellings*	Indicative density range**
Woking Town Centre	2,300	In excess of 200dph
West Byfleet District Centre	170	50 – 100dph
Infill development in the Local Centres	250	30 – 60dph
Infill development in the rest of urban area	750	30 – 40dph
Moor Lane site, Westfield	440	30 – 50dph
Brookwood Farm, Brookwood	300	30 – 50dph
Green Belt (site(s) to be released after 2021/22)	550	30 – 50dph
Woking Town Centre – as a broad location	200	In excess of 200dph
Total	4,964	

* rounded.

** densities are pro rata where part of a mixed use scheme.

⁸ <http://www.woking.gov.uk/council/planningservice/ldf/ldfresearch/shlaa>



5.0 Borough wide policies

The density ranges set out are indicative and will depend on the nature of the site. Density levels will be influenced by design with the aim to achieve the most efficient use of land. Wherever possible, density should exceed 40 dwellings per hectare and will not be justified at less than 30 dwellings per hectare, unless there are significant constraints on the site or where higher densities cannot be integrated in to the existing urban form. Higher densities than these guidelines will be permitted in principle where they can be justified in terms of the sustainability of the location and where the character of an area would not be compromised. Limited infill development will be permitted in the village of Mayford as defined on the Proposals Map, in line with national policy set out in PPG2: Green Belts.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be carried out for any allocation or development proposal with potential impacts on a SPA, SAC or Ramsar sites to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment.

Reasoned justification

- 5.55** Through the SHLAA, the Council has been able to identify sufficient specific deliverable and developable sites in the urban area to meet the housing target for around the first 13 years of the Plan. In this regard, the Council can demonstrate that it can satisfy the Government's requirement to identify specific deliverable sites to meet 10 years housing supply and also provide some degree of certainty in the delivery of the housing requirement against any risk of certain sites not coming forward as expected in the first 10 years of the plan period. However, the Council is required to identify 15 years housing supply. It is considered that there is additional housing potential in Woking Town Centre that will arise in the latter part of the Plan period from sites that have not yet been specifically identified. This can contribute to the housing land supply in the last 5 years of the plan period. Woking Town Centre is therefore identified as one of the broad locations for long-term residential development. This is in accordance with the overall spatial approach, helping to minimise the impact on important biodiversity and landscape features and offers the greatest scope to reduce the need to travel by private vehicle because of the proximity to existing services, jobs and public transport. Furthermore, it will help minimise the amount of land that will be needed to be released from the Green Belt to meet housing need.
- 5.56** In addition to the sites that will come forward in the Town Centre, there will still be the need to identify further sites in the Green Belt to meet both the national requirement for housing land supply and the nature of housing that is needed. The nature of the sites that are considered to be developable in the medium - long term are primarily in town centre locations that are likely only to be suitable for high density flatted developments. The implication of this is that the Council would not be able to achieve an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to meet local need and demand. To satisfy the above requirements, the Green Belt is also identified as a broad location for long term residential development. The specific location(s) of this release will be determined through the Site Allocations DPD. The future monitoring of housing supply will help determining how much land will be needed.
- 5.57** The locations and proportions of new dwellings listed in the policy are intended to be broad proportions that can be varied in relation to the availability of suitable land for development, so long as the basic relationships in the settlement hierarchy are not undermined.
- 5.58** New residential development within the urban area will be provided through redevelopment, change of use, conversion and refurbishment of existing properties or through infilling.
- 5.59** For the purpose of this policy 'infill' development is defined as the development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, or the small scale redevelopment of existing properties within such a frontage. Infill development will be permitted provided the proposed development is at an appropriate scale in relation to the character of the surrounding area.



- 5.60** National policy states that there is no presumption that land which is previously developed is necessarily suitable for residential development, and defines back garden land as 'greenfield'. In making decisions on the appropriateness of development on back garden land, the Council will be mindful of this advice and will permit development where it meets the requirements of other policies in the Local Development Documents and the saved policies of the Woking Borough Local Plan 1999.
- 5.61** Development proposals in the High Density Residential Areas, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be permitted at densities generally in excess of 70dph in order to make the most efficient use of land.
- 5.62** In accordance with the housing and previously developed land trajectory, as evidenced through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Council will expect that between 2010 and 2027 70% of new residential development will be on previously developed land.
- 5.63** In order to make efficient use of land for housing, the Council will encourage new residential development to be at appropriate densities. The density ranges set out in the policy are not intended to be prescriptive, but a guide to inform development proposals.
- 5.64** Over recent years, the density of new residential development has significantly increased in Woking Borough. Whilst this has helped to make efficient use of land, it has led to growth in some types of housing, particularly apartments. It is therefore important to ensure that a balance is achieved between making efficient use of land and delivering the right type of housing to meet the needs of the whole community. The design of new housing is therefore of great importance to the delivery of housing. It is important that the densities sought do not affect the quality and character of an area and the general well-being of residents.
- 5.65** The Borough's Local and Neighbourhood Centres offer community facilities and local services and are within a reasonable distance of the town and district centres via public transport. Infill and other forms of residential development within these centres will be permitted within the boundaries as shown on the Proposals Map. These boundaries may be reviewed as part of the Site Allocations DPD.
- 5.66** Land at Brookwood Farm, Knaphill has been reserved for meeting the long-term housing needs of the Borough since the adoption of the previous Woking Borough Local Plan in 1993. Local evidence in the SHMA, SHLAA and housing trajectory now highlight the need to bring this site forward, particularly to meet the need for affordable housing. Land at Brookwood Farm is allocated for residential development in this Core Strategy. The site will deliver around 300 new dwellings in total, 50% of which will be affordable family housing. Generally, the Council's preference will be to provide all the 50% affordable housing in situ as part of the development. However, the Council will be prepared to negotiate for a percentage of the 50% target to be provided off-site if that will ensure a more effective distribution of affordable housing across the Borough. A Development Brief will be prepared which will set out the detailed development requirements for the site. Land at Moor Lane, Westfield has also been reserved to meet long-term housing needs. The site has outline planning permission for 440 new dwellings, 60% of which will be affordable. The boundaries for both sites are shown on the Proposals Map.

Delivery strategy

- 5.67** This policy will be delivered through working in partnership with developers and landowners through decisions on planning applications, bringing forward land allocations (designated in a Site Allocations DPD), supporting changes of use, redeveloping unsuitable employment sites and permitting taller buildings in appropriate locations.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.68 The Council will monitor the supply of housing land to ensure that a five year supply of deliverable sites is maintained. Annual monitoring and updating of the SHLAA, housing and previously developed land trajectory through the Annual Monitoring Report will enable the Council to keep under review the supply of housing, and provide an early opportunity to consider options to ensure delivery, which may include the allocation of additional land for development or the use of Compulsory Purchase powers.

5.69 Supplementary guidance on density and design will be set out in the Design Standards SPD.

Monitoring and review

5.70 The policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR.

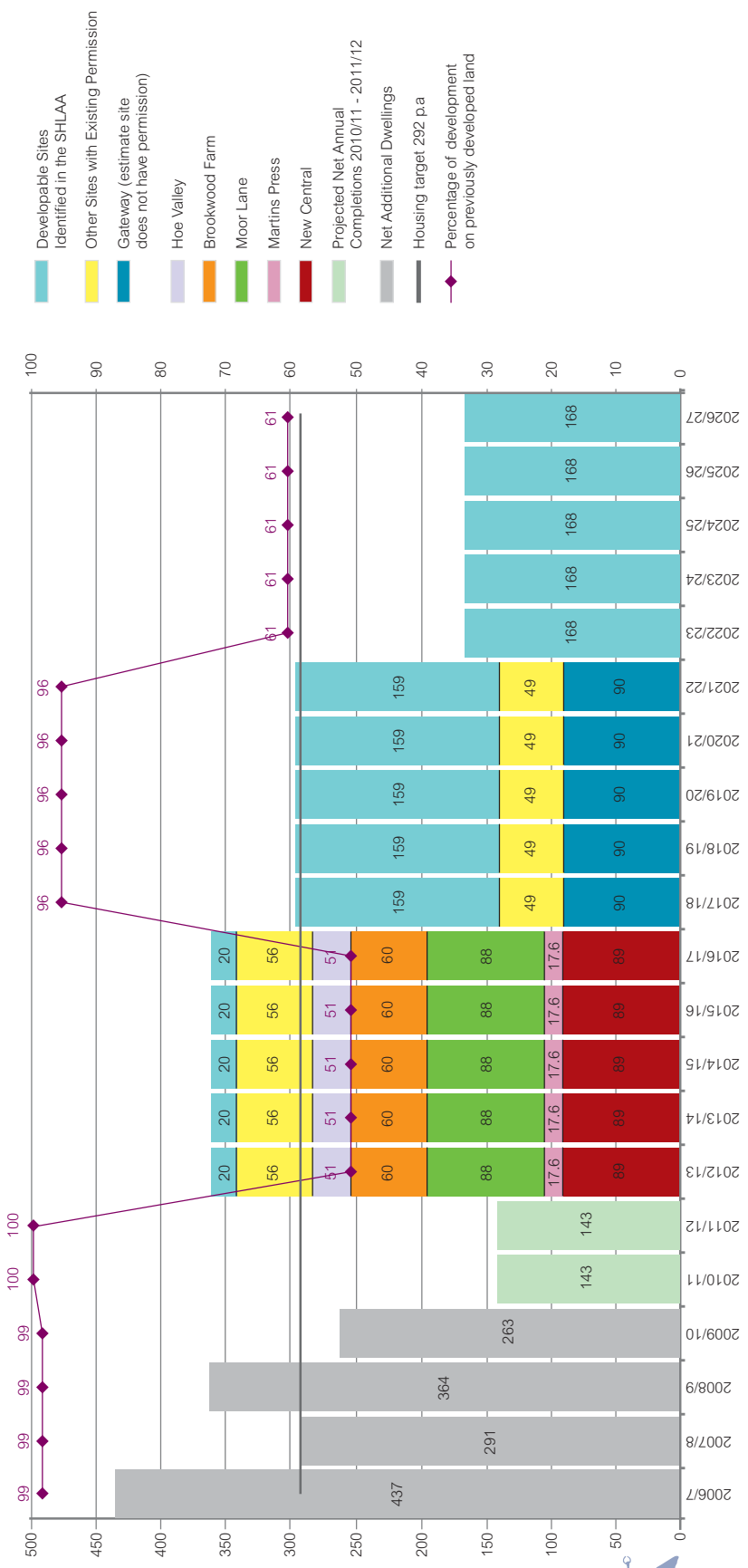
- The delivery of an annual average of 292 net additional dwellings every year to 2027.
- The supply of specific deliverable sites to ensure a rolling five year supply of housing land is maintained.
- 70% of net additional dwellings to be provided on previously developed land.
- Average densities achieved on site by location.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010 update.
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), 2009 produced by Fordhams Research.
- Economic Viability Assessment 2010, produced by Adams Integra.
- Figure 4: Housing and previously developed land trajectory.



Fig 4: Housing and previously developed land trajectory



5.0 Borough wide policies

Housing mix

5.71 Different households require different types and sizes of housing. It is important that the Council provide an appropriate choice and mix of housing across the Borough in order to create balanced and sustainable communities. Widening housing choice broadens the appeal of an area and assists in meeting the needs of existing residents as well as attracting new residents to the Borough. Ensuring that new housing takes account of local need and existing provision to create neighbourhoods where there is a genuine choice of the right housing to meet local need, both at neighbourhood and Borough wide level, is essential. The Council will therefore plan for a mix of housing that will be appropriate to the needs of the community, providing a range of types, sizes and tenures including housing for the elderly, lifetime homes and other specialist housing needs.

CS11: Housing mix

All residential proposals will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to address the nature of local needs as evidenced in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment in order to create sustainable and balanced communities.

The appropriate percentage of different housing types and sizes for each site will depend upon the established character and density of the neighbourhood and the viability of the scheme.

The Council will not permit the loss of family homes on sites capable of accommodating a mix of residential units unless there are overriding policy considerations justifying this loss.

Reasoned justification

5.72 The Council will seek to achieve a mix of dwelling sizes to meet local need and demand. Research (SHMA, May 2009) has found that the overall need and demand for new homes in the Borough is:

- 19% 1 bed
- 28% 2 bed
- 39% 3 bed
- 14% 4+ bed.

The Council will expect new residential schemes to reflect the latest evidence of need, subject to density and character considerations.

5.73 Lower proportions of family accommodation (2+ bedroom units which may be houses or flats) will be acceptable in locations in the Borough such as the town and district centres that are suitable for higher density developments. Equally, lower proportions of smaller units will be acceptable in areas of existing low residential density where the character of the area will not be compromised.



Delivery strategy

- 5.74** The Council will work with developers to ensure that an appropriate mix of units is delivered on sites through the planning application process.
- 5.75** The Council will also prepare a Site Allocations DPD that will specify the mix of dwellings that will be expected to be provided on specific sites.
- 5.76** Through the Annual Monitoring Report, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policy with reference to any changes in need as evidenced through updates to the SHMA. The Council will consider reviewing the mix set out in this policy should the monitoring process highlight any issues concerning delivery or any changes in local evidence.
- 5.77** The Council will provide more details on the application of this policy on housing mix in the Design Standards SPD.

Monitoring and review

- 5.78** The policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR to enable the Council to effectively manage the mix of new residential developments:
 - Size and type of new dwellings delivered by type and location.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), 2009 produced by Fordhams Research.
- Economic Viability Assessment 2010, produced by Adams Integra.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Affordable housing

5.79 Woking is a relatively affluent Borough and is placed within the top 20% of wealthiest local authorities nationally. However, affordability – or the ability for people to get on the property ladder - is a key issue. High average incomes and high employment rates conceal inequalities in the distribution of wealth within the Borough. There are small pockets of relative deprivation with Maybury and Sheerwater being the most deprived ward in Surrey and Goldsworth East recorded as the fifth most deprived area in Surrey.

5.80 Affordability is a measure of whether housing can be afforded by certain groups of households and is defined by the relationship between local incomes and the local general housing market. Therefore, the ability of a household to satisfy its own housing requirement is fundamentally a factor of the relationship between local house prices and household income. The high cost of home ownership in Woking has always presented an issue of affordability for many of the Borough's residents and leaves many people unable to afford market housing. In addition the high cost of renting on the open market leaves many local people unable to afford this tenure without dependency on benefits. This increases the demand for the provision of affordable housing. Indeed, the current SHMA shows that there is a need for an additional 499 new affordable homes in the Borough every year and in April 2011 there were 2,140 households with active applications on the Council's housing register.

CS12: Affordable housing

Between 2010 and 2027 the overall target for affordable housing is 35% of all new homes, equivalent to 1,737 new affordable homes.

All new residential development on previously developed (brownfield) land will be expected to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the following criteria.

- On sites providing 15 or more dwellings, or on sites of over 0.5ha (irrespective of the number of dwellings proposed), the Council will require 40% of dwellings to be affordable.
- On sites providing between 10 and 14 new dwellings, the Council will require 30% of dwellings to be affordable.
- On sites providing between five and nine new dwellings, the Council will require 20% of dwellings to be affordable or a financial contribution equivalent to the cost to the developer of providing 10% of the number of dwellings to be affordable on site.
- On sites providing fewer than five new dwellings, the Council will require a financial contribution equivalent to the cost to the developer of providing 10% of the number of the dwellings to be affordable on site.

The mechanisms for calculating financial contributions in lieu of on site provision will be set out in the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD.

The affordable housing threshold and targets will apply to all new homes that are being proposed.

All new residential development on greenfield land will be required to provide 50% of dwellings to be affordable, irrespective of the site size or number of dwellings proposed.



All new residential development on land in public ownership will be required to provide 50% of dwellings to be affordable, irrespective of the site size or number of dwellings proposed, subject to an assessment of the financial viability of the development of the site. Generally, the Council's preference will be to provide all the 50% affordable housing in-situ as part of the development. However, one of its over-riding objectives is to ensure an effective distribution of affordable housing across the Borough. In this regard, it is prepared to negotiate for a percentage of the 50% target to be provided off-site if that will ensure a more effective distribution of affordable housing across the Borough. The actual level of off-site provision will be determined on the merits of individual schemes that will come forward. As a guide, the Council will seek to ensure that 40% of the provision is secured in-situ.

Non residential developments which generate a need for housing will be required to provide a financial contribution towards the provision of new affordable housing which will be appropriate to the scale and kind of the development and subject to an assessment of financial viability. This is further explained in the reasoned justification – Contributions from non-residential developments.

The proportion of affordable housing to be provided by a particular site will take into account the following factors.

- The need to provide an appropriate tenure mix that meets the needs of local residents, as evidenced by the latest SHMA, and that is considered affordable based on local income levels.
- The requirement for significant provision of new affordable family homes.
- Constraints on the development of the site imposed by other planning objectives.
- The need to achieve a successful housing development in terms of the location and mix of affordable homes.
- The costs relating to the development; in particular the financial viability of developing the site (using an approved viability model).

The delivery of affordable housing will be provided in accordance with the following order of priority.

- On-site as part of the development and distributed across the development as much as is reasonable and practical to create a sustainable, balanced community.
- On an alternative site, only if provision would result in a more effective use of available resources or would meet an identified housing need, such as providing a better social mix and wider housing choice.
- A financial payment to be utilised in providing affordable housing on an alternative site.

If a site allocated or identified for housing is sub-divided so as to create two or more separate development schemes one or more of which falls below the relevant threshold, the Council will seek an appropriate level of affordable housing to reflect the provision that would have been achieved on the site as a whole had it come forward as a single scheme for the allocated or identified site

Planning conditions and/or obligations will be used to ensure that the affordable housing will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled to alternative affordable housing provision.

Full details of how this policy will be implemented will be set out in an Affordable Housing Delivery SPD.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Reasoned justification

5.81 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has found that 58% of households are likely to require market housing and 42% are likely to require affordable housing over the Plan period. Table 3 below shows the likely profile of households requiring market and affordable housing over the Plan period.

Table 3: Likely profile of households requiring market and affordable housing

	Market housing	Affordable housing
Multi-person households (including families with children)	55%	25%
Couples	30%	26%
Single persons	15%	49%

5.82 The Council will seek to make provision for a target of 1,737 new affordable units secured on the back of new developments (equivalent to a headline target of 35%). The Council recognises that the level of provision set out above is insufficient in the context of local need which is estimated at around 499 new affordable homes a year, however, this is what can realistically be achieved without constraining the overall delivery of housing in the Borough.

5.83 This policy applies to all sites where new residential development is proposed, including mixed use schemes and proposals for sheltered and extra care accommodation where there is a net increase in the number of units on the site.

Hierarchy of provision – alternative sites

5.84 The Council will expect new affordable housing to be provided on site in the first instance. If, in accordance with the policy, a case is advanced justifying provision on an alternative site, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to identify a suitable alternative site. To ensure no overall loss of affordable units, the alternative site will be expected to deliver those units foregone on the original site plus any affordable units that would be required should the alternative site in itself also trigger the requirement to provide affordable housing. In such circumstances the Council will require an amount of affordable housing commensurate with that which could have been secured had the site come forward in its own right in addition to the quantum of affordable housing to be provided to secure compliance with obligations for the original site.

Contributions from non-residential developments

5.85 Commercial development can put added pressure on the housing market as new employees move to the Borough for work who may otherwise not have done so. Many commercial developments employ a wide range of employees and inevitably some of these will be on low incomes and in housing need. The Council will require proposals for non-residential development which generates needs for additional housing to make an appropriate contribution to affordable provision, where market pressures are especially strong and the need for affordable housing is acute. Over the Plan period, there will be significant new commercial



development in the Borough, particularly in the town centre, which will put added pressure on the local housing market and the need for affordable housing. Where a need for affordable housing is directly related to a commercial development, the Council will seek a financial or other contribution appropriate to the scale and kind of the development. Full details will be set out in the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD.

Tenure split

- 5.86** The SHMA identifies that there is a need for 70% of new affordable dwellings to be in social rented tenure and 30% at intermediate level (including shared ownership). The Council will therefore expect that new affordable dwellings should be delivered in accordance with this tenure split.

Affordable housing mix

- 5.87** Policy CS11: Housing mix seeks to secure a sustainable range of dwellings in order to create balanced communities in the Borough. The dwelling mix required by the policy is based on the evidence provided by the current SHMA for all new housing. The SHMA also identifies, however, that there is a significant need for new affordable family (2+ bedroom) homes (92% of need is for 2+ bedroom social rented units and 54% of need is for 2+ bedroom intermediate units). The Council will therefore require that a higher proportion of new affordable homes should be family homes.

Viability

- 5.88** In exceptional circumstances, where the provision of affordable housing in accordance with this policy is not economically viable, the Council will expect the submission of financial appraisal information alongside the planning application. Applicants will be expected to pay for an independent review of the information submitted. If the Council is satisfied that affordable housing cannot be provided in accordance with this policy, it will seek to negotiate alternative provision. Further details on this matter will be set out in the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD.

Exceptional circumstances

- 5.89** On the basis of the results of the SHMA and the SHLAA, it is clear that the Council will not be able to deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet the level of identified need. The Council will therefore explore opportunities to deliver affordable housing from other sources of sites. On a limited number of occasions, the Council has approved applications for residential development which are exceptions to the adopted policies. On any future exception sites the Council will expect a substantially higher percentage of affordable housing as the primary benefit to balance the policy objection. The details will be determined on a site-by-site basis through negotiation. The proportion of affordable housing should not prejudice the provision of other planning elements necessary and reasonably related to the scheme. This will not override the objective of achieving sustainable development in the Borough.

Delivery strategy

- 5.90** This policy will be delivered through working in partnership with developers, landowners, Registered Social Landlords and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to bring sites forward to ensure maximum affordable housing provision.
- 5.91** Through the Annual Monitoring Report the Council will keep under review the affordable housing trajectory, and monitor delivery against target provision. Monitoring provision in this way will enable the Council to react at an early stage to any problems with delivery and the consideration of actions which may include the allocation of additional land to meet affordable housing needs or the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers, in accordance with the Implementation and Delivery Plan.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.92 Financial contributions collected by the Council in lieu of on site provision will be used to fund new affordable homes through the following mechanisms.

- Woking Borough Homes.
- The provision of grant funding to Registered Social Landlords.
- The provision of grant funding directly to a developer.

5.93 The Council will prepare and keep under review an Affordable Housing Delivery SPD which will provide detailed information regarding the implementation and delivery of this policy. Specifically, the SPD will include:

- a formula for calculating financial contributions in lieu of on site provision
- details of the size and type of units that the Council will expect to be delivered on site
- details of the distribution of affordable housing across developments (e.g. approach to 'pepper potting' and 'clustering')
- the Council's approach to rounding
- details of any exceptional circumstances
- advice on the open book approach to viability assessments
- details on the requirement for affordable units to be secured in affordable tenure in perpetuity through the use of section 106 agreements
- details of the Council's preferred RSL partners
- details of design standards for new affordable homes.

5.94 The Council will keep under review the SHMA to ensure that provision meets local needs. Should local evidence of need and demand through the SHMA change, the Council will consider the review of this policy and/ or the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

5.95 The policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR to enable the Council to effectively manage affordable housing delivery.

- Number of net additional affordable dwellings provided.
- Size, type and tenure of net additional affordable dwellings provided.
- Level of commuted payments collected by the Council.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), 2009 produced by Fordhams Research.
- Economic Viability Assessment 2010, produced by Adams Integra.



Older people and vulnerable groups

5.96 National policy requires local authorities to meet the specific accommodation needs of older people and other vulnerable groups. Following the national trend, the Borough is forecast to see growth in the proportion of older people and older person households (around 5,000 more people aged 65+ are forecast to live in Woking Borough by 2026). It is important that the Council provides increased housing choices in terms of specialist accommodation, and appropriate dwellings that are suitably located close to public transport and other key local services. In addition, offering attractive alternative housing choices for older people and other vulnerable groups will assist the Council in freeing-up family sized homes that are currently under occupied.

5.97 The ‘Supporting People’ programme is a Government scheme that aims to support people in their own homes so that they can lead more independent lives. In terms of vulnerable groups, the programme covers a number of groups including people who are older, ex-offenders, at risk from domestic violence, homeless, mentally and physically disabled, have alcohol and drug problems, or are young people at risk. The main objective of this programme is to give people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by providing a stable environment which enables greater independence. This includes providing high quality, cost effective, accessible housing and related support services that meet identified need. This is likely to result in the need to develop specific types of accommodation, and address the requirements of wheelchair users, for example.

CS13: Older people and vulnerable groups

The Council will support the development of specialist accommodation for older people and vulnerable groups in suitable locations. The level of need will be that reflected in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This will include the provision of new schemes and remodelling of older, poorer quality sheltered housing which is no longer fit for purpose.

Existing specialist accommodation will be protected unless it can be demonstrated that there is insufficient need/ demand for that type of accommodation.

New specialist accommodation should be of high quality design, including generous space standards and generous amenity space. At least 50% of schemes should have two bedrooms. Bed-sit development will be discouraged.

The Council will allocate specific sites through the Site Allocations DPD to assist in bringing suitable sites forward to meet need.

New specialist accommodation should incorporate “Lifetime Homes” standards and be capable of being readily adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities and the elderly. A percentage of new specialist accommodation will be required to be fully wheelchair accessible.

The Council will work with partners in consultation with the community to ensure access to key local services such as public transport and community facilities.

The Council will work with partners to seek to provide the necessary infrastructure to support specialist accommodation, including homes for the elderly. The Council will seek to develop the role of the community centres and where feasible seek to provide new schemes such as community hubs which provide leisure, recreation, and education and community activities for older people and vulnerable groups.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Reasoned justification

- 5.98** There are certain types of residential accommodation which cater for sectors of the community with specific needs. These are often related to the more vulnerable members of society, or those who would benefit from a higher level of on-site support. This need can be divided in to two broad groupings - the growing elderly population, and those who may need specialist social support. The isolation of such groups is not conducive to social inclusion, balanced communities and sustainable development. It is therefore important for these types of development to be located in accessible areas, close to main facilities and public transport routes to best cater for residents, staff and visitors, and promote social inclusion. The Council acknowledges that land values within the urban area can make securing sites for such developments difficult in terms of viability and availability. The Council will allocate specific sites through the Site Allocations DPD to assist in bringing suitable sites forward to meet need.
- 5.99** Evidence from the SHMA shows that over three-quarters of older person only households are owner-occupiers and just over 70% of these households do not have a mortgage. This evidence suggests that there is significant potential for equity release schemes or leasehold accommodation that would meet the needs of older people and would free up larger units for younger families.
- 5.100** A proportion of two bedroomed units for older people will be required as this takes in to account residents' future needs. By ensuring there are a number of larger properties it will take into account the ongoing needs of older people who may require an additional bedroom for a live-in carer or for a family member to stay. This will ensure that older people are able to remain living independently for longer with additional support as a positive alternative to residential care. In providing two bedroomed units, it will also provide an additional incentive to encourage older people who are under-occupying family sized social housing units.
- 5.101** These specialist types of accommodation have specific design requirements, and must for example include generous amenity and space standards. The Council will therefore encourage all new homes to be designed to ensure that they can be easily modified to meet future housing needs, and will require applicants to demonstrate in their design and access statements how design has taken these considerations in to account. The Council will therefore encourage new developments to incorporate the principles of "Lifetime Homes". Further guidance on design which takes into account "Lifetime Homes" standards and wheelchair accessibility standards will be set out in the Quality Design Standards SPD. The Council has demonstrated through a real example at Brookwood Farm that high standards of sustainable construction can be achieved.

Delivery strategy

- 5.102** This policy will be delivered through partnership working, particularly through the Woking Partnership and with Registered Social Landlords, to consider options to address the needs of the elderly population and other vulnerable groups. This will include consideration of the potential allocation of sites in the Site Allocations DPD and exploring opportunities for shared facilities, such as community hubs.
- 5.103** The needs of the elderly population and vulnerable groups will be kept under review through updates to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Extra Care Strategy.
- 5.104** Should the monitoring indicators (overleaf) identify that demand outstrips supply; the Council may review the policy and seek to allocate additional sites to meet need.



5.105 Details of design considerations for specialist accommodation will be set out in the Design Standards SPD.

Monitoring and review

5.106 This policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR to enable the Council to effectively manage the availability of sites in order to ensure that demand does not outstrip supply.

- The number of nursing home bed spaces against need.
- The amount of private sheltered housing for sale against need.
- The amount of affordable sheltered housing for social rent against need.
- The number of extra care housing spaces against need.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), 2009 produced by Fordhams Research.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 5.107** The Council is committed to providing appropriate housing to meet the needs of the whole community. This includes the provision of sufficient suitable sites for the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community which is at an affordable price.
- 5.108** Woking currently has one publicly owned Gypsy and Traveller site at the Hatchingtan, Worplesdon which has 16 pitches. There are also two privately owned sites in the Borough (Five Acres, Brookwood – 10 pitches and Ten Acre Farm, Mayford – three pitches). There are currently no pitches for Travelling Showpeople in the Borough.
- 5.109** The North Surrey Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identified that there is a need to provide an additional 10 pitches in the Borough between 2006 and 2016. By September 2010, seven of these pitches had already been provided through an extension of the Brookwood site, and there is a recent unimplemented permission for an additional three pitches on that site, meaning that the Council has been successful in meeting the short-term need for additional pitches in the Borough.
- 5.110** In addition, there is a need for one pitch to meet the needs of Travelling Showpeople over the Plan period.
- 5.111** It is recognised that mobile homes are highly vulnerable to flooding (as classified in the **Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification** table in PPS25). As set out in policy CS9, flood risk is a major determining factor when considering all site allocations and the determination of all planning applications, including those for Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

CS14: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Council will make provision for ten additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough between 2017 and 2027.

Provision will also be made for one pitch suitable for the needs of Travelling Showpeople by 2027.

Sites to meet this need will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD. A sequential approach will be taken in identifying suitable sites for allocation, with sites in the urban area being considered before those in the Green Belt. Where no sites are available in the urban area, priority will be given to sites on the edge of the urban area that benefit from good access to jobs, shops and other infrastructure and services. A demonstrated lack of any deliverable sites in the urban area would provide very special circumstances necessary to allocate sites in the Green Belt. Any site to be released from the Green Belt will be informed by the Green Belt boundary review to be carried out in 2016. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be carried out of any site that is allocated in the Green Belt to determine whether there is a need for an Appropriate Assessment. Any site considered for allocation must be deliverable (including affordable to its intended occupiers) so as to ensure that needs are met.

The following criteria will be taken into consideration when determining the allocation of land for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and any planning applications for non allocated sites.

- The site should have safe vehicular access from the highway and have adequate parking provision and turning areas.



- The site should have adequate amenity for its intended occupiers, including space for related business activities.
- The site should not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the visual amenity and character of the area.
- The site should have adequate infrastructure and on-site utilities to service the number of pitches proposed.
- The site should have safe and reasonable access to schools and other local facilities.

Existing authorised sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be safeguarded from development that would preclude the continued occupation by these groups, unless the site is no longer required to meet identified need.

*Note that there is an existing unimplemented permission for 3 pitches. The Council is confident that this permission will be implemented before 2016. The Council will monitor progress on implementation. The need up to 2016 would have been met when this extant planning permission is implemented.

Reasoned justification

5.112 In accordance with PPG2: Green Belts and Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007, the Council will take a sequential approach to the identification of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople through the Site Allocations DPD and when assessing individual planning applications. Sites within the urban area will therefore be explored before sites within the Green Belt are considered. Any site to be released from the Green Belt will be informed by the Green Belt boundary review that is scheduled to be carried out in 2016. Where no sites within the urban area can be identified, priority will be given to sites located on the edge of the urban area where there is good accessibility to key local services. Whilst the Council recognises that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation should be provided first within settlements, it recognises that in reality this is very difficult to achieve. There are unlikely to be appropriate sites within the built-up areas, and individuals and groups will not normally be able to compete in the market for sites where residential development would be acceptable. As such, an exceptions approach to provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is adopted, both for considering planning applications and for any necessary site allocations. The policy approach applies to transit sites, permanent sites and sites for Travelling Showpeople.

5.113 Based on evidence contained in the GTAA, the Council have already met the need identified for Gypsies and Travellers up to 2016. The Council will make the assumption that, based on the GTAA, the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation over the period 2017 – 2027 will be of a similar quantity and will therefore make provision for an additional 10 pitches in the Borough during that period. The GTAA will be updated in 2011 and the Council will review this estimate to reflect the outcome of the updated assessment.

5.114 Due to the nature of their work, pitches for Travelling Showpeople are likely to include some land for the storage and maintenance of equipment. The Council will consider imposing conditions limiting the proportion of a pitch which may be covered by equipment or the hours during which equipment may be tested.



5.0 Borough wide policies

- 5.115** The layout of proposed Gypsy and Travellers sites/ pitches should comply with the design principles set out by Government practice guidance which is currently in the form of 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites' (May 2008). The layout of sites for Travelling Showpeople should comply with the latest Government Guidance available, and also take into consideration the design recommendations from the Showmen's Guild.
- 5.116** The tenure of sites (i.e. whether they will be private or public sites) will be considered through the Site Allocations DPD, taking into consideration the information within the North Surrey GTAA and any future updates to that study, the wishes expressed by the Travelling community within the Borough, and the sources of finance available.

Delivery strategy

- 5.117** This policy will be delivered through working in partnership with the Travelling community to allocate sites in the Site Allocations DPD, to progress applications through the planning system and to explore available Government grants to assist in the delivery of sites.
- 5.118** The needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community will be kept under review through a refresh of the GTAA.
- 5.119** Should the monitoring indicators (below) indicate that demand outstrips supply; the Council may review the policy and seek to allocate additional sites to meet need.

Monitoring and review

- 5.120** This policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR to enable the Council to effectively manage the availability of sites in order to ensure that demand does not significantly outstrip supply.
- The delivery of three additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation between 2010 and 2016.
 - The delivery of 10 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation between 2017 and 2027.
 - The delivery of one pitch for Travelling Showpeople by 2027.
 - The level of need identified in the GTAA measured against supply.
 - The number of unauthorised or illegal encampments or developments and enforcement actions carried out.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010 update.
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), 2006, produced by Anglia Ruskin University.



Sustainable economic development

- 5.121** It is important to ensure that there is an appropriate quantity and range of employment land in the Borough to enable the local economy to function efficiently and contribute to the region's long-term competitiveness.
- 5.122** PPS4: Planning for sustainable economic growth requires councils to plan positively to support the needs of businesses and encourage a flexible approach to economic development capable of accommodating growth in new sectors and changes in economic circumstances.
- 5.123** The majority of existing employment floorspace in the Borough is provided in Woking Town Centre, West Byfleet District Centre and the employment areas⁹. Smaller scale office and industrial space is provided in the local centres, and a number of employment sites exist within the Green Belt, mainly catering for industrial uses. In addition to these sites, there is a scattering of small employment sites located within the urban area.

CS15: Sustainable economic development

To accommodate the predicted future growth in economic development¹⁰ required for Woking's economy to grow, ensure sustainable employment development patterns, promote smart growth and business competitiveness, and allow for flexibility to cater for the changing needs of the economy the Council will:

- permit redevelopment of outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs
- support small and medium sized enterprise (SME) formation and development by encouraging a range of types and sizes of premises including provision for incubator units, managed workspace and serviced office accommodation
- encourage improved ICT infrastructure in refurbished and redeveloped sites
- encourage workspace and ICT infrastructure as an integral part of residential development, where appropriate to support home working
- support childcare facilities close to places of employment

The Council's policy with respect to specific types of employment use is as follows:

B Class Uses¹¹

1. Safeguard land within the employment areas for B uses, except in:
 - The Butts Road/Poole Road employment area where redevelopment for mixed office and residential use will be supported if it does not result in an overall loss of employment floorspace.
 - The Forsyth Road employment area where redevelopment of vacant sites will be encouraged for B uses, unless redevelopment is for an alternative employment generating use which contributes to the aims of policy CS5 (priority places) and would not jeopardise the B use led nature of the employment area.

⁹ A list of employment areas is provided in the reasoned justification and employment areas are shown on the Proposals Map.

¹⁰ As defined by PPS4.

¹¹ Except town centre office space.



5.0 Borough wide policies

2. Retain the Broadoaks site in West Byfleet as a high quality business park. This site is designated as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt.
3. Permit the redevelopment of B use sites elsewhere in the Borough for alternative uses that accord with other policies in the Core Strategy where (i) the existing use of the site causes harm to amenity and/or (ii) it can be demonstrated that the location is unsuitable for the needs of modern business.

Town Centre uses

The nature, scope and scale of town centre uses being promoted is set out in the relevant place policies CS2, CS3 and CS4.

Public and community uses

Public and community uses will be considered as set out in policy CS18.

Reasoned justification

5.124 The Town, District and Local Centres Study and Employment Land Review (ELR) assessed the likely demand for employment floorspace over the plan period. The Town, District and Local Centres Study identifies need for 93,900m² of additional retail and the ELR identifies a residual requirement for approximately 28,000sq.m of offices and 20,000sq.m of warehousing and a loss of 31,000sq.m of industrial space. A five-yearly review of the ELR will enable any unforeseen changes in the local economy to be monitored so that policies can be reviewed where necessary to reflect changing circumstances.

5.125 The need for further economic development floorspace will not necessitate the allocation of additional greenfield land for employment use. Future retail development can be accommodated within Woking Town Centre, West Byfleet District Centre and to a limited degree the local centres. Future office development can be accommodated within Woking Town Centre and to a limited degree West Byfleet District Centre. Office floorspace will also be encouraged in the Butts Road/Poole Road employment area as part of higher density mixed use development, as the area lies adjacent to the town centre boundary. The existing employment areas require safeguarding to meet projected need and are capable of accommodating future requirements for industrial/warehousing space. Sufficient land also exists to accommodate potential growth in high technology manufacturing which may result from the development of the McLaren Production Centre and activities of other high tech manufacturing companies in the Borough.

5.126 The need to renew and refurbish employment floorspace, especially office space in Woking Town Centre, is imperative if the Borough is to retain existing occupiers and compete effectively for new occupiers looking to locate in the area. The overall vacancy rate of employment floorspace recorded in the Borough in 2009 was 19%. However, this figure masks variations in vacancy between different employment uses and locations. Vacancy rates are highest for office accommodation and particularly high in a limited number of office developments located in certain employment areas, where redevelopment to provide alternative B uses or mixed B uses will be encouraged.

¹⁰ As defined by PPS4

¹¹ Except town centre office space



5.127 Part of the Forsyth Road employment area, a traditional industrial estate, was redeveloped to provide offices in the 1980's. The Market Appraisal identified high vacancy rates in these office developments, despite vacancy rates for industrial/warehousing premises being relatively low and stated that office developments could be considered for alternative employment use (B uses) or release. Given the area's location within the Sheerwater/Maybury priority place and the need to provide further employment in the area, redevelopment of vacant sites will be encouraged for B uses, unless redevelopment is for an alternative employment generating use which contributes to the aims of policy CS5 (priority places) and would not jeopardise the B use led nature of the employment area.

5.128 The Broadoaks site in West Byfleet is identified as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt. The site has planning permission as a high quality office and research park set within landscaped grounds. The retention of this site for quality office and/or research premises is important as no other similar sites are available within the Borough.

5.129 The employment areas include the following:

- Byfleet Industrial Estate
- Camphill Industrial Estate
- Forsyth Road Industrial Estate
- Goldsworth Road Industrial Estate
- Goldsworth Park Trading Estate
- Monument Way East Industrial Estate (includes Woking Business Park)
- Monument Way West Industrial Estate
- Old Woking Industrial Estate
- Poole Road/Butts Road
- Robin Hood Works
- The Lansbury Estate

The above are shown on the Proposals Map.

Delivery strategy

5.130 The Council will work with its Partners/Local Business Organisations to support sustainable economic growth in the Borough. Implementation of this policy will be via the development management process. Provision of employment space in Woking Town Centre will be guided by the Area Action Plan.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Monitoring and review¹²

- Amount and location of permitted and completed B1 (a, b, c), B2 and B8 floorspace in the Borough.
- Net change in employment floorspace in the Borough.
- Amount of employment floorspace lost to non-employment uses (permitted, under construction and completed).

Key evidence base

- Employment Land Review (incorporates Employment Position Paper (January 2010), and Market Appraisal (April 2010) produced by Lambert Smith Hampton).



Infrastructure delivery

- 5.131** Fundamental to delivering the spatial strategy is ensuring that the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure is put in place to support the level of growth proposed and, to serve the changes in the Borough's demographic make-up that is expected to take place over the Plan period. Policy CS16: Infrastructure Delivery sets out the Council's approach to securing that necessary infrastructure and the mechanisms that will be put in place to ensure delivery.
- 5.132** The definition of infrastructure is wide and includes a range of services and facilities provided by both public and private bodies. For the purpose of the Core Strategy, the definition of infrastructure is that set out in the box below.

Definition of infrastructure

Transport: road network, cycling and walking infrastructure, rail network, parking

Housing: affordable housing

Education: further and higher education, secondary and primary education, nursery schools and other early years provision

Health: acute care and general hospitals, mental hospitals, health centres/primary care trusts, ambulance services

Social and community infrastructure: supported accommodation, social and community facilities, sports centres, open spaces, parks and play space

Public services: waste management and disposal, libraries, cemeteries, emergency services (police, fire, ambulance), places of worship, prisons, drug treatment centres

Utility services: gas supply, electricity supply, heat supply, water supply, waste water treatment, telecommunications infrastructure

Flood defences

Green infrastructure: parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, amenity greenspace, provision for children and young people, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas, river and canal corridors, green roofs and walls.



5.0 Borough wide policies

CS16: Infrastructure delivery

The Council will work in partnership with infrastructure service providers and developers to ensure that the infrastructure needed to support development is provided in a timely manner to meet the needs of the community. In some cases, it will be necessary for the infrastructure to be provided before development commences. Development may be phased to ensure the timely delivery of the infrastructure that will be necessary to serve it. Each case will be determined on its individual merits during the development management process. The Council will support in principle the development of infrastructure projects if they can be justified to support the delivery of the Core Strategy and meet all other requirements of the Development Plan for the area.

The Council will:

- continue to work in partnership with the Infrastructure Sub Group of the Woking Partnership to monitor and co-ordinate infrastructure provision
- annually review the infrastructure schedule which forms part of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will be reported to the Woking Partnership
- collect financial contributions from developers to support improvements to infrastructure services and facilities that are required as a result of development
- ensure that new developments provide the necessary infrastructure on site required for the development to be acceptable
- ensure that development contributes to the provision of SANG where appropriate in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy (2010 – 2015).

In order to ensure a co-ordinated and consistent approach to the collection of developer contributions, the Council will introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Prior to the adoption of the CIL and subject to viability, the Council will expect development to contribute to infrastructure provision, which will be assessed on a case by case basis through planning obligations. All major development proposals will be expected to be accompanied by a financial viability assessment in order to inform the level of infrastructure contribution that a development can sustain.

The Council will resist the loss of existing infrastructure services and facilities unless a suitable alternative is provided for or it can be demonstrated that they are no longer needed to meet the needs of the community. This will require the developer to provide evidence that consultation with an appropriate range of service providers and the community has taken place.

The Council will safeguard land for future infrastructure provision through the Site Allocations DPD if necessary.



Reasoned justification

- 5.133** Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning. It aims to create sustainable communities by ensuring that development policies are integrated with other policies and programmes that influence the nature and function of places. The provision of infrastructure is therefore central to supporting the spatial vision and spatial strategy set out in this document. Spatial planning is not limited to the activities of the Council. Fundamental to the delivery of the spatial strategy is the Council's ability to work with partners to deliver the spatial vision and in particular, to secure infrastructure provision. To assist this, the Woking Partnership has established an Infrastructure Sub Group (ISG); which is tasked with a role of oversight of the infrastructure planning process, and specifically for preparing and monitoring the progress of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).
- 5.134** The Council will ensure an effective integration of proposed development and the infrastructure to support it. In this regard, it will be necessary in some cases to require developers to put in place the necessary infrastructure before development commences. Development could also be phased to enable the timely delivery of infrastructure to ensure that the infrastructure provision is not lagging behind the development. Detailed decisions about this will be determined on the merits of individual schemes through the development management process.
- 5.135** The Core Strategy is supported by an IDP that sets out the capacity of existing infrastructure, the impact of development on that infrastructure, and the likely funding sources available to meet future needs. The IDP also gives an indication of where opportunities may be available to co-ordinate provision through co-location of services, for example. The IDP includes a schedule of infrastructure that is considered necessary to support the spatial strategy.
- 5.136** The IDP forms the evidence base for the CIL which will ensure that all new development contributes to the provision of new infrastructure.
- 5.137** The Council's strategy is to optimise use of existing infrastructure, to reduce demand (for example, by managing travel demand) and to seek new infrastructure where required. The loss of existing facilities will therefore be resisted and land will be safeguarded for the provision of future infrastructure requirements where necessary. The Council will ensure a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure management and investment through partnership working with the Woking Partnership and key infrastructure service providers.

Delivery strategy

- 5.138** The Council will work with partners and key infrastructure service providers to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure provision in the Borough. Specifically, the Council will continue to play a central role in the activities of the ISG and the Surrey wide Key Infrastructure Service Providers Group.
- 5.139** The Council views the IDP as a 'living' document that will be updated bi-annually to ensure that it is as robust and up-to-date as possible, taking into account changes in need, capacity and the availability of funding sources in order that the Council and partners can respond to any changes to priorities in a timely and co-ordinated manner.
- 5.140** It is the Council's intention to introduce a CIL in order to secure contributions from new development to pay for essential infrastructure.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.141 The Council is mindful that development proposals need to be economically viable. The Council will therefore negotiate with applicants who state that viability is the reason for non-compliance with the requirements for developer contributions until such time as a CIL is in place. Where this is the case, financial evidence must be submitted with the planning application.

5.142 In order to ensure that land is available for the provision of additional infrastructure, the Council may consider safeguarding land through the Site Allocations DPD. In addition, the Council may consider using its Compulsory Purchase Order powers as set out in the Implementation and Delivery Plan.

Monitoring and review

5.143 Progress towards achieving the strategic objective through Policy CS16 will be measured against the following indicators and targets.

- Adoption of a CIL.
- Level of developer contributions collected and spent.
- Delivery of infrastructure items listed in the infrastructure schedule.

Key evidence base

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), 2009 and 2010.
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2011.
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Study, 2009.
- Infrastructure Requirements Study, 2006.
- Social and Community Facilities Study (2011).
- Population Topic Paper 2011.



Open space, green infrastructure, sport and recreation

- 5.144** The purpose of the policy is to provide opportunity for people to participate and enjoy sports and recreation and to facilitate effective access to the countryside and the amenity that it offers. This is essential to the wellbeing of the community.
- 5.145** Open space, green infrastructure, sports and recreation areas are highly valued by local people and play a key role in the Borough's landscape setting and local identity, whilst also providing habitats for wildlife, and land for agriculture and forestry.
- 5.146** Green infrastructure relates to a network of multi-functional open space and other environmental features. The following can form part of green infrastructure networks.
- Parks and gardens.
 - Natural and semi-natural greenspaces.
 - Green corridors.
 - Outdoor sports facilities.
 - Amenity greenspace.
 - Provision for children and teenagers.
 - Allotments, community gardens and urban farms.
 - Cemeteries and churchyards.
 - Accessible countryside in urban fringe areas.
 - River and canal corridors.
 - Green roofs and walls.

CS17: Open space, green infrastructure, sport and recreation

All proposals for new residential developments (other than replacement dwellings) will be required to contribute towards the provision of the following:

- children's play areas and outdoor recreational facilities for young people.
- outdoor sports facilities.

Developers will be expected to contribute to provision through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or on larger sites through on-site provision and/or a S106 contribution as appropriate.

Development involving the loss of public open space will not be permitted unless:

- alternative and equivalent provision is made available in the vicinity
- or the development is directly related to the enhancement of the open space.



5.0 Borough wide policies

There will be a presumption against any development that involves the loss of a sport, recreation or play facility except where it can be demonstrated that there is an excess of provision, or where alternative facilities of equal or better quality will be provided as part of the development.

Development involving the loss of open space to which the general public do not have a right of access, such as school playing fields or allotments, will only be permitted if it passes the tests in PPG17: Open space, sport and recreation (or any guidance that supersedes this). The loss of public open space will not be permitted where there will be adverse impacts on biodiversity.

Planning applications for development that would create additional pressures on the green infrastructure network should incorporate proposals to improve the network sufficient to address these pressures.

The Council encourages the improvement of the quality and quantity of the Green Infrastructure network in the Borough. The protection and enhancement of physical access, including public rights of way to open space and green infrastructure is supported.

Allotment numbers in the Borough should be protected and there will be in-principle support for new allotments.

Development will not normally be permitted which would have a detrimental impact upon the landscape quality, ecological value or water quality of the following corridors. The Environment Agency require undeveloped buffer zones alongside watercourses to help protect them (8 metres for main rivers and 5 metres for ordinary watercourses). These include the:

- Valley of the Wey and Wey Navigation
- Hoe Valley
- Basingstoke Canal
- Bourne Stream.

The Council will seek to protect river corridors by creating undeveloped buffer zones, which will serve as green infrastructure as well as habitat of biodiversity value.

New residential units within five km of an SPA will be required to provide or contribute to the provision and improvement of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which is a component of Green Infrastructure and also its Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). This land will be used to mitigate the impact and effect of residential development on the SPA, by providing informal recreation land of appropriate quality across Woking Borough. Standards for the provision of SANG are set out in the Council's Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy 2010-15.

Reasoned justification

- 5.147** In line with the requirements of PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, an audit of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Borough has been carried out and updated in 2008. The study found there is a deficit of these facilities in the Borough. Therefore, it is appropriate to require new residential development, which results in a net increase in units, to contribute to the provision of children's play areas, outdoor recreational facilities for teenagers and outdoor sport facilities.



- 5.148** Improved play provision for children and young people will be made to serve local areas where there is an identified shortfall, or to meet increased demands as a result of new development. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the detail of identified need in the Borough.
- 5.149** Outdoor sports facilities will be provided to meet identified demands and shortfall as highlighted in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and previously in the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Audit (2008).
- 5.150** Where provision is provided on site, the current National Playing Field Association standards should be applied. The Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) produced by Natural England should also be adhered to. Assessing current provision against ANGSt helps the Council to identify where adequate provision is being made for natural green space, and where action needs to be taken to deliver appropriate levels of natural space close to people's homes.
- 5.151** The Council's current priorities for addressing shortfalls in children's play areas are parts of:
- Barnsbury
 - Brookwood
 - Byfleet (north of Parvis Road)
 - Goldsworth Park (St John's Road area)
 - Maybury (area around Windsor Way)
 - Pyrford Village.
- 5.152** A need for additional multi-use games areas suitable for teenagers has been identified in many parts of the Borough. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the detail of identified need in the Borough.
- 5.153** The Council recognises that river and canal corridors are of great importance for water resources, water quality, nature conservation, recreation and landscape value. Rivers and canals are also an important source of open space and can also form valuable links between habitats (as set out in PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation). Wetland habitats, open space and green infrastructure aid with flood storage and biodiversity.
- 5.154** Natural England has demonstrated that the new population arising from housing developments at a distance of up to 5km away from the SPA can cause significant disturbance to the breeding success of rare bird populations. This is because of the impact of recreational activities of residents, in particular walking, and walking with dogs. As a result, all housing developments within 5km of the SPA will now be subject to stringent tests and impact assessments. SANG attracts informal recreation users, such as dog walkers, and walkers away from Special Protection Areas. SANG can be new open space or the improvement of existing open space to increase its capacity for informal recreation, at a minimum standard of 8 hectares per 1,000 population. SANG land is to be provided and maintained in perpetuity in line with the quality and quantity standards advocated by Natural England – the Government's advisor on these matters. Full information about the Boroughs Special Protection Areas and the SANG is set out in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2010-15.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Delivery strategy

- 5.155** Through the protection of existing facilities to meet current and future need and demand.
- 5.156** This will be achieved through the Development Management process and where appropriate developer contributions.
- 5.157** By working in partnership with local community groups, partner organisations and providers of open space, sports facilities and green infrastructure in the Borough and in areas adjoining the Borough.
- 5.158** Regarding green infrastructure, quantitative improvements will be achieved through the incorporation in development proposals of extensions to the network. Qualitative improvements could include financial contributions to attain enhanced management. If this is not possible, there may be circumstances where such development may be acceptable if it includes full compensatory measures.
- 5.159** SANGs will be delivered by the implementation of policy CS7: Biodiversity, International, National, Regional and Local Nature Designations and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2010 – 2015.

Monitoring and review

- 5.160** Net change (positive or negative) in the amount of green infrastructure, public open space and built sports facilities.

Key evidence base

- Green Spaces Development Plan, 2005.
- Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Audit, updated 2008.
- Playing Pitch Strategy, 2006.
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2010-15.
- PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2011.



Transport and accessibility

- 5.161** A well connected and integrated transport network supports the sustainable functioning and development of the Borough. Woking Rail Station is a key hub for the South East, providing direct rail access to London, the South East and the South West. Woking Rail Station currently has a direct Railair coach service to Heathrow Airport running every 30 minutes. Investment in cycling has significantly increased since Woking's designation as a Cycle Town in 2008, providing attractive alternatives to the car. There is significant scope to influence a shift in the mode of travel from car-based journeys to public transport and cycling.
- 5.162** Surrey County Council is the Highways Authority for the Borough. Woking Borough Council will work in partnership with Surrey County Council to achieve the aims and objectives of the Surrey Transport Plan (LTP) which sets out the transport strategy for Surrey. The current LTP vision seeks to help people meet their transport and travel needs effectively, reliably, safely and sustainably; in order to promote economic vibrancy, protect and enhance the environment and improve the quality of life.
- 5.163** The majority of trips taken in the Borough are by car, resulting in congestion, particularly at peak times. PPG13: Transport requires the Council to promote sustainable transport choices, manage the location of development and provide an integrated transport network to influence a shift to non-car modes.
- 5.164** Key to the achievement of the spatial vision is an integrated transport system that provides easy access to jobs, community facilities, green infrastructure and recreation, by all modes; in particular sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. A successful transport system offers an effective interchange between modes and local, regional and national destinations and, complements the economic role of the Borough as a regional focus for infrastructure, in particular the regeneration of the town centre. Woking Rail Station plays a pivotal role in this.

CS18: Transport and accessibility

The Council is committed to developing a well integrated community connected by a sustainable transport system which connects people to jobs, services and community facilities, and minimises impacts on biodiversity. This will be achieved by taking the following steps.

- Joint working with key stakeholders through the Transport for Woking Partnership to ensure that the principal objectives and overall vision of the Surrey Local Transport Plan are met.
- Locating most new development in the main urban areas, served by a range of sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, walking and cycling to minimise the need to travel and distance travelled.
- Ensuring development proposals provide appropriate infrastructure measures to mitigate the adverse effects of development traffic and other environmental and safety impacts (direct or cumulative). Transport Assessments will be required for development proposals, where relevant, to fully assess the impacts of development and identify appropriate mitigation measures. Developer contributions¹³ will be secured to implement transport mitigation schemes.
- Requiring development proposals that generate significant traffic or have significant impact on the Strategic Road Network to be accompanied by a travel plan, clearly setting out how the travel needs of occupiers and visitors will be managed in a sustainable manner.

¹³ This will be achieved either through current planning obligations or through the future infrastructure tariff system the Council will introduce.



5.0 Borough wide policies

- Supporting proposals that deliver improvements and increased accessibility to cycle, pedestrian and public transport networks and interchange facilities. In particular, proposals to improve easy access between Woking Rail Station and the town centre will be encouraged.
- Implementing maximum car parking standards for all types of non-residential development, including consideration of zero parking in Woking Town Centre, providing it does not create new or exacerbate existing on-street car parking problems. Minimum standards will be set for residential development. However, in applying these standards, the Council will seek to ensure that this will not undermine the overall sustainability objectives of the Core Strategy, including the effects on highway safety. If necessary, the Council will consider managing the demand and supply of parking in order to control congestion and encourage use of sustainable transport.
- Ensuring that changes made to transport infrastructure or increase in road vehicle usage will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of an SPA, SAC or Ramsar site.
- The Proposals Map and the Site Allocations DPD will safeguard land to deliver schemes that are adopted by the County Council to support the Core strategy.

Reasoned justification

- 5.165** The main urban centres offer a wide range of retail, employment and community services. It is in these areas where public transport interchanges and walking and cycling networks are readily available. By concentrating development in the main urban centres, the amount and length of journeys can be minimised, particularly by private car, as the needs of the population can be met by the services and facilities around them, and use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. This will lead to a reduction in energy consumption, efficient use of public transport, lower transport carbon emissions and an overall improvement in the well being of the population due to the health benefits of walking and cycling and increased social inclusion.
- 5.166** New developments can create significant transport, environmental and safety implications and it is important that these are taken into account when determining planning applications. The Council will work in partnership with Surrey County Council to ensure developments, where appropriate, make suitable provision for service vehicles, do not reduce highway safety and do not lead to an increase in heavy goods vehicle movements along unsuitable roads. Necessary mitigation measures will be assessed on a site-by-site basis to enable mitigation to be tailored to address specific issues. Land required for major highways and transportations schemes, including any schemes that will be developed in a future funding bid, will be safeguarded as part of the Site Allocations DPD and will be reflected on the Proposals Map.
- 5.167** Transport Assessments set out the transport issues related to development proposals and identify measures to reduce impacts and improve accessibility. Transport Assessments will be expected for development proposals with significant transport implications. Where transport impacts are anticipated to be small, development proposals may be required to submit a Transport Statement, in line with DfT Guidance on Transport Assessments.



- 5.168** New developments that lead to an increase in the number of people travelling to a site can put pressure on the road network, particularly as car ownership in the Borough is higher than the national average. A Travel Plan can be utilised to manage the travel demands of occupiers and visitors, employing measures to control the number of private vehicle trips to a site and influence a shift to sustainable transport choices for site users. The Council will require a Travel Plan from development proposals that generate significant traffic and a Travel Statement from smaller scale developments, in accordance with good practice guidance¹⁴.
- 5.169** Around two out of every three trips made are less than 5 miles in length, many of which could be easily cycled, walked or undertaken by public transport. Facilitating the movement of people between sustainable modes of transport is a key factor in the use of such travel modes. Woking has had significant investment in cycle infrastructure through the Cycle Woking partnership between Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council. This programme upgraded and extended the cycle network, encouraged school children into cycling with a new mountain bike course at Goldsworth Primary School and increased the number of cycle parking facilities across the Borough.
- 5.170** Maximum car parking standards are a means of restricting the number of cars on the road and influencing a shift in behaviour towards other transport modes, particularly in urban centres with high accessibility. The Council produced a Parking SPD in 2006 which sets appropriate car parking and cycle parking standards for all forms of development. This includes residential car parking standards that have regard for highway safety issues resulting from off-street parking and maximum car parking standards for non-residential developments. The SPD will be reviewed after the adoption of the Core Strategy and at regular intervals to ensure the standards set are the most appropriate.
- 5.171** Safeguarded land identified on the Proposals Map and in the Site Allocations DPD will include extant transport proposals in the Woking Borough Local Plan 1999. A list of the adopted and proposed schemes to support the Core Strategy can be found in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The County Council is in the process of reviewing the need of some of the schemes and the Core Strategy will be updated to reflect the outcome of this exercise.

Delivery strategy

- 5.172** This policy will be implemented through the development management (WBC) and transportation development control (SCC) process and in partnership with key stakeholders through Transport for Woking.

Monitoring and review

- Number of new developments located within 30 minutes travel by public transport to local services (including health, education and retail).
- Number of major developments submitted with Transport Assessments.
- Number of major developments with travel plans, assessed in accordance with Surrey County Council's Travel Plans Good Practice Guide, 2009.
- Amount of transport infrastructure improvements secured with developments.
- Annual patronage of Borough rail stations.
- Average journey time per mile during the morning peak on major routes in the authority (Current National Indicator 167).



5.0 Borough wide policies

Key evidence base

- The Surrey Transport Plan (Local Transport Plan Third Edition – LTP3), 2011, produced by Surrey County Council.
- Transport Assessment, 2010, produced by Surrey County Council.
- Transport and Accessibility Topic Paper, 2011, produced by Woking Borough Council.
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2011, produced by Woking Borough Council.



Social and community infrastructure

- 5.173** The Core Strategy seeks to achieve a sustainable community for Woking and improve upon the well-being of its people. This requires an effective balance between the provision of housing and employment and providing the necessary infrastructure to support the growth. Social and community infrastructure includes: schools, higher education facilities, health centres, GP surgeries, dentists, child care premises, supported accommodation, libraries, museums, community halls, places of worship, church halls, day centres, children's centres, indoor and outdoor recreation and sports facilities and any other facility owned by a publicly funded body to provide front line services.
- 5.174** The provision of adequate community facilities and social and community infrastructure is critical as it has a direct bearing on the well-being of the community. Community facilities play an important role in the development of a sustainable community, by providing a place for people to meet. They also offer services that are essential for education, health and well-being and support community cohesion and benefit the general quality of life of residents. The provision of community facilities is particularly important in view of our ageing population (see policy CS13: Older people and vulnerable groups) and our reliance on third sector (charity and voluntary organisations) and faith sectors to provide services to the community.
- 5.175** One of the purposes of the Core Strategy is to deliver a significant amount of housing and jobs in the Borough. The Council is therefore committed to working with partners to deliver the social and community infrastructure to support it.

CS19: Social and community infrastructure

The Council will work with its partners to provide accessible and sustainable social and community infrastructure to support growth in the Borough. It will do so by promoting the use of social and community infrastructure for a range of uses.

The loss of existing social and community facilities or sites will be resisted unless the Council is satisfied that:

- there is no identified need for the facility for its original purpose and that it is not viable for any other social or community use
- adequate alternative facilities will be provided in a location with equal (or greater) accessibility for the community it is intended to serve
- there is no requirement from any other public service provider for an alternative social or community facility that could be met through change of use or redevelopment.

Applicants will be expected to provide evidence that they have consulted with an appropriate range of service providers and the community.

The provision of new community facilities will be encouraged in locations well served by public transport, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.

The Council will work with other public sector bodies to encourage efficient use of public sector assets, such as co-location, to facilitate the delivery of community facilities.

Developers will be required to provide and/or make a contribution towards the provision of community facilities where it is relevant to do so. The methods of securing financial contributions are set out in policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Reasoned justification

- 5.176** It is essential that the growth in population in the Borough is supported by adequate social and community infrastructure, including schools, health centres, centres for the community and community halls, for example. The Council will work with partners to seek to develop the role of centres for the community and where possible new schemes such as community hubs, which provide leisure, recreation, education and community activities for older people and vulnerable groups.
- 5.177** The Council's Priority Places (as set out in policy CS5) are in need of additional infrastructure. Meeting the needs in the most deprived areas is a priority for the Council.
- 5.178** The Council will encourage facilities that are capable of accommodating a mix of uses which will serve more sections of the community, rather than traditional single-use buildings. Community groups can often use buildings at different times of day or on different days of the week to enable the most efficient use of facilities.
- 5.179** Property prices in Woking are high and consequently so are land values. The Council is aware that it can be difficult for community organisations to compete with the prices that private developers can pay for land. The evidence shows that existing social and community facilities are well used and the Council will therefore resist the loss of any facility that does, or has the potential to, meet a current or identified need, unless the proposal replaces the facility in an equally accessible or improved location.
- 5.180** All development has some impact on the need for infrastructure, services and amenities, or benefits from existing ones, so it is only fair that developers make a contribution towards the provision of community facilities where relevant. It is also right that those who benefit financially when planning permission is granted should share some of that gain with the community, to help fund the infrastructure that is needed to make development acceptable and sustainable. In this regard, the Council will seek to secure developer contributions to provide community facilities. The mechanism for delivering this is set out in Policy CS16: Infrastructure delivery.
- 5.181** When an application will involve the loss of social and community infrastructure which is not being replaced, applicants will be expected to provide evidence that they have consulted with an appropriate range of service providers and the community, to prove that there is no need for or requirement for the facility from any other public service provider for an alternative social or community facility that could be met through change of use or redevelopment. Applicants will be expected to show that the property has been marketed for a period of at least one year. The Council and partner organisations can provide contact details of community organisations in the Borough.

Delivery strategy

- 5.182** The Council will work with partners and key infrastructure service providers to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure provision in the Borough. Specifically, the Council will continue to play a central role in the activities of the ISG and the Surrey wide Key Infrastructure Service Providers Group. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a key document that assesses capacity and need. It will be updated bi-annually and will take into account changes in need, capacity and the availability of funding sources in order that the Council and partners can respond to any changes to priorities in a timely and co-ordinated manner. The details of the mechanisms for securing developer contributions are set out in policy CS16 Infrastructure Delivery.



Monitoring and review

5.183 Progress towards achieving the strategic objective through Policy CS19 will be measured against the following indicators and targets:

- delivery of items listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

5.184 The policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR.

- Loss of D1 facilities (permissions and m²) and what they were used for.
- Gain of D1 facilities (permissions and m²) and proposed use.

Key evidence base

- Social and community facilities study, 2011.
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2011.
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Study, 2009.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Heritage and conservation

- 5.185** The Borough has a diverse and unique heritage including historic buildings and places ranging from Woking Palace and Sutton Place to the Shah Jahan Mosque and Brookwood Cemetery. There are 180 Listed Buildings in the Borough including four that are Grade 1 Listed plus 25 Conservation Areas.
- 5.186** There is a wide diversity in the built character of Woking Borough from rural villages to an urbanised Woking Town Centre and suburban residential areas. It is expected that new development will take account of this. A Character Study has been carried out to provide a detailed description of the various areas.
- 5.187** Those aspects of Woking that define its heritage will be conserved for their worth and the benefits that they have in enriching the well-being of the local people and those who visit the area.

CS20: Heritage and conservation

New development must respect and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which it is proposed whilst making the best possible use of the land available. New development should positively contribute to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the historic environment.

Conservation Areas and area of historic or architectural importance will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance. Conservation Areas and Areas of High Archaeological Potential are shown on the Proposals Map.

There will be a presumption against any development that will be harmful to a listed building. Alterations and extensions to Listed buildings must respect the host building in terms of scale, design, use of materials, retention of the structure and any features of special historic or architectural importance. Planning applications will be refused for any alteration or extension to a Listed building that will not preserve the building or its setting. A Listed building consent will be required for any development that will affect a Listed building.

On all development sites over 0.4 hectares an archaeological evaluation and investigation will be necessary if, in the opinion of the County Archaeologist, an archaeological assessment demonstrates that the site has archaeological potential.

Within Areas of High Archaeological Potential (as illustrated on the Proposals Map), development will not be permitted unless the following are satisfied:

- Submission of an archaeological assessment of the site.
- Where archaeological importance of the site has been identified, a programme setting out a full archaeological survey of the site has been submitted and agreed with the Council.

Reasoned Justification

- 5.188** Woking Borough comprises a variety of character areas. The Council has undertaken a Character Study which provides a useful description and information about these areas. The Heritage of Woking document will also be useful to applicants. It is expected that new development will take account of the character within which it is situated.



- 5.189** Conservation Areas are designated for their special architectural or historic interest. There are 25 Conservation Areas in Woking. The Council will continue to periodically appraise its Conservation Areas to assess changes which might have occurred over the years. This will inform a potential review of their boundaries or the creation of new areas. Development that adversely affects the Conservation Area and/or its setting, which cannot be mitigated, will be resisted. Development will be required to demonstrate that it will preserve and/or enhance the special features of the Conservation Areas.
- 5.190** To ensure sufficient information is available to make a proper assessment of any development that has the potential to threaten the heritage, culture and character of the area, planning applications will be required to include detailed drawings including details of materials and the relationship to adjoining properties.
- 5.191** The Council will resist the loss of Listed Buildings, and will use advice, negotiation and refusal of consent to ensure features of architectural and historic interest are preserved and the setting of Listed Buildings is safeguarded.
- 5.192** Locally Listed Buildings are not statutory listed, but are of local architectural or historic interest. They contribute to the character of the area as often they are local landmarks of historic merit or have architectural features of local significance. Approximately 330 buildings are Locally Listed in Woking Borough. They form an important part of the heritage of the area and will be preserved and enhanced.
- 5.193** It is considered that planning guidance such as Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment (which is supported by practice guidance) provides sufficient protection of the historic environment and archaeology at the strategic level including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and historic parks and gardens. It is therefore not intended to repeat the requirements of PPS5, however specific attention is drawn to the criteria in the Practice Guide which applicants must abide by when submitting an application relating to a heritage asset.

Delivery strategy

- 5.194** This policy will be delivered through the Development Management process. The Borough-wide Character Study provides the evidence base and will assist applicants in identifying key characteristics.

Monitoring and review

- Number of imposed planning conditions that require mitigation or recording.
- Trends shown by condition surveys of Local Authority owned assets.
- Number of Grade 1 and 2* Listed Buildings at risk.
- Changes in the appearance and 'health' of the historic environment.

Key evidence base

- Character Study, 2010, produced by the Landscape Partnership.
- The Heritage of Woking - An Historic Conservation Compendium, 2000, produced by Woking Borough Council.
- Planning Policy Statement 5, 2010, Planning for the Historic Environment and accompanying practice guidance, produced by Department of Communities and Local Government.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Design

- 5.195** All forms of development should make a positive contribution to the environment and strengthen the character and distinct identity of the area.
- 5.196** Good design is of fundamental importance to the delivery of the Core Strategy, because it will contribute significantly to the acceptance and appreciation of development by local residents and occupiers of buildings. It also has a bearing on the well-being of people.
- 5.197** Woking Borough Council expects the design of buildings to be inclusive and comprehensive, not only looking at aesthetic quality, but also how the development brings various elements together to improve the quality of life of its users and enhance the character of the area. These elements include how development incorporates high quality sustainable construction standards and ensures the functionality of buildings. It is also about how development is accessible by its users and by various transport modes, including service vehicles.
- 5.198** Individual places within the Borough have their own distinctive characters. These have evolved over time, and they are well valued by the local community as part of the heritage of the area. The Council seeks a design solution that enhances the distinctive character of the area without compromising innovation and creativity.
- 5.199** A Character Study has been carried out to provide evidence of the character of the area. This will provide useful information to guide development and inform planning decisions. Furthermore, the Heritage of Woking Study provides additional information.
- 5.200** There have been concerns by local residents about the poor quality of some past developments. The Core Strategy seeks to promote high density development in the main centres of the Borough. The design of the proposed developments will be key to their acceptability by the public, the people who use them, and the character of the area.

CS21: Design

Proposals for new development should meet the criteria below:

- Create buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity; they should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated, paying due regard to the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land.
- Achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook.
- Be designed in an inclusive way to be accessible to all members of the community, regardless of any disability and to encourage sustainable means of travel.
- Incorporate landscaping to enhance the setting of the development, including the retention of any trees of amenity value, and other significant landscape features of merit, and provide for suitable boundary treatment/s.



- Protect and where possible enhance biodiversity within new developments (as set out in policy CS7 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation). The Council encourages the incorporation of built-in measures in new construction design. Examples of such measures may include green walls, brown roofs and the installation of bird and bat boxes.
- Ensure provision of well designed Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace, (SANG) where necessary.
- Ensure schemes provide appropriate levels of private and public amenity space.
- Create a safe and secure environment, where the opportunities for crime are minimised.
- Incorporate measures to minimise energy consumption, conserve water resources, use the principles of sustainable construction and provide for renewable energy generation in accordance with policy CS22 Sustainable Construction and CS23 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation.
- Incorporate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable materials, and make provision for sustainable drainage systems.
- Ensure the building is adaptable to allow scope for changes to be made to meet the needs of the occupier (life time homes and modern business needs).

Reasoned justification

- 5.201** Different parts of the Borough present different contexts for development, as demonstrated by the Character Study and Conservation Area Appraisals. All forms of development, whether residential or commercial, should have regard to the value of their surroundings.
- 5.202** Good quality construction is an inseparable element of good quality design. Developments will be expected to make use of appropriate materials whether these are local architectural features or more unusual high-performance components.
- 5.203** There is potential to exert a positive social effect through design. The design and function of an environment can help to discourage crime and encourage positive use of public spaces. Areas where there is a mixture of uses or types of homes will ensure a footfall of people, offering natural surveillance and reducing incidents of crime and fear of crime. Quieter areas such as car parks should be overlooked, open spaces and pedestrian routes visible from roads and buildings.

Delivery strategy

- 5.204** Planning applications must be supported by design and access statements and the Council expects applicants to demonstrate how all the design issues covered in the policy have been addressed in developing a good proposal.
- 5.205** It is proposed that a Design Supplementary Planning Document is produced to clarify the detailed requirements of this policy.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Monitoring and review

5.206 The Council will keep under review the number and reasoning behind planning appeals being allowed contrary to local design and character considerations.

Key evidence base

- Character Study, 2010, produced by the Landscape Partnership.
- Surrey Design Guide, 2002, published by the Surrey Local Government Association.
- Heritage of Woking – An Historic Conservation Compendium, 2000, produced by Woking Borough Council.



Sustainable construction

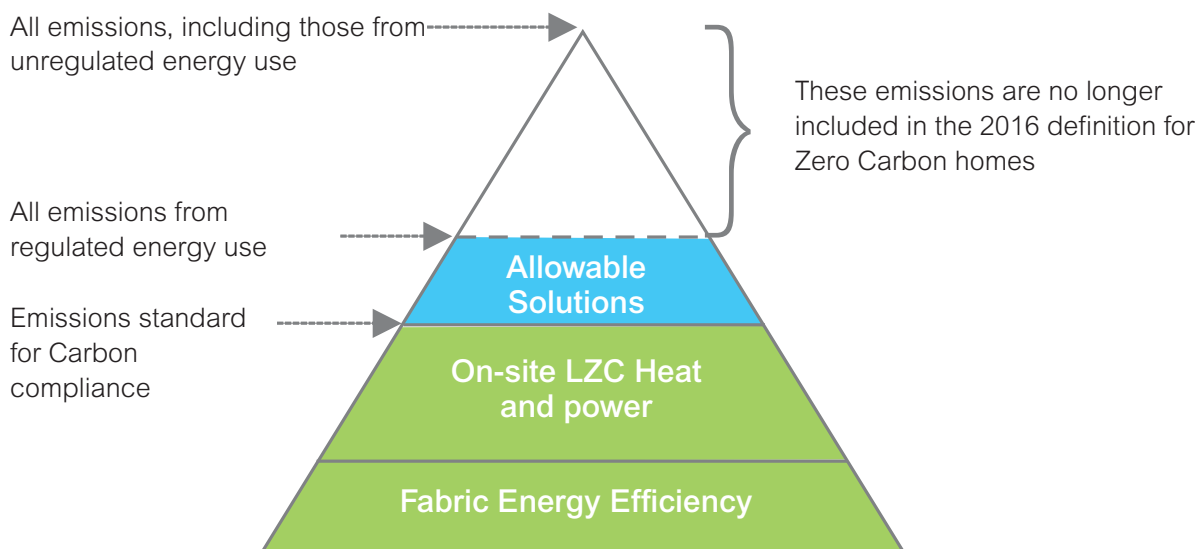
- 5.207** One of the key principles of the Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1 is that local planning authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions and promote the development of renewable energy. The PPS requires local planning authorities to set out a clear and evidence-based local policy framework through which development proposals are to be assessed in terms of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and resilience to changes in climate.
- 5.208** The supplement makes it clear that where local circumstances warrant higher standards of energy efficiency, LZC (low or zero carbon) energy and climate change resilience these must be clearly expressed and evidenced.
- 5.209** Woking Borough Council has commissioned a climate change, renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy study to provide evidence to justify its specific requirements on development in the Borough. Furthermore, the Council has the commitment and credentials to manage and facilitate the delivery of the Core Strategy to achieve these targets. The Council leads by example and in 2010 work was completed on ten new affordable family homes in the Borough which were built to a very high environmental standard to demonstrate that the targets can be achieved. The scheme was designed to blend with the traditional architectural style in the Borough but achieved Code for Sustainable Homes level five and is believed to be the first mainstream housing project to have been built to this level in the UK.
- 5.210** The approach is underpinned by the Council's Climate Change Strategy which was first adopted in 2002. This comprehensive strategy recognises the contribution that all council services can make towards climate change mitigation and adaptation and aligns with the target reduction in carbon dioxide equivalent emissions set out in the UK Climate Change Act (of at least 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050, both against a 1990 baseline). The strategy is divided into ten key themes, one of which is Planning and Regulation, recognising the significance this policy area can have in reducing local area emissions.
- 5.211** The Government has set the objective for all new houses to be zero carbon by 2016 and non-domestic buildings by 2019. A number of measures are proposed in order to meet these standards, combining significantly improved energy efficiency along with widespread deployment of renewable and low carbon energy supply systems. Stepped tightening of standards of energy efficiency is proposed through amendments to Part L of the Building Regulations. The initial revisions were introduced in October 2010, with further revision planned for 2013. Even with the definition of a "zero carbon home" being clarified in 2011 to only including "regulated" energy, that from heating, fixed lighting, hot water and building services and not covering the emissions related to "unregulated" energy use from cooking or from plug-in electrical appliances such as computers or televisions, a number of steps are going to be required to meet the zero carbon target.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.212 Despite high standards for energy efficiency and widespread use of LZC energy, achieving zero carbon emissions through on-site measures alone may be prohibitively costly and may not be technically possible for all types of residential and non-domestic buildings. Therefore the proposals include measures termed 'Allowable Solutions' to address the 'residual' emissions through funding a range of off-site measures. Allowable Solutions for homes that have been discussed include increased levels of carbon compliance, exports of low carbon or renewable heat from the development to other developments, and investments in low and zero carbon community heat infrastructure. Allowable Solutions will be expected to mitigate the carbon emissions from a home for around 30 years after it is built. It is likely that a maximum price will be set by government for each tonne of residual emissions to be met by the development industry through Allowable Solutions. The Council will seek to ensure funding from Allowable Solutions arising from developments in the borough is used to support a programme of low and zero carbon measures within the local community in Woking Borough.

Fig 5: The hierarchy of steps for achieving zero carbon



CS22: Sustainable construction

New residential development on previously developed land will be required to meet the energy and Carbon Dioxide (CO²) and water components of the Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 (or any future national requirement) from now until 31 March 2013, the energy and CO² and water components of at least Code level 4 from 1 April 2013 and the energy and CO² and water components of Code level 5 from 1 April 2016. New residential development is encouraged to meet the full requirements of each Code level, with particular encouragement for the material and ecology elements. Where the scale, nature and location of a development would justify a higher Code level, the Council will negotiate with developers to achieve that because of the lower cost of developing such sites.

New residential development on greenfield sites will be required to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 (or any future national requirement) from now because of the relatively lower cost of developing such sites. The



Council will consider a case based on evidence of viability if an applicant can demonstrate that the requirement for code level 5 cannot be met. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

New non-residential development of 1,000m² or more (gross) floorspace is required to comply with BREEAM very good standards (or any future national equivalent).

All new development should consider the integration of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) or other forms of low carbon district heating in the development. All new development in proximity of an existing or proposed CHP station or district heating network will be required to be connected to it unless it can be demonstrated that a better alternative for reducing carbon emissions from the development can be achieved. Details of the zones where connection will be required will be set out in an SPD and will be determined by factors such as the capacity of the existing CHP network, distance from it and physical constraints.

The evidence base¹⁵ sets out the locations in the Borough which have significant potential for CHP or other forms of low carbon district heating networks. Subject to technical feasibility and financial viability, all development within these zones will be required to be designed and constructed to enable connection to the future network.

Applications for developments with exceptionally high total energy consumption, such as large leisure facilities with a high heat demand or buildings with exceptionally high power/cooling loads (such as data centres), will be required to reduce the total carbon emissions from the development by 10% through the use of renewable energy measures on site.

Where it can be demonstrated that the standards set out in this policy cannot be met on site, permission will only be granted if the applicant makes provision for compensatory energy and CO² and water savings elsewhere in the Borough equivalent to the carbon savings which would have been made by applying this policy.

The Council will encourage proposals for residential extensions and non-residential developments of 1,000m² or less (gross) floorspace to incorporate energy and water efficiency measures.

The Council will develop and adopt its Allowable Solutions framework when legislated. The Council will seek to ensure funding from Allowable Solutions arising from developments in the borough is used to support a programme of low and zero carbon measures within the local community in Woking Borough.

The standards set out in the policy will be reviewed to reflect any future change in national standards and/or any equivalent standards that might be introduced.

Electric vehicle charging points

The Council is actively promoting electric vehicle charging points and has already provided a number of these in the Borough. These are of particular value when the electricity source is low carbon. Details of when new development will be expected to provide electric vehicle charging points or when a contribution towards public charging points will be required, will be set out in an SPD.

Design and construction

The design of all new developments will be required to take account of layout, landform, orientation and landscaping to maximise efficient use of energy and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

¹⁵ Climate Change and Decentralised, Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Evidence Base, June 2010, ecsc.



5.0 Borough wide policies

The design of all new developments should facilitate the reduction of waste and the recycling and composting of the waste produced.

All developments should consider the use of sustainable construction techniques that promote the reuse and recycling of building materials. All development is encouraged to use responsible resourcing of materials and is encouraged to source materials locally. All new residential development is encouraged to meet the 'materials' elements of the Code.

Checklist

All applications for new development should include a completed copy of the Council's climate neutral checklist (with the exception of very minor development such as minor exterior alterations).

Ecology and biodiversity

All development is encouraged to make biodiversity enhancements such as green roofs and bird and bat boxes. All new residential development is encouraged to meet the 'ecology' elements of the Code.

- 5.213** The Minimum % Improvement in Dwelling Emission Rate over 2010 Target Emission Rate (TER) and Maximum Indoor Water Consumption in Litres/ Person/Day required in order to meet the equivalent Code for Sustainable Home Standards set out in the policy are set out in Table 5.

Reasoned justification

- 5.214** The way in which developments are regulated, planned and built and the way in which resources are used to do this can determine whether or not they are sustainable. By simply re-evaluating how and where we build things we can reduce emissions and help adapt to the effects that climate change will bring about. Factors such as location, layout and landscape are all important as well as the use of climate neutral technologies.
- 5.215** Local evidence shows that the infrastructure in the Borough and the stresses placed upon it justify going further than the minimum requirements set at a national level. This evidence includes an Economic Viability Assessment.
- 5.216** Construction methods used and standards of buildings can help to reduce these effects and the design of buildings can ensure they are able to adapt better to the changing climate. Buildings are responsible for almost half of the country's carbon emissions, half of our water consumption, about one third of landfill waste and one quarter of all raw materials used in the economy¹⁶. The Government had identified this issue as a priority (see PPS1: Planning and Climate Change Supplement).
- 5.217** All developments should consider the use of sustainable construction techniques that promote the reuse and recycling of building materials. This is to achieve more sustainable forms of development including the conservation of important mineral resources. This is considered particularly important given that Surrey is likely to become increasingly reliant on recycled aggregates and imported marine sharp sand and gravel towards the end of the plan period as land won resources capable of being worked within the county without breaching environmental constraints rapidly diminish.



5.218 The Code for Sustainable Homes (the Code) is the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code is the Government’s preferred system for measuring the performance of new homes. The Code aims to reduce carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable. The code has six levels with mandatory requirements at each regarding energy and water usage (see Table 5), surface water run-off and waste. It also covers the categories of pollution, health and well-being (which incorporates Lifetime Home Standards), management and ecology but with flexibility over which standards to choose to achieve a specific Code rating. The attainment of higher Code levels requires the incorporation of renewable energy production. In 2008 the Government set out their intention to bring in the energy efficiency improvement equivalent to the Code’s energy standards through stepped changes to the Building Regulations as set out in Table 4 below. “Zero carbon” was defined in March 2011.

Table 4: Anticipated timetable of improvements to Part L of the Building Regulations and equivalent standards within the Code for Sustainable Homes

Date	2010	2013	2016
Energy efficiency improvement of the dwelling compared to 2006 Part L (Building Regulations)	25%	44%	Zero carbon
Energy efficiency improvement of the dwelling compared to 2010 Part L (Building Regulations)	0%	25%	Zero carbon*
Equivalent standard within the Code for Sustainable Homes	Code level 3	Code level 4	Code level 6

Source rows 1 and 3: DCLG 2008: Greener homes for the future.

Source row 2: Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guide (Nov 2010).

*Zero carbon was defined in the Government’s Plan for Growth (March 2011) as including the carbon dioxide emissions from energy use that are covered by Building Regulations. This “regulated” energy includes those from heating, fixed lighting, hot water and building services. They do not cover the emissions related to “unregulated” energy use from cooking or from plug-in electrical appliances such as computers or televisions.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Table 5: Code levels for mandatory minimum standards in CO² emissions

Code Level	Minimum % improvement in dwelling emission rate over 2010 target emission Rate (TER)	Maximum indoor water consumption in litres/ person/day
Level 1	0%	120
Level 2	0%	120
Level 3	0%	105
Level 4	25%	105
Level 5	100%	80
Level 6	Net Zero CO ² Emissions	80

Source: Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guide (Nov 2010)

5.219 Despite its limited size and other physical constraints, there is a significantly greater level of existing renewable and low carbon energy in Woking than in many other boroughs of comparable, or indeed, larger size. The reasons behind this are set out in detail in the evidence base and can be summarised as:

- a strong and early lead taken by the local authority through investing in decentralised energy since the 1990s
- well-established delivery partners, including one of the first Energy Services Companies (ESCO) in the UK
- consistent and assertive use of planning powers and tools to secure investment in decentralised energy through new development for over five years.

5.220 Future Water, the Government's Water Strategy for England¹⁷ was published in February 2008 and sets out the Government's vision for the water sector by 2030. Future Water maps out how the above overarching target of reducing domestic water usage to 130 litres per person per day, can be achieved from a current estimate of 150 litres of water used by every person in Britain per day. Average water usage in Woking is estimated to be 170 litres per person per day. The Government introduced Building Regulations to improve the water efficiency of new homes from 6 April 2010¹⁸. This required a whole building standard of 125 litres per person per day.

5.221 The region's level of water stress combined with higher than average levels of water consumption in the Borough, the existing infrastructure in the town centre, and the scale of development required by the strategy justify sustainable construction requirements in advance of the proposed national programme. This policy will apply to all new development in the Borough. Special requirements will apply for greenfield development because of the relatively lower cost of developing such sites.

¹⁷ Future Water, the Government's water Strategy for England, Defra, February 2008.

¹⁸ Building (Amendment) Regulations 2009: New Part G in Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations and new minimum water efficiency requirements. The Amendment Regulations were due to come into force on 1 October 2009 but this was postponed to 6 April 2010 by circular 10/2009.



5.222 The establishment of the Thamesway Group of companies by the Council in 1999, which includes two ESCos (Thamesway Energy Limited and Thamesway Central Milton Keynes Limited), has enabled the Council to progress its investment in decentralised energy infrastructure through a Special Purpose Vehicle. This has established a robust commercial business platform on which to base further expansion of energy infrastructure and diversify its customer base. The infrastructure available in the town centre and elsewhere in the Borough has made Woking Borough Council a name synonymous with tackling climate change, and has given the Council an almost unique position. Development in parts of the town centre can connect to an existing district heating network today and through Thamesway the practical infrastructure is already in place to supply, bill and service customers.

5.223 On sites where it has been proved to be unviable for developments to meet the standards set out in policy CS22 on-site, one way that applicants could achieve equivalent energy and water savings elsewhere in the Borough would be to make a financial contribution to the Council to enable it to help to find schemes that would make the savings. The Council will publish updates of energy and water schemes that will be eligible and the cost per tonne of carbon dioxide and per cubic metre of water saved.

Delivery Strategy

5.224 The Council will prepare and keep under review a Climate Change SPD which will provide detailed information regarding the implementation and delivery of this policy. Specifically, the SPD will include:

- the zones within which all new development will be required to connect to a CHP station or district heating network
- advice on the open book approach to viability assessments
- details of the Allowable Solutions framework and the Council's carbon offset fund.

5.225 The Council's key partner in delivering the strategy is ESCo Thamesway Energy Limited which has enabled the Council to progress its investment in decentralised energy infrastructure through a Special Purpose Vehicle.

5.226 The Core Strategy has strong links with the Climate Change Strategy and each document supports the delivery of the other. The Council will work with community groups such as Local Agenda 21 to deliver both strategies.

Monitoring and Review

5.227 This policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR.

- % of new development achieving each Code standard.
- Tonnes of CO² saved.
- % of commercial development which is BREEAM good, very good or excellent (%s for each).

Key evidence base

- Climate Change, Decentralised, Renewable and Low Carbon Evidence Base, produced by ecsc, 2010.
- Woking Borough Council Climate Change Strategy, 2008.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Renewable and low carbon energy generation

- 5.228** Key to the reduction of carbon emissions will be the generation of energy from renewable sources. The UK has committed to securing 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and government has set out how it expects this to be achieved in the UK Renewable Energy Strategy (RES) 2.
- 5.229** The adopted PPS: Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS 1 and the draft revision to it - Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate, both give a strong positive message about renewable and low carbon energy generation both as stand alone development and as part of residential and commercial development.
- 5.230** The Government is seeking to stimulate greater investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation through a wide range of measures. The Energy Act (2008) provided the basis on which the Secretary of State could introduce fiscal measures that reward the generation of LDC energy. This includes the introduction of a feed-in tariff (FIT) for small scale renewable electricity in April 2010 and the planned two-phase introduction of renewable heat incentive (RHI) in autumn 2011 (non-domestic) and October 2012 (domestic). These measures have been designed to provide a guaranteed income to owners and installers of small scale LDC heat and power generating technologies at a level and for a duration that is sufficient to incentivise significant investment in these measures.

CS23: Renewable and low carbon energy generation

The Council recognises significant progress needs to be made if national targets for the generation of renewable energy are to be met and encourages the development of stand-alone renewable energy installations in the Borough. All proposals will be considered on their individual merits with regard to scale, location, technology type and cumulative impact on the surrounding area.

The Council particularly encourages applications from community-based and community-owned projects.

Applicants should take appropriate steps to mitigate any adverse impacts of proposed development through careful consideration of location, scale, design and other measures. All reasonable steps to minimise noise impacts should be taken.

Applicants should provide sound evidence of the availability of the resource which will be harnessed or the fuel to be used, including details of the adequacy of transport networks where applicable and detailed studies to assess potential adverse impacts such as noise nuisance, flood risk, shadow flicker and interference with telecommunications.

Reasoned justification

- 5.231** The South East Plan included a sub-regional target for the Thames Valley and Surrey sub-region. The Council is confident that the evidence used to inform the targets is sound and credible and will therefore retain them.
- 5.232** The targets for Thames Valley and Surrey are set out in Table 6. Whilst no sub-regional targets have been identified beyond 2016, the overall target for the region is likely to result in further increases equating to approximately a doubling of the 2016 levels by 2026.



Table 6: Sub-regional targets for land-based renewable energy

Sub-region	2010 Renewable Energy Target (Mega Watts)	2016 Renewable Energy Target (Mega Watts)
Thames Valley and Surrey	140	209

Source: extract from policy NRM14 of the South East Plan, 2009.

- 5.233** Development of renewable and low carbon energy provides one of the mainstays of the provisions set out in the Climate Change Act. The Act puts into statute the UK's targets to reduce the carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by at least 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 (both against a 1990 baseline). The Act is supported by the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan which sets out the UK Government's strategy for climate and energy and proposes measures to reduce carbon emissions across all sectors.
- 5.234** Woking Borough Council commissioned a climate change, renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy study which sets out the Borough's opportunities and constraints for renewable energy development. The key opportunities were considered to be medium-large scale wind energy, combined heat and power (CHP) and solar heat and photovoltaic (PV).
- 5.235** A wind energy feasibility study for the Borough (quoted in the climate change, renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy study) concluded that wind speed for medium - large turbines is not a limiting factor anywhere in the Borough but there were a number of land and planning-related constraints such as ancient monuments, designated landscapes and habitats which may constrain the development of wind turbines. In addition, there are 'possible' areas of constraint such as aerodrome notification areas where there is a requirement to consult the relevant operators and authorities. The study revealed there are very few unconstrained places for wind turbines in the Borough, therefore there will be some practical obstacles to be overcome in siting medium-large turbines. Nonetheless, there are many areas where it may be possible to locate wind turbines subject to over-coming one or more possible constraints. Locating wind turbines in any locations within the Borough would require detailed studies to assess potential adverse impacts such as noise nuisance, flood risk, shadow flicker and interference with telecommunications.
- 5.236** There are opportunities for further use of CHP and the Council's experience in the application of this technology means it is well placed to encourage further use of CHP. However, an adequate 'base' heat demand is required to maximise the efficiency of CHP and other forms of community heat network. In addition, physical constraints can limit the installation of new heat distribution infrastructure (or the expansion of existing networks).
- 5.237** Photovoltaic or PV are solar electricity systems that capture the sun's energy using photovoltaic cells and convert the sunlight into electricity. Solar water heating systems (also called solar thermal) use the heat from the sun to heat water that can be used for domestic hot water.



5.0 Borough wide policies

Photovoltaic and solar thermal energies are considered to have good potential in Woking due to the favourable insolation levels in the south east of England. PV provides a good complementary energy source to CHP and, along with wind energy, provides a higher level of carbon emissions reduction than heat-based renewable energy sources. Woking has been a pioneer of local authority-led large scale PV installations with the result that nearly half of the total installed PV capacity in the region is located in the Borough.

5.238 A number of different fuel types are collectively described as 'biomass' including: wood fuel from woodland management or forest thinning operations, waste wood from sawmills and the construction industry, agricultural products and wastes including straw, slurry and chicken litter, energy crops including miscanthus grass and short rotation coppice and household putrescible waste. There is limited potential for the Borough to generate adequate biomass to meet a significant growth in biomass-based energy supply. However, supply chains are becoming established within Surrey (where greater potential exists) and Woking's road network and rail aggregates depot provide potential to enable importation of biomass fuel from local sources into the Borough. The existence of heat distribution mains in some parts of the borough could be used to distribute energy via community-scale biomass heating.

5.239 There are no active or recent landfill sites where methane gas is being produced on a regular basis or at any volume that would enable gas capture and re-use for energy production. The sludge from the only sewerage treatment works in the Borough is transferred to another site outside the Borough before being recycled. However, there may be opportunities to divert suitable wastes from existing waste collection and disposal arrangements to be used in anaerobic digestion to generate biogas. There are no power stations in the Borough so waste heat recovery opportunities and the small rivers with low flow provide very limited potential for hydro electricity.

Delivery strategy

5.240 An SPD will be produced which sets out the detail and delivery mechanisms behind this policy.

5.241 The Council's key partner in delivering the strategy is its ESCo Thameswey Energy Limited. The existence of an ESCo in the borough with experience operating community energy systems and retailing heat to customers will help to ensure delivery of any new community heat energy.

5.242 The Core Strategy has strong links with the Climate Change Strategy and each document supports the delivery of the other. The Council will work with community groups such as Local Agenda 21 to deliver both strategies.

Monitoring and review

5.243 This policy will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the AMR to enable the Council to effectively monitor the Borough's centres.

- MW of new renewable energy installations permitted.
- MW installed capacity of new renewable energy.

Key evidence base

- Climate Change, Decentralised, Renewable and Low Carbon Evidence Base, produced by ecsc, 2010.
- Woking Borough Council Climate Change Strategy, 2008.



Woking's landscape and townscape

5.244 Woking Borough has a varied landscape. Its townscape also benefits from attractive local and neighbourhood centres. It is essential that the character and sense of place conveyed by these different landscapes and townscapes are fully considered when making decisions that affect them. Future development should be well situated, and sensitive to its location, to protect the Borough's different character areas, whilst accommodating the change needed to contribute to environmental, social and economic objectives.

5.245 Landscape character is a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another. Townscape character is the appearance and character of buildings and all other features of an urban area taken together to create a distinct visual impression. Landscape and townscape character is that which makes an area unique.

CS24: Woking's landscape and townscape

All development proposals will provide a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character, and local distinctiveness and will have regard to landscape character areas.

To protect local landscape and townscape character, development will be expected to:

- conserve, and where possible enhance existing character, especially key landscapes such as heathlands, escarpments and the canal/river network and settlement characteristics; maintain locally valued features, and enhance or restore deteriorating features
- respect the setting of, and relationship between, settlements and individual buildings in the landscape
- conserve, and where possible, enhance townscape character, including structure and land form, landscape features, views and landmarks, and appropriate building styles and materials
- support land management practices that have no adverse impact on characteristic landscape patterns and local biodiversity.

Reasoned justification

5.246 This policy does not seek to prevent changes to the landscape; its aim is to guide the direction of any change, whether initiated through new development or land management decisions, indicating sensitivities that should be considered in order to minimise negative impact, and provide the most positive opportunities for change.

5.247 Development in the urban fringe, adjoining the countryside, requires special consideration because these areas are most vulnerable to a range of adverse environmental pressures. It will be important to maintain the clear transition between the urban areas and the countryside and to ensure that development on the edge of the urban area does not create obtrusive and unattractive skylines. The urban fringe should be conserved and, where possible, be enhanced through appropriate landscape restoration, management and habitat creation.



5.0 Borough wide policies

5.248 Development will not normally be permitted on the slopes of the escarpments which are shown on the Proposals Map, or which would result in a significant reduction in the amount of tree cover. Development on the top of the escarpments will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the character of the landscape.

5.249 The landscape values of canals, rivers and their valleys are an important attribute and can add considerably to the character of an area. Included in this definition are the:

- Valley of the Wey and the Wey Navigation
- Hoe Valley
- Basingstoke Canal
- Bourne Stream.

5.250 Policy CS24 will prevent development which would harm this visual quality by protecting the water course, its immediate banks and wider setting.

Delivery strategy

5.251 All new development must respect and, where appropriate, enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape character area in which it is proposed. Landscape enhancement works may be required to avoid adverse impacts associated with new developments.

5.252 Some schemes may require landscape assessments, depending on the size and location of proposals.

5.253 The Council will encourage the preparation of Design Statements for local and neighbourhoods by local amenity and community groups.

Monitoring and review

5.254 The number and content of landscape assessments submitted with planning applications.

Key evidence base

- Character Study, October 2010, produced by The Landscape Partnership.



6.0 Implementation and monitoring of the Core Strategy

- 6.1** The Core Strategy should show a clear path for its implementation to demonstrate how its vision and objectives will be achieved. Furthermore, it should set out how it is effecting a positive change in the lives of people who live, work and visit the Borough by addressing the key challenges facing the Borough. This should closely be monitored to assess whether the policies and proposals are delivering the objectives, target and standards at the right time. PPS12: Local Spatial Planning sets out the key tests of soundness for the Core Strategy to meet. One of them is a clear demonstration of its delivery. This section sets out how the Core Strategy will be implemented and monitored.

Implementation

- 6.2** The Core Strategy will be delivered by the following sectors:

- Public Sector - through investment in infrastructure to create the necessary environment for other policies and proposals to be delivered, direct investment in delivering some policies and proposals such as affordable housing, rationalisation of public sector assets to maximise their effective and efficient use. This will include disposal of assets for alternative uses or co-location for efficient use of land. It will also deliver the Core Strategy through development enabling and management by ensuring that development meets all necessary standards and objectives to support infrastructure provision.
- Private Sector - through direct investment in land and buildings and developer contributions towards infrastructure delivery.
- Voluntary Sector - through direct investment in land and buildings.

- 6.3** **An Infrastructure Delivery Plan** has been prepared to set out the scale, type and cost of infrastructure needed to support the Core Strategy, who will provide it and how it will be delivered. The Woking Partnership is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It has an Infrastructure Sub Group, which will seek to coordinate the delivery of this programme. The Council will ensure that development is supported by the necessary infrastructure and/or contributions made towards that before planning permission will be granted.

- 6.4** The Council recognises that the implementation of the Core Strategy will involve a variety of delivery agencies and, for that matter, will need to take a proactive role in coordinating them to ensure that the objectives they seek to achieve are not lost in the process. It will also take a realistic approach towards the delivery of the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. In this regard, it accepts that the nature and cost of schemes will influence when specific schemes come forward in the short, medium or long term. Some schemes might have to be phased to achieve its expected objectives. Other proposals will require extensive consultation depending on their nature, location and sensitiveness. The Council will therefore ensure that public consultation is integral to the delivery process. The Council will work closely with its partners to coordinate all these to ensure a comprehensive delivery of all aspects of the Core Strategy.

- 6.5** Each policy in the Core Strategy includes a section on delivery, monitoring and review. Details of these proposals comprise of how, who and when the policy will be implemented. Furthermore, it includes targets and indicators against which the policy will be monitored and reviewed.



6.0 Implementation and monitoring of the Core Strategy

- 6.6 Planning Application Process** - The Council has a primary role for enabling and determining the suitability of development proposals. It will exercise this responsibility proactively to ensure the delivery of the Core Strategy. It will seek to ensure that schemes that come forward are legally, technically and practically feasible in the short, medium and long term before they are approved. It will be proactive to ensure that developers are fully aware of the objectives and expectation of the basis upon which the suitability of their schemes will be judged. It will ensure that planning applications are submitted with adequate and appropriate information to make informed decisions before the application is accepted. Furthermore, it will ensure strict compliance of all necessary adopted standards such as design, parking and sustainable construction when planning applications are determined.
- 6.7** The Council will resist any proposed development that will prejudice the future development of a neighbouring site and/or prohibit the comprehensive development of a larger site.
- 6.8 Developer Contributions** - Development should be supported by adequate infrastructure. The Public Sector has a significant role to play in providing part of this infrastructure. However, development has impacts and it is only fair that developers also make a contribution towards mitigating the impacts of their development. The Council will ensure that this is the case. The Council will require developers to contribute towards the provision of facilities, services and infrastructure to make a scheme acceptable in planning terms before planning approval is granted. This infrastructure will include green infrastructure and other forms of social, community and environmental requirements. The Council will ensure that all forms of development will achieve a net benefit to the community; taking into account its needs and aspirations. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides evidence of the infrastructure needs to support growth identified in the Core Strategy and how they will be delivered.
- 6.9** The Council has approved Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a mechanism for securing developer contributions. An Infrastructure Schedule and a charging level will be established as part of this process. In the transitional period, the Council will continue to use Planning Obligations and Planning Conditions as the main mechanisms for securing developer contributions. The tests of Circular 05/2005 are now a statutory requirement of the Planning Act 2008 and the requirement of Planning Obligations as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and Community Infrastructure Levy Amendment Regulations 2011 will apply.
- 6.10 Compulsory Purchase Powers** - The Council has Compulsory Purchase Powers, which it is willing to use to assemble land to enable the implementation of the Core Strategy. This power will be used as a last resort, because the Council's preferred approach to any land assembly will be through negotiation.
- 6.11 Rationalisation of Public Sector Assets** - The Council will seek to maximise opportunities for the use of public sector assets for the implementation of the Core Strategy. Public sector assets in the form of land and buildings will play a significant role in delivering the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. It could provide land for the provision of housing and employment or buildings to provide community facilities and services. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Employment Land Review (ELR) take into account public sector land that is available and suitable for development. The Council is committed to the Surrey Public Sector Asset Review. This review will establish a common database for all public sector assets, their performance and efficient use to inform decisions about how they could be utilised efficiently. Any future review of SHLAA and ELR will take the outcome of this exercise into account.



6.12 Delivery mechanisms of the Council – Woking Borough Council will continue to be very proactive towards delivering its key priorities, including affordable housing and mitigation of climate change. It has set up Thamesway Limited, which is an independent company to deliver these priorities. Thamesway Limited enters into public/private joint ventures to deliver its energy and environmental strategies and targets. As part of its energy efficiency programmes, the Council, through Thamesway, implemented its first CHP system in 1992 and the United Kingdom's (UK) first small scale CHP/heat fired absorption chiller system in 1994. What marks these systems out from any other system in the UK is the direct sale of co-generated heat and sustainable electricity to local customers at a lower price than conventional sources. The company will seek to work in partnership with developers and customers to deliver the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy where it is technically and economically feasible.

6.13 The Council has also set up **Woking Borough Homes**, which is a subsidiary of Thamesway. It focuses on the delivery of affordable homes with emphasis on the intermediate rent market. It will continue to acquire and build properties for affordable housing. The Core Strategy identifies a significant unmet need for affordable housing. Woking Borough Homes will contribute towards meeting this need.

6.14 Other Council plans and strategies will complement the implementation of the Core Strategy. This will include:

- Supplementary Planning Documents
- Housing Strategy
- Climate Change Strategy
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Site Allocations Development Plan Document
- Development Management Development Plan Document
- Town Centre Area Action Plan
- any other plans and strategies that the Council may feel it is necessary to prepare to enable the Core Strategy to be delivered.

6.15 Working in partnership – The Council will proactively work in partnership to deliver projects of cross boundary significance such as the strategic monitoring and mitigation of Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas and transport projects where the County Council is the highway authority.

Monitoring

6.16 Monitoring the performance and effects of the Core Strategy will be integral to its delivery. PPS12: Local Spatial Planning requires Core Strategies to have clear arrangements for monitoring and reporting results to the public and civic leaders. In this regard, the Council will be preparing Annual Monitoring Reports to be based on the period 1 April to 31 March. The Annual Monitoring Report will be published on the Council's website. It will demonstrate how the policies of the Core Strategy are achieving their objectives.



6.0 Implementation and monitoring of the Core Strategy

6.17 The Council has a project management plan for the preparation of its Local Development Documents. How the Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with timescales set out in the plan is the first stage of its monitoring. At this stage, the Core Strategy has been prepared according to timescales in the plan.

6.18 Each policy includes a section of how it will be monitored and reviewed. It also identifies a set of indicators and targets for the effective monitoring of the policies in a consistent manner.

Risk and contingencies

6.19 The Council is working towards the comprehensive delivery of the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy and has no reason to believe that they will not be implemented in full. However, it accepts that there could be circumstances where development fails to come forward for a number of reasons, some of which can be beyond its control. Where the Council is able to use its influence and power to enable the delivery of the Core Strategy it will do so. The Core Strategy has an in-built mechanism to monitor performance through an Annual Monitoring Report. Generally, the outcome of the monitoring process will inform whether or not the Core Strategy and/or other complementary plans and strategies should be reviewed. At this stage, two potential areas of risk and the contingency measures to deal with them in the event that they materialise are identified below.

6.20 **Failure of sites coming forward for housing and/or employment development due to difficulties of land assembly and/or housing and employment delivery falling behind the projected trajectory.** – At the end of three years after the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Council will undertake a comprehensive monitoring of the performance of housing and employment floorspace delivery. This monitoring will look at the cumulative delivery of housing and employment floorspace. If delivery is significantly behind the projected cumulative target over this period as set out in the housing trajectory and the Five Year Housing and Employment Land Supply Position Statements is not providing any evidence that this will be addressed in subsequent years, the Council will take the following steps.

- Use its compulsory purchase powers to ensure that key sites are brought forward to meet any shortfall in supply.
- Re-prioritise its infrastructure investment programme (through CIL) to create the conducive environment for key sites to come forward.
- Review and re-prioritise its heads of terms for securing developer contributions to enable priority schemes to be developed.
- Review its SHLAA, Site Allocations DPD to bring forward new sites.
- Carry out an Employment Land Review and Market Appraisal of employment land to maximise their efficient use.
- The Council has safeguarded Moor Lane Westfield and Brookwood Farm for possible long-term housing. Restrictions on the release of these sites will be lifted to enable them to come forward for development to achieve a five year housing supply between 2012/2013 – 2016/2017.
- If this situation continues, the Council will seek a selective review of the housing and employment policies of the Core Strategy.





6.21 Infrastructure provision to support development – The Council will continue to work in partnership with infrastructure providers and the Woking Partnership to coordinate an effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure. A significant proportion of the funding to deliver infrastructure will be secured in the form of development contribution on the back of housing and employment development. In this regard, all the above contingency measures will also apply where relevant.



Glossary

Adoption: The formal approval or acceptance of Local Development Documents by the Council.

Affordable housing: Housing available at below market price or rents which can be provided by either the private or public sector. Please see Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) for the full and most up-to-date definition.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): Monitors progress against the Local Development Scheme (project plan for LDF documents) and policy targets.

Area Action Plans: Document for key areas of change or conservation which focuses on proposals for the area and their implementation.

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method): The world's most widely used means of reviewing and improving the environmental performance of buildings. The residential version of BREEAM is called EcoHomes.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy): Standard charge decided by local authorities and levied on new development. The CIL will be levied as a certain amount per square metre of development. The money will be used to pay for infrastructure. It would be a standard charge on all development rather than the charge being calculated individually for each planning permission.

Community: Usually refers to those living within a specific area but can be any group with shared needs or interests living in the Borough.

Community Strategy: Long-term vision for improving the quality of people's lives, with the aim of improving the economic, social and environmental well being of the Borough. Sometimes referred to as a Sustainable Community Strategy.

Core Strategy: Sets out the long-term vision for area and the main strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision.

Deprivation: Deprivation covers a broad range of issues and refers to unmet needs caused by a lack of resources of all kinds, not just financial. The Council uses the English Indices of Deprivation produced by the DCLG to identify areas of deprivation. The English Indices of Deprivation attempt to measure a broader concept of multiple deprivation, made up of several distinct dimensions, or domains, of deprivation.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Local Development Framework (LDF) documents containing the core planning policies and proposals. These are subject to independent examination. Woking Borough Council is intending to prepare the following DPDs: Core Strategy, Development Management Policies, Site Allocations DPD, Proposals Map.

Examination: Formal examination of Local Development Documents by an independent inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

ecsc: The Energy Centre for Sustainable Communities' is a sustainable energy consultancy that designs and implements projects to create a socially responsible, sustainable energy future. Became part of the Thamesway Group of companies in 2007.

Heritage assets: Parts of the historic environment which have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest.

Inspector: Representative from the Planning Inspectorate, which is an impartial government agency. Leads the examination of the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents.

Local Development Documents (LDD): Comprises of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and Statement of Community Involvement i.e. both statutory and non-statutory documents.



Local Development Framework (LDF): A folder of Local Development Documents that provides the framework for planning in the Borough and to guide planning decisions.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): Three-year project plan for the production of Development Documents.

Natura 2000: A European network of protected sites which represent areas of the highest value for natural habitats and species of plants and animals which are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the European Community. The Natura 2000 network includes two types of area Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA).

Planning Inspectorate (PINS): The Planning Inspectorate holds independent examinations to determine whether or not DPDs are 'sound'. The Planning Inspectorate also handles planning and enforcement appeals.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS): Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and their replacements Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are prepared by Central Government (after public consultation) to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies which have an important bearing on issues of development and land use. Local authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plans. The guidance may also be relevant to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements will be replaced by a National Planning Framework.

Proposals Map: It is part of the Local Development Documents that identify areas that should be protected, safeguarded sites in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework, areas to which specific policies apply.

Previously developed land (often referred to as brownfield land): Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. (Please see Planning Policy Statement 3 for full definition).

Ramsar: Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. The initial emphasis was on selecting sites of importance to waterbirds within the UK, and consequently many Ramsar sites are also Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)/Regional Strategy: It is part of the development plan and new local development documents must be in general conformity with the RSS. The RSS provides broad development strategy for the region for a 15 to 20-year period. The RSS for the South East is called the South East Plan.

Representations: General comments or responses to a consultation which support or object to proposals.

Site Allocations document: Produced after the Core Strategy. This will specify exactly where new development will take place in accordance with the policies set out in the Core Strategy.

Site specific allocations: Allocation of sites for specific or mixed-use development.

Sound/soundness: Describes where a DPD is considered to 'show good judgement' and also to fulfil the expectations of legislation, as well as conforming to national and regional planning policy.



Glossary

South East Plan: The title given to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East to cover the period to 2026. It was published on 6 May 2009. It was revoked by the coalition government on 6 July 2010 however a legal judgment on 10 November 2010 reestablished the South East Plan as part of the development plan for the time-being. The Government has written to all local authorities and made them aware of its intention to revoke all regional strategies through the forthcoming Localism Bill.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC): These areas are of international importance because they are home to rare or endangered species of plants or animals (other than birds). SACs are designated under the Habitats Directive.

Special Protection Areas (SPA): Areas which support significant numbers of ground nesting birds and their habitats. SPAs are classified under the Birds Directive.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): Sets out the Council's standards for involving the community in the preparation, alteration and review of Local Development Documents and the consideration of planning applications.

Statement of Proposals Matters/Statement of Representations Procedure: The regulations set out that the Council must produce a Statement of Matters which sets out the title of the document, subject matter of and area covered, period for representations, address where representations should be sent and list of places at which the document is available for inspection and the times at which it can be inspected.

Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA): A system of incorporating environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes. It is sometimes referred to as Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment. The specific term Strategic Environmental Assessment relates to European Union policy.

SuDS: Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD): Non-statutory documents that expand upon policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): A social, economic and environmental assessment primarily used for DPDs, incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Sustainable Development: The core principle underpinning the planning system. This means 'to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generation'.

Woking Partnership: This represents the residential, business, statutory and voluntary interests of the area. Members include the Primary Care Trust, Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, Woking Chamber of Commerce, Woking Association of Voluntary Service, Community Learning Partnership, and the People of Faith Forum.

Appendix 1: Evidence base supporting the Core Strategy

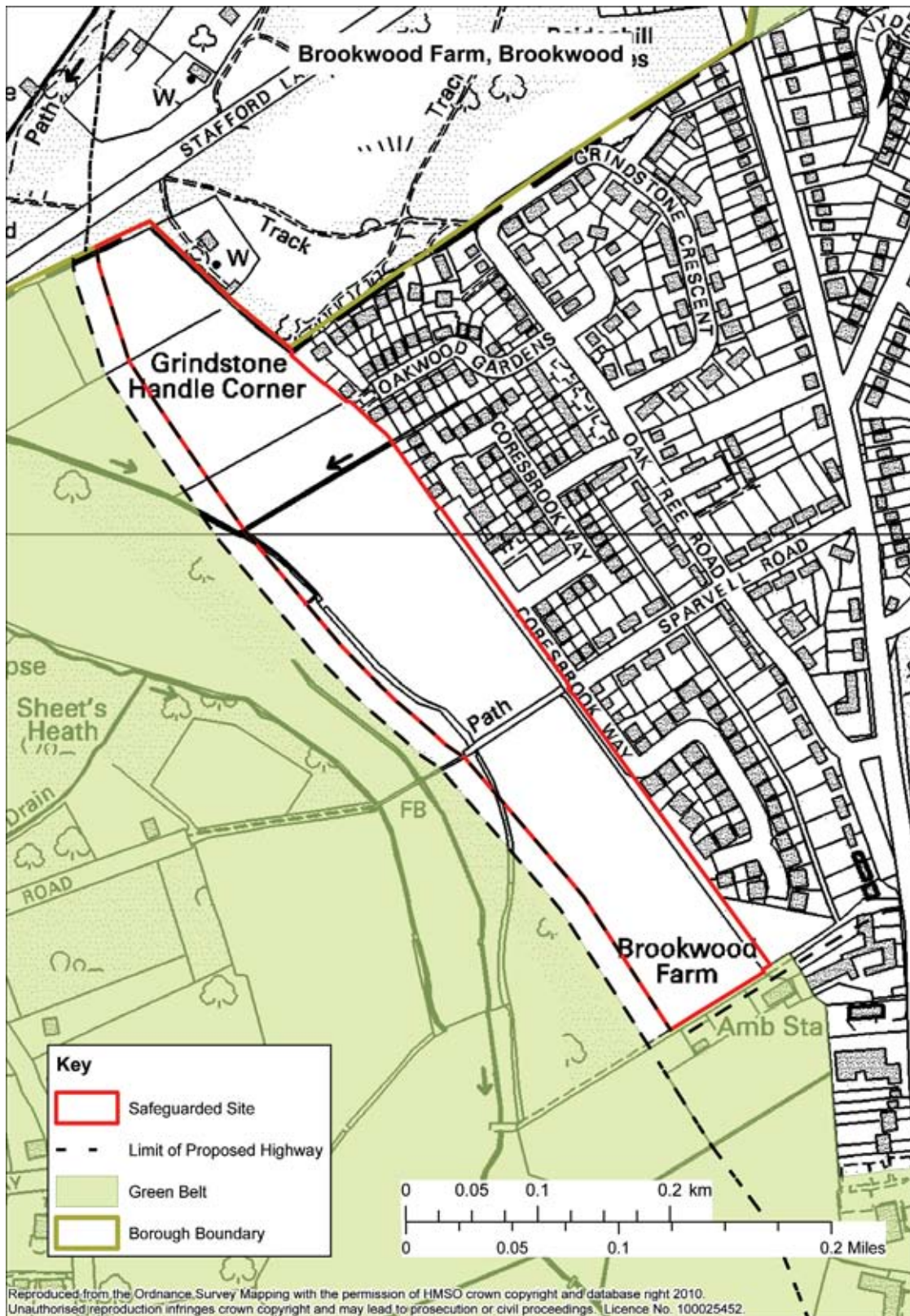


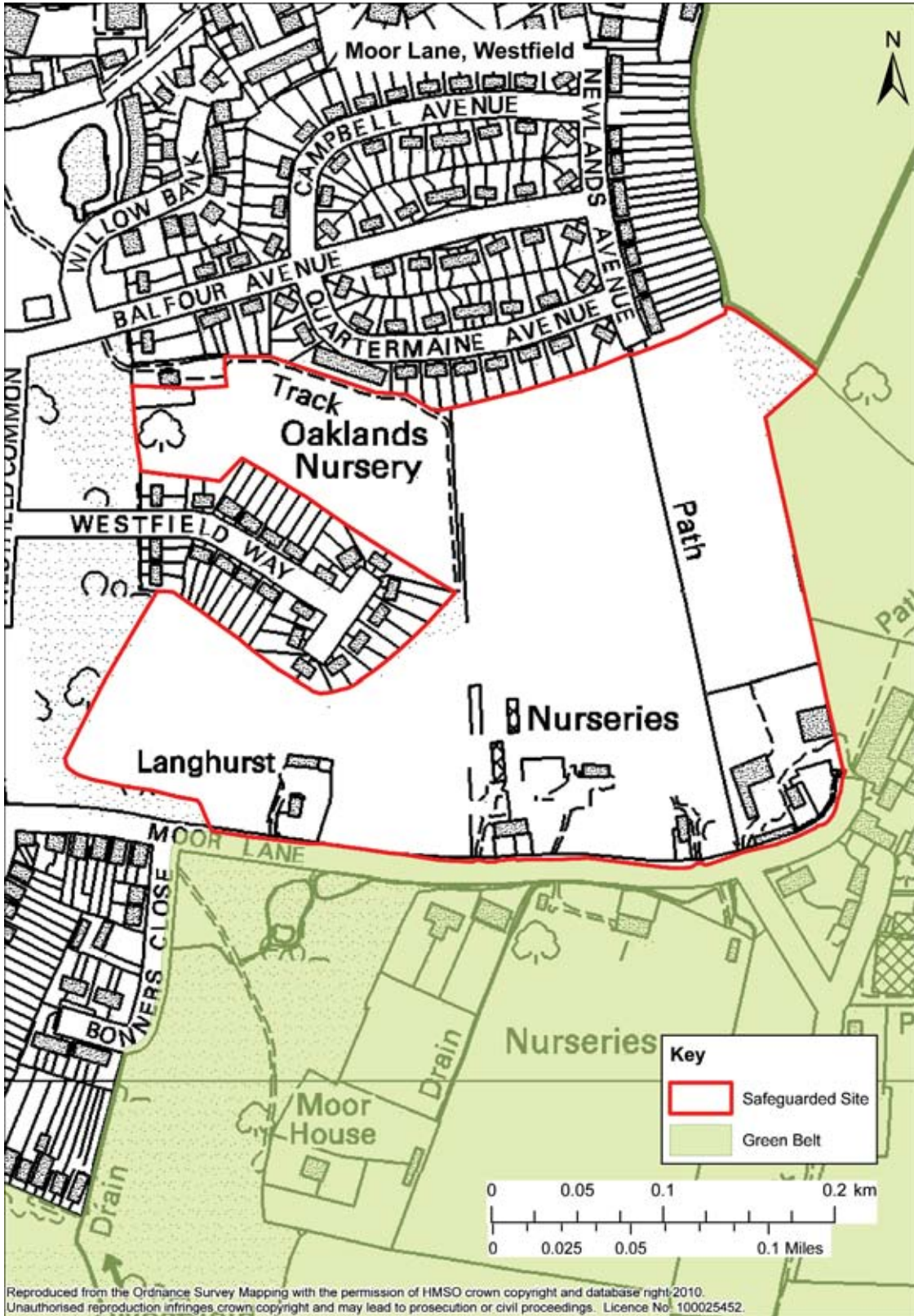
- Biodiversity & Planning In Surrey, November 2010 (Surrey Wildlife Trust and Surrey Biodiversity Partnership)
- Character Study (October 2010)
- Climate Change Study (June 2010)
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (July 2011)
- Economic Viability Assessment (2010)
- Economic Viability Assessment (July 2010)
- Employment Land Review - Employment Position Paper (2010)
- Employment Land Review – Market Appraisal (April 2010)
- Gypsies and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (April 2007)
- Habitats Regulation Assessment (June 2011)
- Heritage of Woking – An Historic Conservation Compendium, 2000, produced by Woking Borough Council
- Housing Land Supply Position Statement (2010 and 2011)
- Housing Topic Paper (2010)
- Infrastructure Requirements Study (2006)
- Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Audit (2008)
- Population Paper (2010).
- Social and Community Facilities Audit (July 2011)
- Social and Community Infrastructure Requirements Study (2006)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (July 2009)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009, 2010 and 2011)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2009)
- Surrey Hotel Futures (September 2004)
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Study, 2009
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (June 2010 and July 2011)
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy (2010-2015)
- The Surrey Transport Plan (Local Transport Plan Third Edition – LTP3), (2011)
- Town, District and Local Centres Study (September 2009)
- Transport and Accessibility Topic Paper (2011)
- Transport Assessment (2010)
- Transport Assessment (June 2010)
- Woking and Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy (2006 and 2010)

All of the above documents can be viewed on the Council's website www.woking.gov.uk/woking2027



Appendix 2: Site boundaries

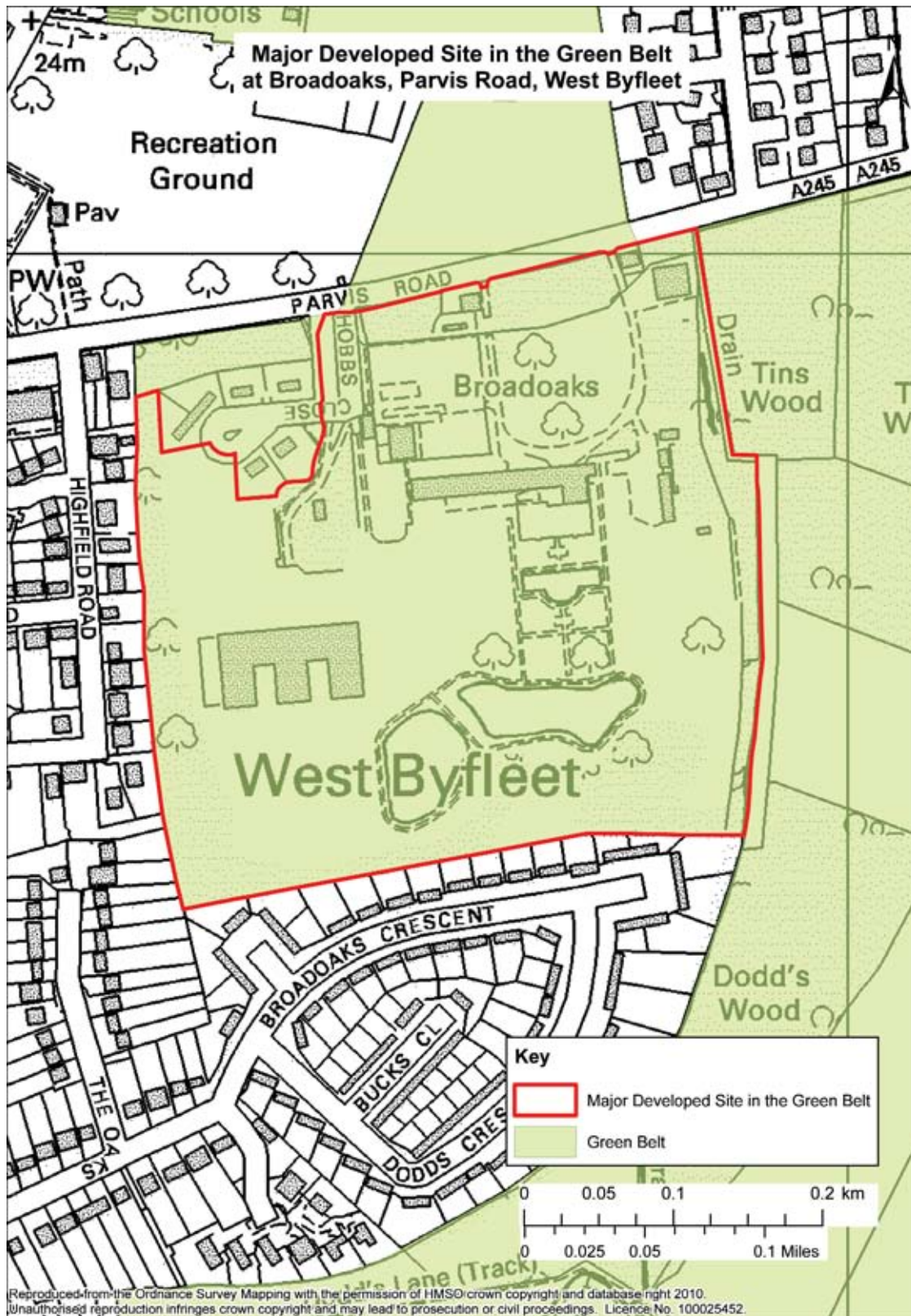


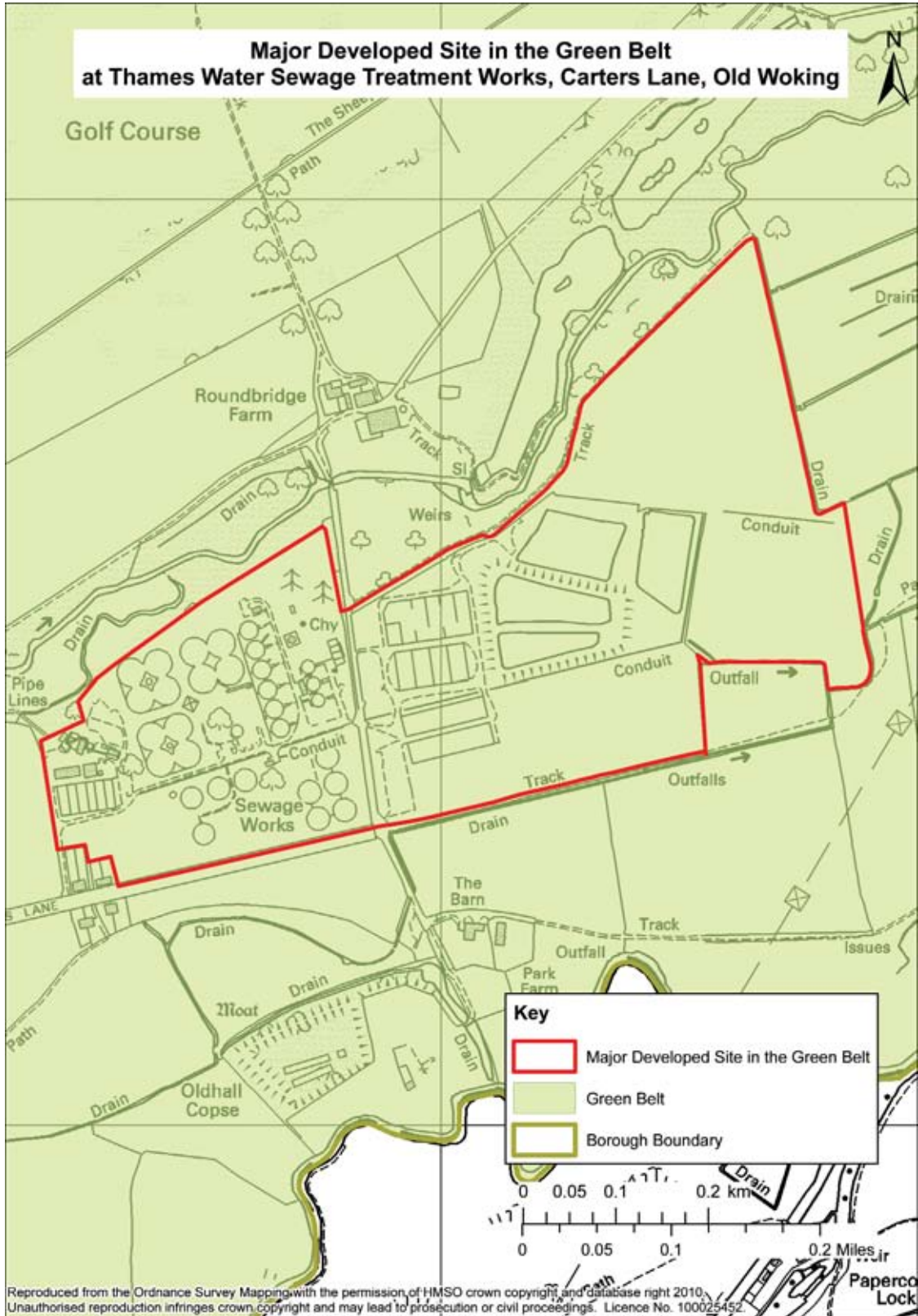


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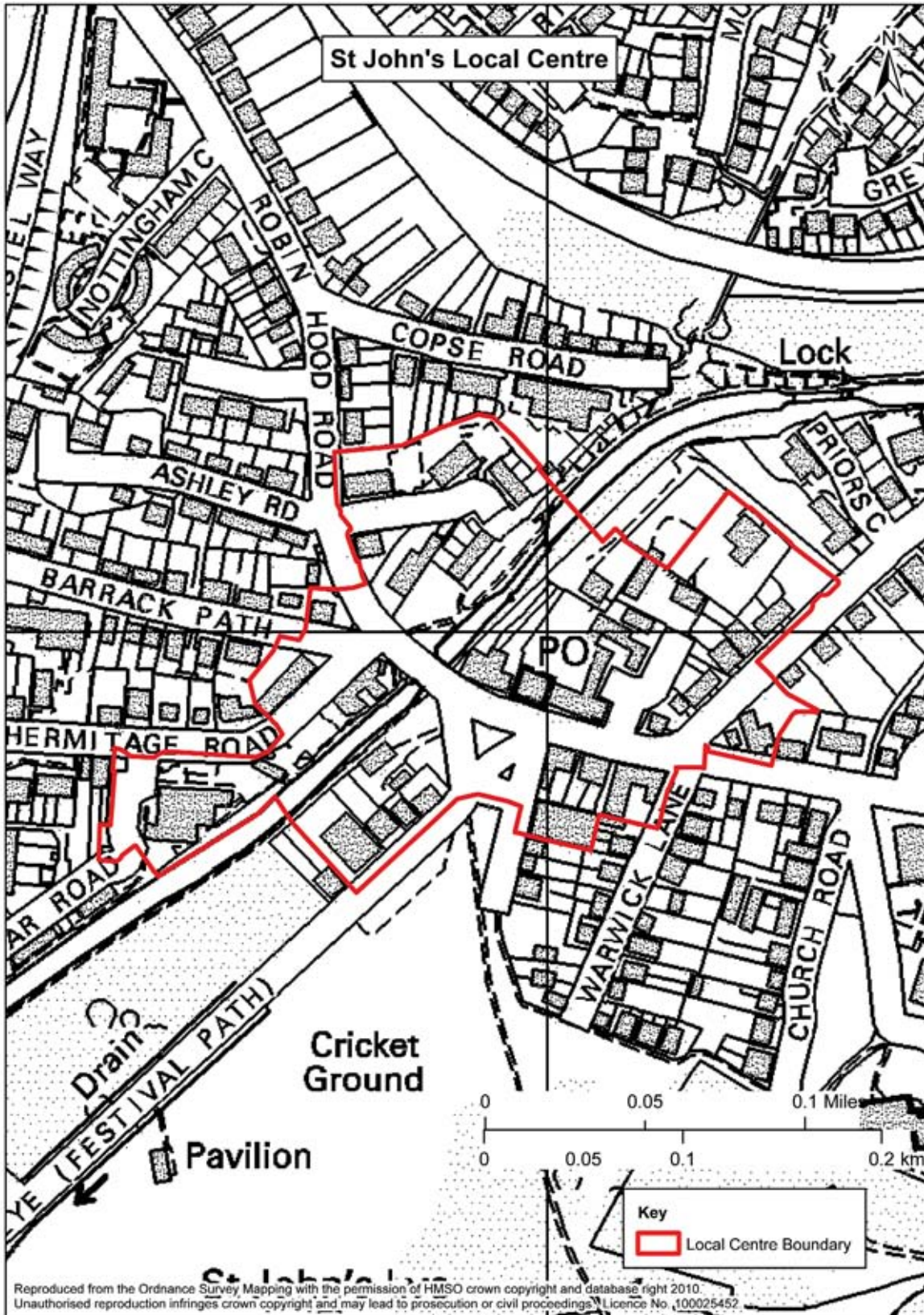


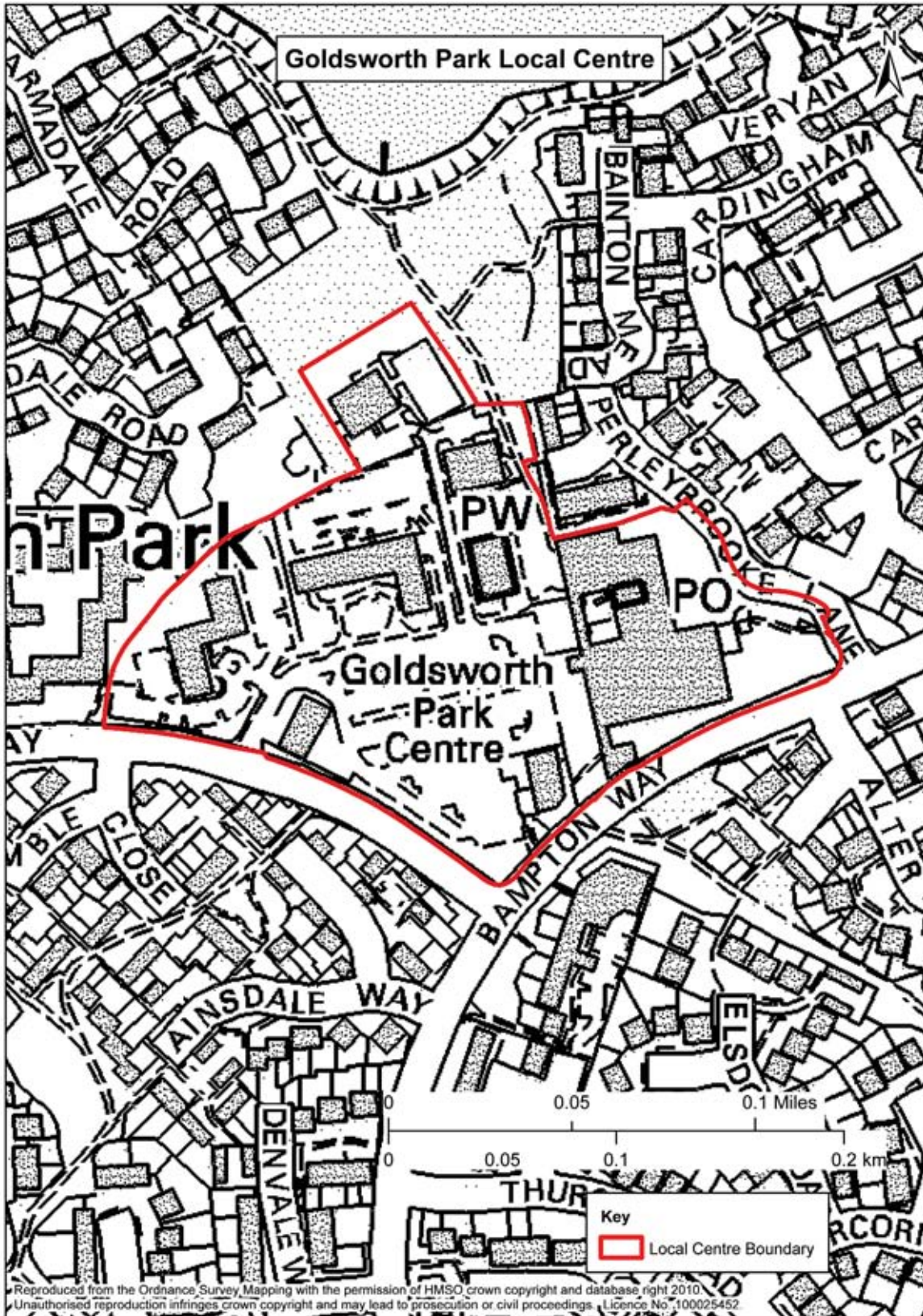
Appendix 2: Site boundaries



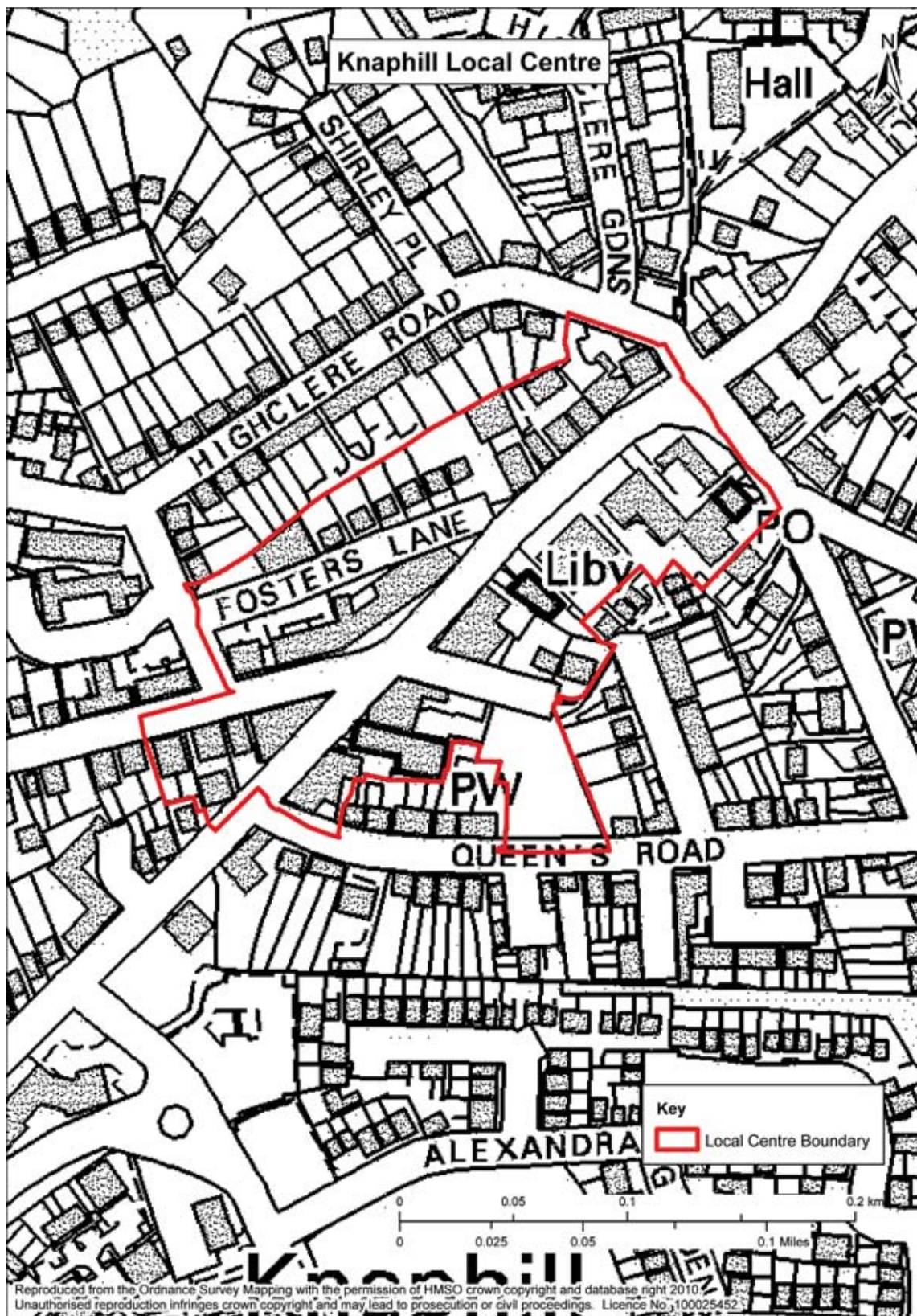


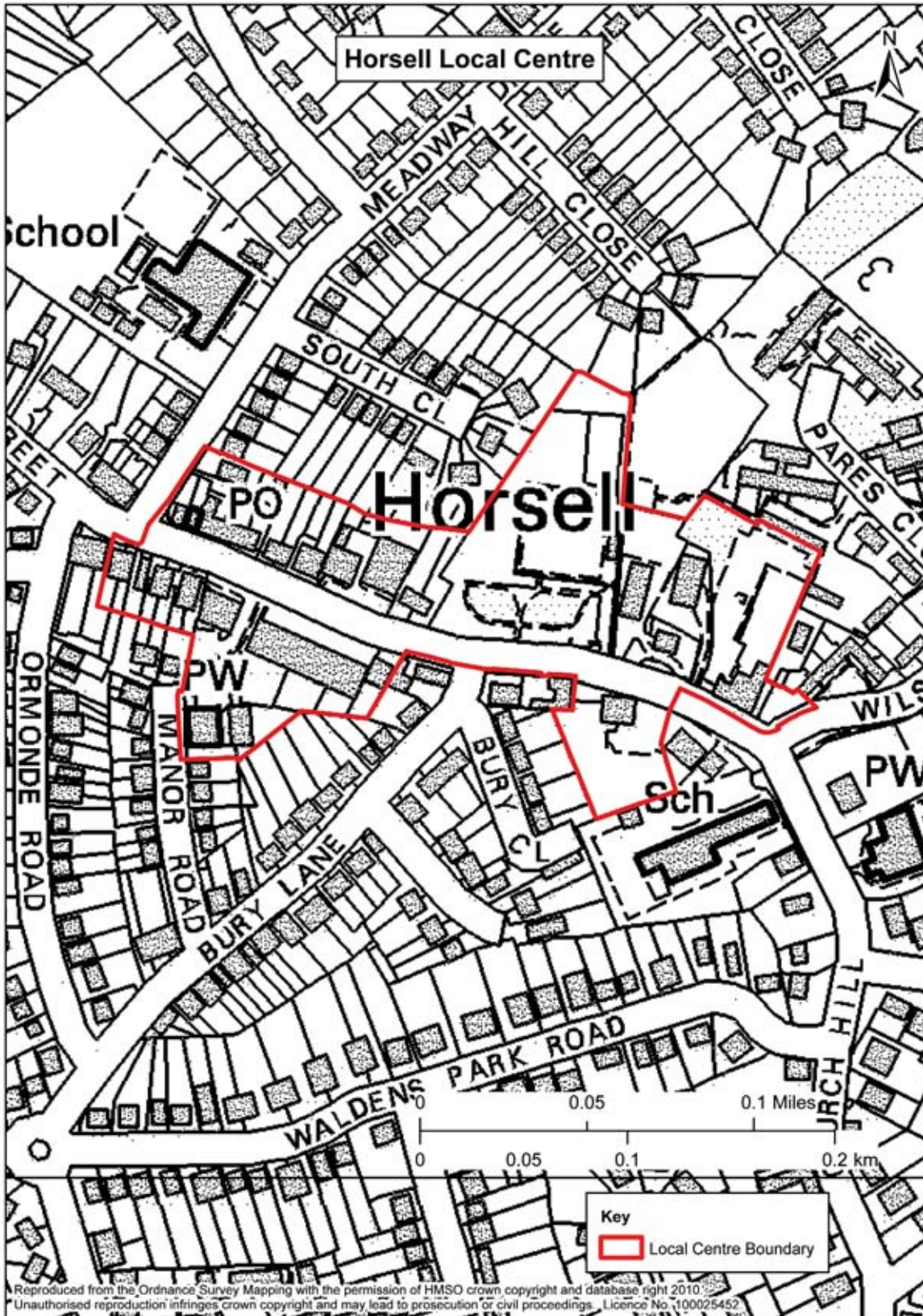
Appendix 3: Town, District and Local Centre boundaries





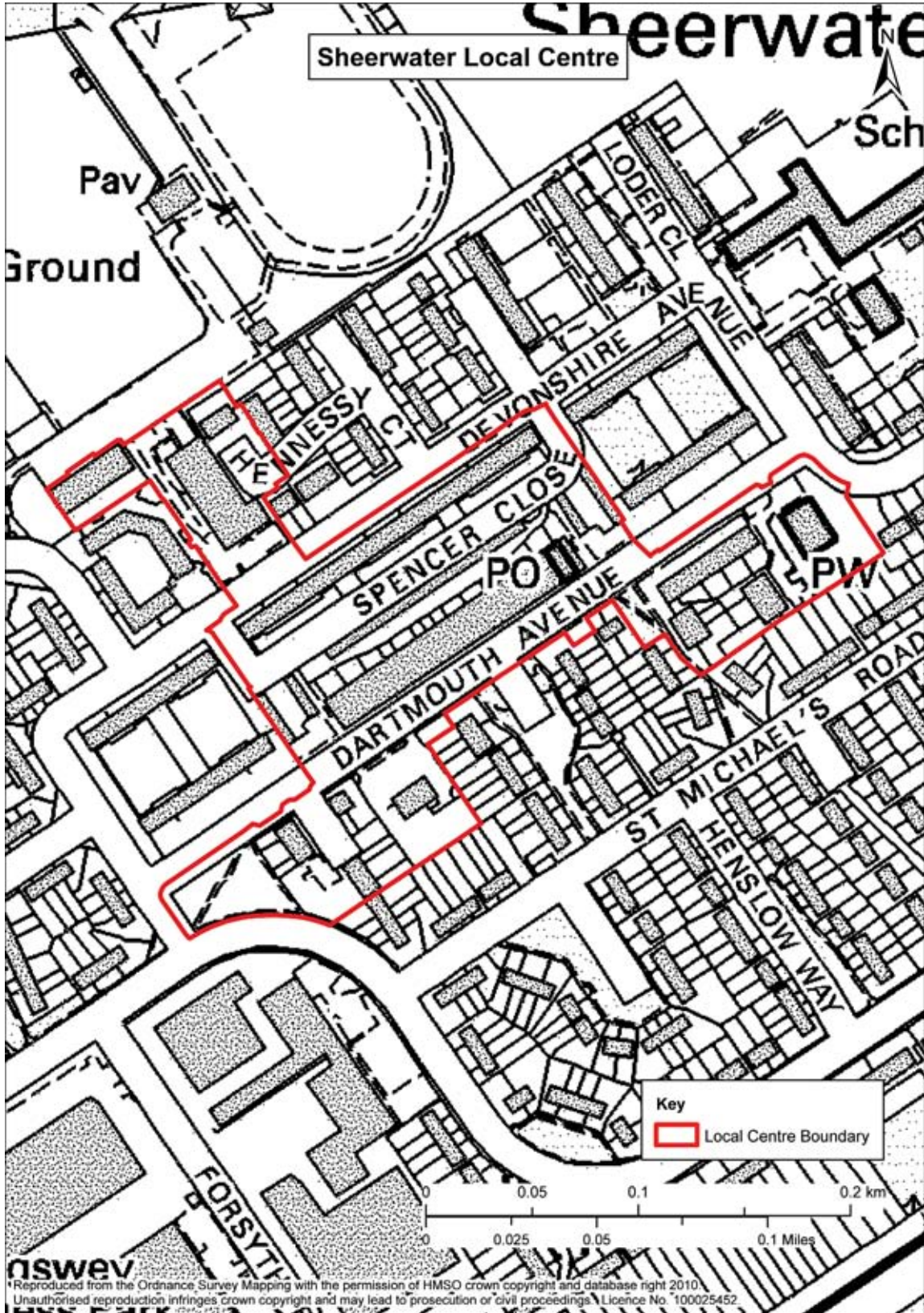
Appendix 3: Town, District and Local Centre boundaries



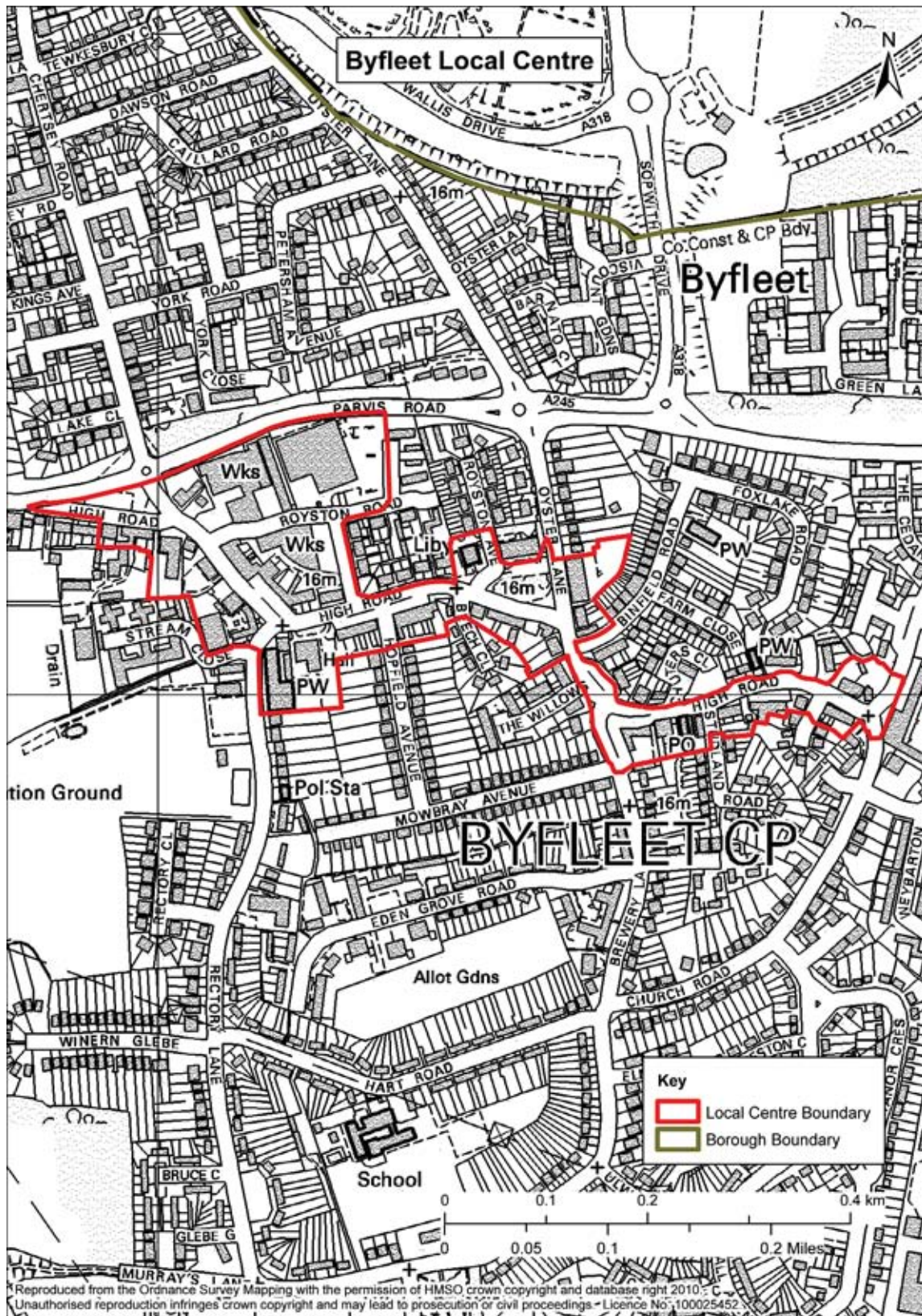


Appendix 3: Town, District and Local Centre boundaries



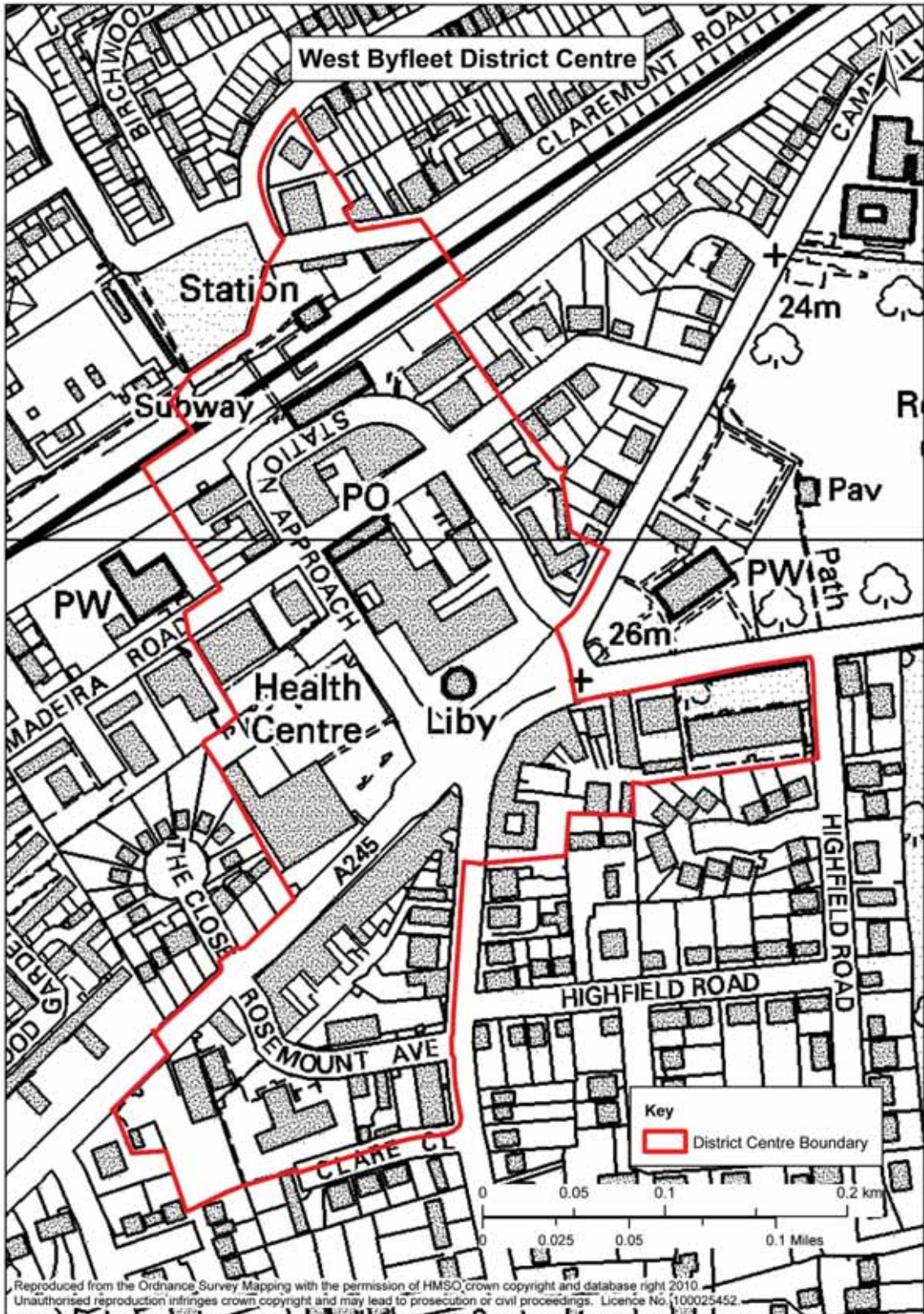


Appendix 3: Town, District and Local Centre boundaries

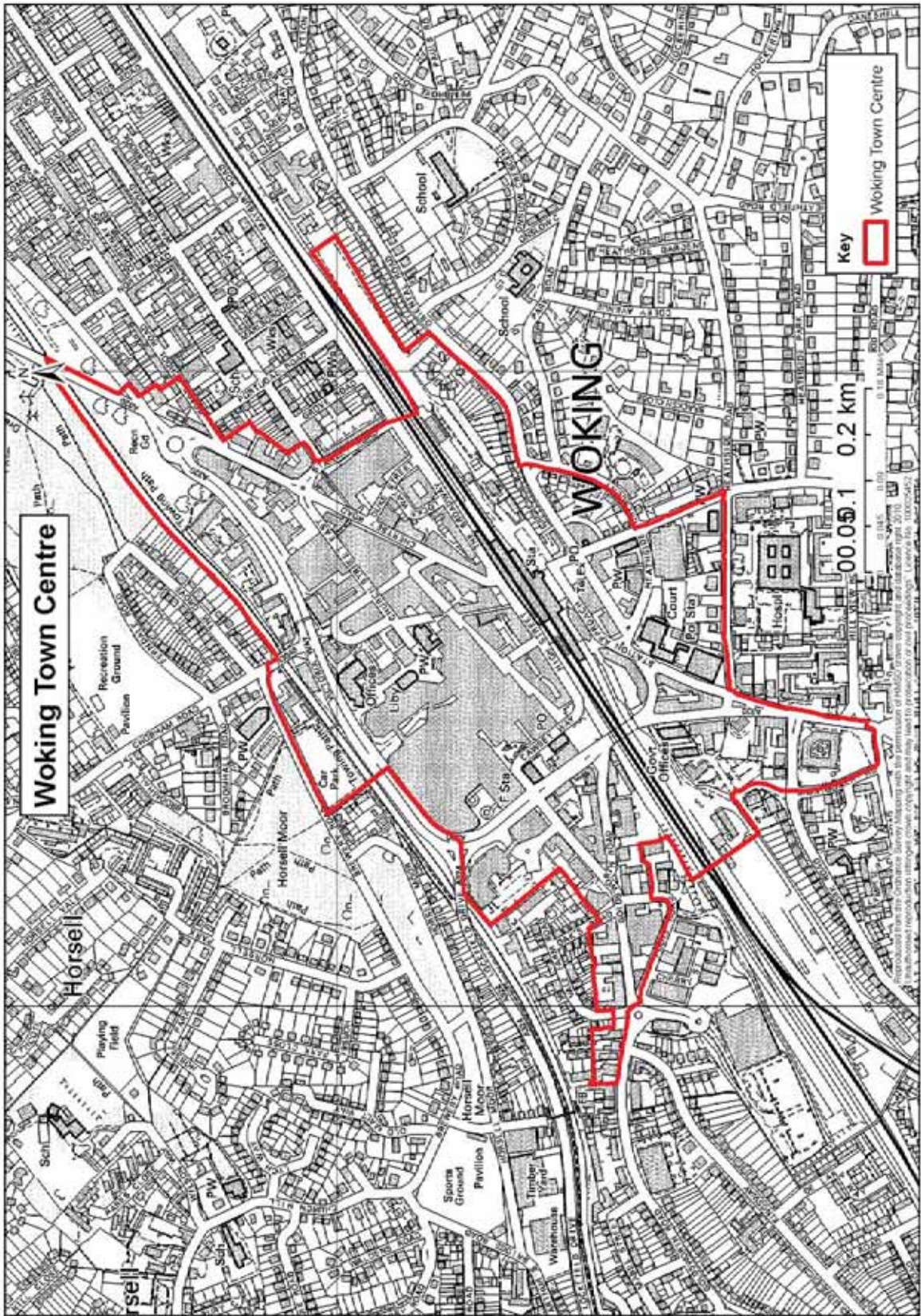


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Appendix 3: Town, District and Local Centre boundaries







Core Strategy

Woking Local Development Framework



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