

# Core Strategy 2007



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# Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Local Development Framework

## Foreword



Councillor Keith Mann  
Chairman -  
Strategy and  
Resources Committee



David Smith  
Chief Executive

Planning shapes the places where people live and work, and the environment we live in. The Epsom and Ewell Development Framework presents a real opportunity to improve the way we do things in the future - the way we use land, the way we build, the way Epsom town centre and local centres will develop and change, and how planning decisions we take will fit in with other agreed plans and strategies.

We are determined that “sustainability” becomes the core principle underpinning our decisions. At the heart of sustainable development is the concept of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. It means an approach which will help us meet the environmental, social and economic challenges that face us all.

The Core Strategy is the first part of the new development framework we are now preparing under the revised planning system. It provides a long term planning vision for the Borough and the overall framework in which more detailed plans will be drawn up and decisions made. It contains the broad planning strategy aimed at meeting that vision, and contains core strategic policies which we believe will provide sound guidance for the next fifteen years. It draws on the work that’s already been done on the Borough’s Community Strategy.

The involvement of the local community and many other organisations and groups helped us shape the strategy in this document. We are very grateful for the contributions made throughout the development planning process. An independent public examination took place between July 2006 and May 2007 and we were delighted that the appointed independent Inspector found the document sound.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council adopted the Core Strategy on 24 July 2007. It now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Borough.



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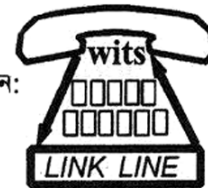
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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 *What is the Epsom and Ewell Local Development Framework?*

1.1.1 The Epsom and Ewell Local Development Framework (LDF) is a new way of planning the future of the Borough. It will consist of a folder of documents, produced at different times (called 'local development documents') to guide development and land use in the Borough. These documents will eventually replace the Epsom and Ewell District-wide Local Plan. The timetable for preparing these documents and what they will deal with is set out in a published work programme (the 'Local Development Scheme').

1.1.2 What is significant about the new style plans is that they go beyond traditional land use plans by bringing together and integrating policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which can influence the nature of places and how they function. This means, for example, a much closer working relationship with other agencies and organisations, and particularly members of the Local Strategic Partnership, in the development of a spatial planning approach for the Borough.

1.1.3 The Core Strategy is one of these new planning documents. It identifies the key issues and the social, economic and environmental objectives for the future development of the Borough up to 2022, and a strategy to achieve them. It is central to the delivery of sustainable development and creating sustainable communities. However it does not deal with specific development sites, nor does it deal with the most detailed policy issues; these will follow in later documents. It contains a Key Diagram (at the end of the document) which shows the broad locations of development and the Borough's relationship with adjoining areas.

1.1.4 The other key documents will be:

**Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) -**

which will allocate the main development sites and identify areas to be protected from development or where special policies apply;

**Development Control Policies DPD -**

this will guide day to day decisions on planning applications;

**Area Action Plan DPD -**

this will cover development and conservation issues within Epsom town centre;

**Proposals Map -**

this will show sites and areas subject to the policies in the documents above and will be prepared in conjunction with the Site Allocations DPD;

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) -**

which will provide more detailed guidance on a range of issues, sites or wider areas, such as affordable housing, developer contributions and design;

**Statement of Community Involvement -**

setting out how the community can be involved in the new planning process.

## 1.2 *What stage have we reached and how did we get here?*

- 1.2.1 The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 24 July 2007.
- 1.2.2 To reach this stage we held consultations and public meetings over a 24 month period. An important part of that process was understanding the issues the Borough faces and considering alternative options before moving on to publish the Council's preferred options in January 2006. The responses we received at those stages informed our later decisions.
- 1.2.3 Sustainable development is at the core of policies contained in the plan. We are trying to achieve more sustainable development and more sustainable communities. To ensure that our proposals achieve this, the Core Strategy was subjected to a detailed 'sustainability appraisal' at each stage of its preparation to consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of the various options considered.
- 1.2.4 The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2006 for examination of its soundness by an independent Inspector. Public hearings took place in January 2007. The Inspector's binding report was published in May 2007 and required a number of changes to the document in order to make it sound. These have all been incorporated, and do not change the overall strategy.

Mark Berry  
Head of Planning  
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## **2** Issues facing Epsom and Ewell Borough and our Vision for the Future

### **2.1** *Context - existing policies and plans*

- 2.1.1 Epsom and Ewell's Local Development Framework is not being prepared in isolation. It is being developed in the context provided by other strategies, plans and policies at the national, regional and local level. These have had an important influence over the form and content of this Core Strategy.
- 2.1.2 At the national level, policy is set out in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. At the regional level planning guidance is set out in Regional Planning Guidance Note 9: South East England (RPG9), and in the emerging regional spatial strategy, the South East Plan, which was submitted to Government in March 2006. Epsom and Ewell is located in the "London Fringe" sub-region within the South East Plan.
- 2.1.3 At a more local level, the Surrey Structure Plan (2004) contains policies which will remain a material planning consideration until superseded by the South East Plan (probably in 2008). The Epsom and Ewell District-wide Local Plan (2000) also contains policies which will remain in force until at least September 2007 and which represent a material planning consideration in development control. The Council will progressively bring forward local development documents which will eventually replace the Proposals Map and those retained policies in the current local plan.
- 2.1.4 Ultimately the development plan for the Borough will comprise the South East Plan, the Council's Local Development Framework, and the Minerals and Waste Development Framework prepared by Surrey County Council.
- 2.1.5 Other plans and strategies that have influenced the development of this Core Strategy include the Surrey Local Transport Plan, the Epsom and Ewell Community Strategy, and the Council's Corporate Plan and Key Priorities.
- 2.1.6 A full list of plans and strategies that have been used in the preparation of this Core Strategy is contained in a supporting document, available on the Council's website.

### **2.2** *The Evidence Base*

- 2.2.1 In preparing the Core Strategy we have taken into account what we understand the needs of the local community to be, and the important issues that the new plan needs to address. We have done this in a number of ways:
- ❑ By assessing the national and regional framework which provides the context for this document. In particular the emerging South East Plan provides the regional and sub-regional basis that we should work within, and sets out how much housing needs to be provided within the Borough.
  - ❑ By consulting local people and organisations as part of the earlier stages of the document, in particular at the "Issues and Options" and "Preferred Options" stages. In addition we have worked with the Local Strategic Partnership and drawn from the Community Strategy and its annual action plans, in order to help define the issues the Council should currently

be addressing. Parallel work on the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, based on the results of focus groups held with local residents, and with the Citizens' Panel, has helped ensure policies take account of the needs and aspirations of local people.

- ❑ Linked to the implementation of the Community Strategy, we have consulted with other organisations involved in providing local services to establish how they are meeting local needs and to ensure that the plan can integrate its own spatial proposals with those of others.
- ❑ By gathering information about the characteristics of the Borough and where necessary by carrying out our own studies (or commissioning others to carry them out), to understand particular issues in greater depth such as the Housing Needs Study and the Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Assessment of Local Needs.

## 2.3 *The Main Issues*

2.3.1 From our work on the plan and from the responses we have received from earlier engagement with the community, there are clearly a number of key issues facing the Borough. These are described below. The purpose of this Core Strategy is to set out the broad policies to address them.

2.3.2 From our background work we believe the key issues are:

- ❑ Epsom and Ewell has a diverse and ageing population with a range of housing needs, and an economy which needs a local workforce to help reduce longer-distance out commuting. Local house prices are increasingly beyond the means of key workers and local people. As a consequence many first time buyers and lower income households find it difficult to gain a foothold in the local housing market. There is a diverse range of needs for different sizes and types of housing across the Borough, but the provision of affordable housing is a priority need. *How can the right types of homes be provided in the right place, within the context of significant Green Belt and environmental constraints?*
- ❑ Epsom and Ewell has a thriving local economy although considerable pressure is placed on the Borough because of its proximity to London and the good connections it enjoys with neighbouring areas. More workers exist in the Borough's population than jobs available locally, although some businesses have problems recruiting suitable staff. Unemployment is low in the Borough, although this may mask local variations. The standard of premises and the quality of employment land is variable, with some which are not necessarily suitable for the needs of modern business. *Against this background, how can planning policy assist the reduction of longer distance commuting and the maintenance and development of a vibrant local employment market?*
- ❑ The Borough has a high environmental quality which is much appreciated by both residents and visitors. A significant proportion of the area is Green Belt which tightly constrains the scope for outward expansion of the built up areas. Within the built up areas development is already dense and the attractive character of many established residential areas depends on the balance that exists between built form and landscape. However at the same time the area is subject to strong development pressures, particularly for new housebuilding. *How is the quality of the environment to be protected against these pressures, while improvements are made to the other areas that need them?*
- ❑ For many people the provision of community facilities and access to open space are key concerns. Some areas are deficient in leisure or recreational provision, or in access to

open space. In other areas there is a surplus. *Which are the facilities that should be safeguarded and how are needs for new community, sport and recreation facilities to be met?*

- ❑ Although the Borough is generally affluent, this hides some areas of special need. Some social issues afflict certain groups within the population and lead to problems associated with anti-social behaviour, specific health needs in vulnerable groups, and shortages of facilities and services for minority ethnic groups, the young and the elderly. The Community Strategy concluded that many of these problems were particularly acute in specific locations (such as Court and Ruxley wards, and Epsom town centre). *How can the plan assist agencies in addressing these sorts of problem and the issues in the less affluent parts of the Borough?*
- ❑ While the quality of new development may be improving, there is potential to raise the quality still further, and to ensure that it contributes more significantly to meeting sustainability objectives. *How can policies ensure that higher quality sustainable environments are achieved and that the most efficient use is made of land and infrastructure which minimises the use of scarce resources and energy?*
- ❑ Epsom town centre provides a good range of facilities and services, and is currently undergoing a period of change and development. While providing an attractive environment for the shopper and visitor, traffic congestion and other factors can detract from the shopping experience and the enjoyment of other activities. *How should the town centre adapt to these changes, and remain a vibrant and focussed centre for retail, leisure and other day to day facilities?*
- ❑ While the future amount of new development will be governed by regional planning strategy, and will be constrained by local environmental factors, it will be important to ensure that what infrastructure improvements that are needed as a result of development are provided in good time. *How can policies ensure that this objective is achieved?*

## 2.4 *The Epsom and Ewell Community Strategy - “A bright future for the Borough”*

- 2.4.1 The Local Development Framework has a key role to play in setting out the spatial aspects of the Community Strategy and in providing a long term spatial vision for the local area. Epsom and Ewell’s Community Strategy was adopted in 2003 and is managed by the Local Strategic Partnership - a group of some twenty key interests from the statutory, business and voluntary sectors of the community. The strategy is founded on the needs and aspirations of local people, while acknowledging the importance of protecting the interests of future generations. Its stated vision is to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the Borough by balancing environmental, social and economic factors, and it seeks to achieve this by setting out a series of key themes.
- 2.4.2 The two overarching themes adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership are - creating opportunities for all, and supporting a society that recognises the needs of future generations. Seven further sub-themes are developed which reflect the priorities of the LSP:
  - ❑ a caring society and thriving economic community
  - ❑ a protected and improved environment
  - ❑ a safe society
  - ❑ a healthy society

- a harmonious and inclusive society
- communities working together
- supporting the voluntary and community sectors.

2.4.3 In 2005 the LSP adopted a more focussed approach to the community strategy work it oversees and monitors. It developed an annual action plan for its five priority areas which are:

- young people
- anti-social behaviour
- transportation and congestion
- quality of the environment
- health

2.4.4 As a result of further consultation with local residents, and a growing awareness of the relative importance placed by them on the various topics covered in the Community Strategy, the LSP has in addition chosen Epsom town centre as one of the areas for special focus in its action plans. The Partnership has been particularly concerned to reduce the problems caused by traffic congestion and to help ensure the town's long-term economic viability.

2.4.5 The themes of the Community Strategy are reflected throughout this document. Spatial planning policies contained in this Core Strategy, and in the other local development documents to be produced over the next few years, will therefore contribute to meeting the aspirations of the local community through supporting actions and initiatives promoted by the LSP. By working with the members of the Local Strategic Partnership, the Council can help ensure that it achieves a more integrated approach towards future development in Epsom and Ewell. This will be based upon a shared belief in sustainable development objectives and a shared desire to deliver an improved quality of life, and a stimulating and healthy environment for all.

## 2.5 *Our Vision - What are we planning for by 2022?*

2.5.1 Based on the evidence we have collected and on the issues identified above, the Core Strategy seeks to guide development in a way which reflects the key priorities for the Borough envisaged in the Community Strategy. The Core Strategy will seek to guide change in a way which reinforces those distinctive characteristics which make living and working in Epsom and Ewell something people do as a matter of conscious choice. It will guide development in a way that reflects their social, environmental and economic aspirations, while ensuring the needs of future generations are taken into account. Sustainability will be a key factor in decision making and in resource allocation.

2.5.2 By 2022 the strategy envisages the Borough as economically strong and a good place to live, work and visit ('working' within this context also includes those who study in the Borough). New development will support and enhance the attractiveness of local places, and be designed and located in a way that is safe, accessible and sustainable. There will be greater biodiversity, more effective use will be made of natural resources, and carbon dioxide emissions will have been reduced. The Green Belt countryside surrounding Epsom will continue to retain its character and quality, define the extent of the Borough's built up areas, and provide a special experience for residents and visitors.

2.5.3 Epsom town centre will have retained the best of its character, and will be an even more attractive place in which to move around on foot and to shop. The unpleasant impacts of

traffic will have been reduced and the town will be a vibrant centre meeting the day to day needs of those who live or work in the town, or who visit it for the range of services and facilities it can provide. It will sustain thriving day time and night time economies. Ewell village centre will have retained its unique identity and incorporated positive regeneration and change in the interests of its longer term vitality, while other local centres such as Stoneleigh will continue to serve their nearby communities.

- 2.5.4 The conversion and redevelopment of the remaining former hospital sites to the west of Epsom will have created attractive and thriving living environments, in a unique rural setting. Within the urban areas the open spaces which give the Borough its distinctive appeal will continue to be positively managed and provide important benefits to local residents. More affordable housing will have been provided throughout the Borough to meet local housing needs, while the special character of the existing residential neighbourhoods will be protected as far as possible.

## 2.6 *Our Aims and Objectives*

- 2.6.1 In preparing the Core Strategy we presented a number of key objectives. These have been developed during the course of the consultation on the preferred options and again following the responses we received. They are now targeted at four broad aims:

- Conserving resources
- Creating a quality environment and special places
- Addressing community needs - now and in the future
- Encouraging a prosperous economy

- 2.6.2 We believe our vision - that development should be achieved in accordance with the principles of sustainability and the four broad aims above - can be delivered through pursuing the following objectives:

- making sure that sufficient suitable land is identified through the development plan for meeting the regional and local requirements for housing and employment, and maintaining a suitable mix of premises to meet the needs of local business;
- focussing development on previously developed land within the built up area or in the hospital cluster, rather than on green field releases, and ensuring it is located where access to services can be secured and where it can make the most efficient use of the site;
- meeting the diverse social needs of our communities and in particular meeting the needs for affordable housing and for those with a nomadic way of life;
- ensuring the necessary infrastructure and services are provided to support communities, and as an integral part of new development wherever possible;
- protecting and improving community, recreational and cultural facilities, especially ones that cater for young people and the elderly, and maximising their accessibility;
- conserving and improving the natural landscape, the historic built environment and local biodiversity, and protecting designated areas of special importance;
- protecting the Green Belt and maintaining the separate identity of neighbourhoods;
- ensuring all aspects of new developments accord with the principles of good design, create safe and inclusive places, and contribute positively towards local distinctiveness;

- ❑ ensuring new development incorporates sustainable building principles and high standards of energy efficiency;
- ❑ protecting and enhancing open spaces, and creating new ones, and improving public access to them in the interests of residents, workers and visitors;
- ❑ enhancing the vitality and viability of Epsom town centre, Ewell village and Stoneleigh local centres, and other local centres serving the Borough's communities;
- ❑ minimising the need to travel and encouraging opportunities for trips to be made by alternative modes of travel to the motor car;
- ❑ encouraging highway safety and environmental improvement measures which reduce the detrimental impacts of high traffic volumes.

## 3 Core Strategic Policies

### Creating Sustainable Communities in the Borough

#### 3.1 *Our Approach*

- 3.1.1 The overarching principle for this strategy document, and for the documents that follow as part of the Epsom and Ewell Local Development Framework, is to achieve sustainable development. The spatial strategy proposed for Epsom and Ewell Borough has an essential role to play in delivering the two key themes of the Community Strategy - creating opportunities for all and ensuring society recognises the needs of future generations.
- 3.1.2 Achieving sustainable communities requires consideration of social and economic as well as environmental factors. The Council's Sustainability Policy Statement (adopted in 2005) confirms that the Council's intention is to promote and control development in the Borough so as to protect and enhance the quality of life, and improve economic and social opportunities, in line with the objectives of sustainability.
- 3.1.3 This Core Strategy document will help assist in achieving the right balance between protecting and improving the quality of life of the community, while ensuring that all necessary change is sustainable in the interests of future generations. The Borough has to accommodate development and growth but this will be in the context provided by the distinctive local character of the area, and the Council's intention to protect and enhance the quality of the natural and built environment of Epsom and Ewell.
- 3.1.4 Delivering the vision of the Community Strategy will depend on the work of many organisations and individuals. However, based on our vision and our objectives for the Borough, this Core Strategy introduces policy principles on which sustainable development will be achieved. These form the basis on which the Core Strategy policies have been prepared and include:
- ❑ protecting the most valued landscapes and built environment (**Policies CS2, CS3 and CS4**);
  - ❑ applying positive policies on issues such as design and conservation in order to improve the local environment, or in some locations to counter the possible impact of declining environmental quality (**Policy CS5**);
  - ❑ minimising the use of natural resources and energy, reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting more "sustainable" forms of building (**Policy CS6**);
  - ❑ providing for the necessary new housing, employment and other development in the Borough in sustainable locations within the built up areas and particularly through the re-use of previously-developed land (**Policies CS7 and CS8**);
  - ❑ meeting the diverse existing and future needs of local communities for example by improving access to facilities, and in particular to housing (**Policies CS9 and CS10**);
  - ❑ maintaining a diverse and prosperous economy with an improved balance between local jobs and local labour supply (**Policy CS11**);
  - ❑ supporting the provision of services, facilities and infrastructure which meet the Borough's needs - where appropriate through contributions from developers, or by other means (**Policies CS12**);

- ❑ promoting an inclusive and caring society, supporting the provision of community facilities (including high quality education and health facilities), and encouraging development which meets those requirements arising from people with special needs, and in particular from the elderly and from young people (**Policy CS13**);
- ❑ safeguarding the role and function of Epsom town centre and of local centres (**Policies CS14 and CS15**);
- ❑ minimising the effect of a growth in travel by private car through providing for choice in travel modes, assisting managing travel demand through mechanisms such as parking policy, and supporting the improvement of the environment for walking and cycling (**Policy CS16**).

3.1.5 The proposed strategy in this document reflects these principles. We did as far as possible explore alternative approaches, including not controlling development within the Green Belt to the extent proposed, and allowing expansion of the built up areas. Our conclusion is that the right approach is one which combines minimising the adverse effects of change, and seeking positive improvements from development wherever possible, while overall encouraging better quality development and more sustainable approaches to construction.

3.1.6 The following overarching principle will therefore apply to new development.

#### **Policy CS 1**

**The Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvements necessary to achieve sustainable development - both in Epsom and Ewell, and more widely. Changes should protect and enhance the natural and built environments of the Borough and should achieve high quality sustainable environments for the present, and protect the quality of life of future, generations.**

3.1.7 This overarching policy applies to all development. The Core Strategic Policies that follow provide the framework for its delivery.



## Conserving and Enhancing Open Space and Landscape Character

### 3.2 *Background*

- 3.2.1 The natural environment of the Borough is greatly valued by both local residents and visitors. About one half of the Borough comprises open space - much of it Metropolitan Green Belt or protected in other ways. It helps define the character of the Borough and it plays a significant role in achieving opportunities for improvement in health and in the quality of life sought by the Community Strategy and Health Strategy. Its distinctive visual characteristics, habitats and species should be carefully guarded and maintained. Policies are therefore aimed at safeguarding this valuable resource, ensuring a suitable quantity and quality of green space is maintained, while providing protection from harm through inappropriate development. As well as offering protection, wherever possible the plan will promote opportunities to improve the appearance of the local environment in line with explicit objectives in both the Council's Corporate Plan and the Borough's Community Strategy.

### 3.3 *Green Belt*

- 3.3.1 The designated Green Belt covers some 42% of the area of the Borough and its boundaries have been defined in previous local plans. The general extent of the Green Belt is shown on the key diagram. Government policies emphasise that the fundamental objective of Green Belts is to prevent urban sprawl, by keeping land permanently open. It is therefore a significant spatial issue in defining the extent of the built up area and in constraining development in the Borough. As one of the first extensive areas of open space on the southern edge of the Metropolitan area of London, the Green Belt is highly accessible to the urban population. It plays an essential role in providing recreational opportunity, securing the quality of the Borough's landscape setting, and in creating the special identity of the area.
- 3.3.2 Land uses within the Green Belt are dominated by a small number of large-space users. It provides protection for nature conservation, acting as a valuable reservoir for biodiversity and provides numerous opportunities for a variety of sport and recreational activities. Approximately 40% of the Green Belt comprises public open space, including Epsom Downs, Horton Country Park and Epsom Common.
- 3.3.3 Epsom has long been associated with horse racing and the Green Belt is home to the nationally important Epsom racecourse and its associated buildings, and to facilities for the local racehorse training industry. There are a number of other developed sites within its boundaries including two important educational establishments.
- 3.3.4 Also within the Green Belt lies the 'hospital cluster'; this comprises five large, former psychiatric hospitals (the construction of which pre-dated the designation of the Green Belt). The closure of these hospitals has provided an opportunity for their conversion and redevelopment, predominantly for housing. In the context of policies of development constraint, they have formed an important strategic development resource over the last decade. Schemes involving two of the hospital sites have been completed, while a third is currently underway. The two remaining undeveloped hospital sites (West Park and St Ebba's), and the remainder of the partly-developed Horton site, form an important part of this spatial strategy. They will provide an important development resource over the first

decade of this plan. Their location is shown on the key diagram.

- 3.3.5 As the Green Belt is such an important feature of national and local policy, it is essential that its permanence is safeguarded and its quality maintained. Such aims were generally supported in the 'Preferred Options' paper and also performed well in the sustainability appraisal. In line with Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts, the submitted South East Plan (London Fringe Sub-Region policies) and the Surrey Structure Plan, it is envisaged that the extent of the Green Belt will be maintained without alteration to its boundary for the foreseeable future.
- 3.3.6 As with most areas in the South East, green space is facing considerable development pressure, and policies must therefore be robust to protect against this. The Council is satisfied from its housing potential assessment (Surrey Housing Potential Study - September 2005) that the Borough can accommodate the development requirements arising from its housing land targets within the built up areas. The Council has therefore not identified any exceptional circumstances which might justify the removal of land from the Green Belt. This position will be tested under the "plan, monitor and manage" regime to ensure the level of development is sustainable in the longer term.
- 3.3.7 With such a diverse mix of uses in the Green Belt it is important that it remains a quality, attractive and accessible environment. Established programmes like the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project, and new initiatives such as the 'Green Arc', will improve management of the Green Belt resource, seeking improvements in the landscape, biodiversity and conservation value of the area and helping to improve access. The Council will offer its support to such projects, which are aimed at promoting the Green Belt as a multi-functional resource, and will endeavour to ensure that its policies and strategies integrate with them.

#### **Policy CS 2**

**To ensure the Green Belt continues to serve its key functions, its existing general extent will be maintained and, within its boundaries, strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development as defined by Government policy.**

- 3.3.8 The Site Allocations DPD will examine and define the precise Green Belt boundary and, identify 'major developed sites' within the Green Belt where infilling or redevelopment may be permitted. Those sites which have not already been implemented will be carried forward from the adopted local plan and relevant policies developed. It is not envisaged that there will be any reduction in the extent of the Green Belt from that contained in the adopted local plan. Policies to prevent inappropriate development within the Green Belt, and guidance relating to 'major developed sites' and to other developments within the Green Belt, will be contained in the Development Control Policies DPD.

#### **Indicators**

- Number and type of planning permissions granted in the Green Belt

#### **Target**

- All development allowed in Green Belt meets criteria in national policy

#### **Delivery Mechanism**

- Through development control decisions based on Green Belt policy and boundaries defined on the Proposals Map

## 3.4 *Biodiversity and Designated Nature Conservation Areas*

- 3.4.1 The term 'biodiversity' relates to the genetic, species and ecological richness of an area. Maintaining biodiversity helps to promote the stability, sustainability and resilience of ecosystems and is an important national objective. The Borough's location on the edge of the countryside is strategically important, with the Green Belt and the many green spaces within the built up areas acting as reservoirs for flora and fauna.
- 3.4.2 An important objective in conserving biodiversity is to avoid development that fragments existing habitats and, where possible, to create links to those that are already isolated. The Council will actively seek opportunities to increase biodiversity within the Borough, which will include, where possible, the creation of new habitats. A number of stretches of the River Hogsmill have been identified in the South London River Restoration Strategy as potential sites for river enhancement or restoration.
- 3.4.3 The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) proposed each Borough should develop its own action plan; the Epsom and Ewell Environment Forum, in partnership with the Council, is currently in the process of preparing one for the Borough. This plan will help to ensure that targets from the national and regional level are translated into effective action at the local level. The local BAP will contain information on protected species and valuable habitats that are found within the Borough. This document will provide a useful source of information for the LDF.
- 3.4.4 There are numerous designated areas within the Borough which offer protection to sites that are particularly valuable for nature conservation. At the national level, sites are designated for their contributions to biodiversity. These include 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSIs) of which the Borough has two:
- ❑ *Epsom Common* is located within the Green Belt and is managed as public open space by the Council. Due to its management history and drainage variations, this area supports a diversity of habitats, some rare, providing a rich community for breeding birds and nationally rare invertebrates. The whole of the Common has the potential to be designated as a National Nature Reserve.
  - ❑ *Stones Road Pond* is located within the urban area of Epsom, surrounded by semi-natural vegetation. This large deep pond is an important breeding locality for the great crested newt, and supports one of the largest colonies in the South East of England.
- 3.4.5 Other sites have been designated within the Borough as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs). These are of significant interest and they have been classified in accordance with their existing and potential nature conservation value. Grade 2 sites are of County-wide importance; English Nature has designated three areas of chalk grassland containing rare plants and invertebrates as Grade 2 sites. Additionally, Surrey Wildlife Trust has designated almost all of Nonsuch Park as being of County-wide importance. Grade 3 sites are of local significance and there are 17 such sites within the Borough, the majority being located within the Green Belt. The Council will work with the Wildlife Trust to ensure the designations remain up to date and that the areas are managed accordingly.
- 3.4.6 The Council has also designated a number of Local Nature Reserves which include Epsom Common, Horton Country Park and a substantial area surrounding the Hogsmill River. Two areas of ancient woodland (areas wooded since at least 1600) remain within the Horton Country Park and cover approximately eight hectares.

- 3.4.7 All these allocated areas will be offered protection appropriate to their level of designation. Development on these sites or in a locality which may result in damage to designated sites will be resisted to ensure their continued presence and value. Should the benefits of development in proximity to such areas clearly outweigh the impact, mitigation measures would be required to assist in maintaining the quality and value of the site.

### **Policy CS 3**

**The biodiversity of Epsom and Ewell will be conserved and enhanced through the support for measures which meet the objectives of national and local biodiversity action plans in terms of species and habitat.**

**Sites that are designated for their nature conservation attributes will be afforded protection appropriate to their designation.**

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ancient Woodland will be afforded the highest level of protection. Development which harms the scientific interest of these areas will not be permitted.**

**Development that would harm Grade 2, Grade 3 SNCIs or Local Nature Reserves will not be permitted unless:**

- **suitable mitigation measures are put in place, and**
- **it has been demonstrated that the benefits of a development would outweigh the harm caused.**

**Elsewhere, development that is detrimental to the Borough's biodiversity will be minimised, and where it does take place, adequate mitigating measures should be provided. Wherever possible, new development should contribute positively towards the Borough's biodiversity.**

- 3.4.8 As required by Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, the designated sites will be clearly defined on the Proposals Map accompanying the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.4.9 Further details on potential requirements for ecological surveys to be conducted for developments which may affect important habitats or species will be included in the Development Control Policies DPD. Further policies may also be introduced in future development plan documents following the production of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

#### **Indicators**

- % of SSSIs in favourable condition or improving
- Number and area of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (Grade 2), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (Grade 3), and ancient woodlands
- Number of new developments providing mitigation for loss of biodiversity or / and incorporating features to improve existing biodiversity

#### **Targets**

- 95% of the SSSIs should be in a favourable or recovering condition by 2010 (Government Public Service Agreement target)
- Appropriate targets will be developed in the Development Control Policies DPD, informed by the local Biodiversity Action Plan

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through development control decisions and negotiation (for mitigation measures)
- By the effective management of designated sites
- By maintaining up to date information on local biodiversity (including the value of contributions from previously developed land)
- Production of a local Biodiversity Action Plan

## 3.5 *Open Spaces and Green Infrastructure*

- 3.5.1 The Borough is fortunate in having a diverse mix of green spaces ranging from natural / semi natural areas to parks, gardens and formal recreational facilities. These open spaces and their landscaping provide relief from the density of urban form and contribute to an attractive urban character, appreciated by both residents and visitors. They distinguish Epsom and Ewell Borough from other places. These green spaces make a valuable contribution to people's health and well being and often have a multi-functional role, being havens for biodiversity as well as providing a range of leisure and recreational opportunities. They add to the diversity of the landscape and are a characteristic of the Borough. The large number of trees within them is recognised as a great asset.
- 3.5.2 Some of the larger open spaces within the Borough are considered to have a widespread rather than simply local significance. They have an important strategic role in separating distinct areas, acting as a buffer to development, and in helping define urban structure. These have been designated as 'Strategic Open Spaces' in the adopted local plan. As they are within the urban area they are not incorporated into the Green Belt, but play an equally valuable role. They contain sites for ecological protection and enhancement, as well as for recreation. They will be retained in this plan and their general locations are shown on the Key Diagram. Their precise boundaries will be shown on the Proposals Map which will be produced in conjunction with the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.5.3 The largest strategic open space is *Nonsuch Park*. As well as being a Grade 2 SNCI, it contains formal parkland of considerable archaeological and historic interest. Its attractive ambience and exceptional amenity value is valued by residents of the north and east of the Borough, and from nearby Cheam, who do not have such immediate access to the Downs and Epsom Common. The area surrounding the *Hogsmill River*, to the north of the Borough, fulfils a similar role to Nonsuch Park and is similarly designated. A large proportion of its area is also a Grade 3 SNCI and Local Nature Reserve.
- 3.5.4 Extensive support for options that generally protect the Borough's green spaces was given in response to the 'preferred options' consultation. Improving their environmental quality is a specific objective of the Community Strategy which recognises their social, recreational and environmental value. The Council will promote healthy living by aiming to provide the required quantity, and to improve the quality, of open space and the sports and recreational facilities they contain, along with improving access to them.
- 3.5.5 Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, requires local authorities to undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of residents and visitors in relation to open space, sports and recreational facilities. Consultants were appointed by the Council to undertake a comprehensive audit and review of recreational open space needs in accordance with PPG17. They reported in March 2006 and identified

the types of open space and their distribution and size in relation to locally identified needs, and suggested the standards of provision that should be set locally. The study identified where deficiencies exist and also where land did not contribute significantly and was potentially surplus to needs. The audit will provide guidelines for the levels of provision, and other proposals, which will be made in forthcoming development plan documents. The audit forms an important part of the evidence-base underpinning the policy approach in this Core Strategy.

- 3.5.6 The following policy is intended to help improve the quality, quantity and variety of open spaces available to the local community and provide clear and more focussed guidance to developers on what scale and form of contribution is expected from them.

#### **Policy CS 4**

**Emphasis will continue to be placed on protecting and enhancing the two Strategic Open Spaces of Nonsuch Park and the Hogsmill River, shown on the Key Diagram. These areas provide a particularly important recreational, amenity and wildlife resource.**

**Provision of the amount and type of open space within the Borough will have regard to the standards identified in the most recent Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Assessment of Local Needs. The required quantity and range of open spaces will be rigorously maintained, and focus will be given to the creation and maintenance of an accessible network of green spaces within the built up area of the Borough.**

**The Council will endeavour to address any shortfalls in provision of defined open space types and will seek opportunities to enhance the quality of existing open spaces where necessary, and improve access to them.**

**Development which results in a deficit of open space provision will not be permitted.**

**On all new residential developments there will be a requirement for open space and recreational provision in accordance with the details set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document. This policy will apply to all new residential developments within the Borough where a quantitative or qualitative deficiency of open space or recreational provision exists, or where the development would lead to such a deficiency.**

**Where it is impractical or inappropriate to provide the open space within the housing scheme, the Council will expect a financial contribution from the developer to allow an alternative means of provision or enhancement. The nature and extent of that contribution will be governed by the formulae set out in the SPD, the identification of needs in the Audit of Open Space, and other evidence as appropriate.**

- 3.5.6 The Council will keep the findings of the Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities under review to help ensure the needs of residents and visitors are being adequately met. More detailed policies relating to development for essential sporting / recreational needs will be contained in the Development Control Policies DPD.
- 3.5.7 The Developer Contributions SPD will be prepared to provide the detailed basis for operating this policy, particularly the estimated costs of providing open space and associated facilities.

Local priorities for the provision of recreational open space will be set out in the SPD and in the Council's own Sports and Active Leisure Development Strategy. The SPD, the strategy and the core survey data on which the policy has been based, will be updated regularly, ensuring that the evidence base remains relevant and up to date.

**Indicators**

- Amount and range of open space provided in the Borough relative to requirements set out in the most recent open space audit

**Target**

- Provision should meet defined audit standards. Appropriate targets will be developed in future local development documents

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through the development control process
- By maintaining an up to date audit of open space, sport and recreational facilities to identify shortfalls and requirements, and opportunities to fund investment

## Conserving and Enhancing the Quality of the Built Environment

### 3.6 *Background*

- 3.6.1 The built environment is instrumental in defining the character of the local area. The Borough's rich built heritage is of considerable interest to the local community, and is greatly valued. The attractive and varied character of the built up areas, and the relationships between them and the surrounding open countryside, contribute significantly towards the quality of life, and should be conserved and enhanced.
- 3.6.2 Both Government policy and that of the South East Plan seek a renaissance of urban areas, both because of the wider benefits and to make them places where people choose to live. While urban renaissance is a wide-ranging concept, protecting and improving the quality of the natural and built environment is a vision shared by the Council's Corporate Plan and the Borough's Community Strategy. This objective may be achieved not only by offering protection to historical assets, and ensuring harm to the environment is minimised, but also by ensuring that the design and layout of new developments are in harmony with, and positively contribute to, local character and its context. This principle will extend across the potential design range, from major sites to smaller-scale domestic extensions.
- 3.6.3 As new developments will have a long life-span it is important they embrace the concept of sustainability - socially, economically and environmentally - and are a long-term asset to the community. Good design is becoming increasingly important as more opportunities are taken to intensify development within the built up areas. Achieving a balance between the competing pressures of increasing density, choosing the appropriate scale and height of building, and safeguarding local character, is an important challenge to which good design plays a vital role.

### 3.7 *The Built Environment*

- 3.7.1 Epsom and Ewell possesses a fine built heritage which is held in high regard by the Borough's residents. This has been recognised by the designation of 21 conservation areas, each different in form and character, but all designated for their special architectural or historic interest. Additionally, the Borough contains over 400 'listed buildings' and some 100 'locally listed' buildings, all of which add to the variety and richness of the urban environment. The majority of these individual buildings fall within designated Conservation Areas and, as they are limited in number, it is important they are preserved and protected from inappropriate development.
- 3.7.2 Support was given in the 'Preferred Options' paper for the continued protection of such areas and buildings, although the importance of an emphasis on enhancement as well as preservation was recognised. New development, carefully integrated with the old, can help achieve this. It is an objective of the Core Strategy to seek to protect and enhance conservation areas and listed buildings, including their settings. The value of the special character of some established residential neighbourhoods has been recognised locally and the Site Allocations DPD will consider whether other areas of special character should also be defined.
- 3.7.3 The Council has begun to prepare character appraisals and management plans for each of



the Borough's conservation areas. These will assess the character of each area, defining what contributes to making them "special". They will identify both positive and negative features of the environment, and will define elements which should be improved. Up to date appraisals will form a vital source of detailed information for later local development documents, particularly the Area Action Plan for Epsom town centre.

- 3.7.4 It is also desirable to provide for the protection and care of finite archaeological remains, especially those of national importance. The Borough contains two Scheduled Ancient Monuments - the site of Nonsuch Palace and its associated remains, and St Mary's Church Tower in Ewell. Additionally there is one identified County Site of Archaeological Importance in the Borough - 'Diana's Dyke', a site close to Nonsuch Palace. In line with Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning, the Council will promote the protection, preservation and enhancement of sites of archaeological interest and of their setting. A positive approach will be taken when facilitating new development in areas of high archaeological potential, with appropriate protection provided to future discoveries of archaeological interest.
- 3.7.5 Good design is a key part of sustainable development. The Council wants to help create places where people choose to live, work and visit. It wishes to protect and enhance the pleasant scale, character and amenities of the developed areas of the Borough. New development should enhance and complement local character, and be capable of integrating well into existing neighbourhoods. For example the built up areas of the Borough have a characteristically "leafy" appearance, which provides a distinctive natural element in the urban environment. It is important that new development helps to maintain and enhance this aspect through the incorporation of appropriate green amenity space and landscaping.
- 3.7.6 The Council will expect developments to be of a high quality, creating a safe environment which enhances the public realm and which positively contributes to the townscape. Inclusive design results in environments that are accessible and convenient for all people, regardless of disability, age or gender. The "Surrey Design Guide", produced in collaboration between the Surrey District Councils, is a useful tool in helping to maintain and improve the quality of the urban environment and is commended.
- 3.7.7 Although Epsom and Ewell Borough has low levels of crime and is perceived to be a safe place in which to live, there remain concerns about crime levels, and the impact of antisocial behaviour. Reducing crime and the fear of crime remains a priority of the Community Safety Strategy and is reflected in the Community Strategy's aspirations for a "safe society". Careful planning and good design of new developments can make a contribution towards this objective; positively influencing human behaviour and helping people feel safe in their environment. The Council will expect new developments to consider 'designing out crime' principles from the outset, for example covering the layout, features and lighting of a development. Making security an inherent part of the design process during the early stages is imperative, as once a development is built, the main opportunity for crime prevention measures has been lost.

#### **Policy CS 5**

**The Council will protect and seek to enhance the Borough's heritage assets including historic buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, parks and gardens of historic interest, and other areas of special character.**

**The settings of these assets will be protected and enhanced.**

**High quality and inclusive design will be required for all developments. Development should:**

- **create attractive, functional and safe public and private environments;**
- **reinforce local distinctiveness and complement the attractive characteristics of the Borough;**
- **make efficient use of land and have regard to the need to develop land in a comprehensive way.**

3.7.8 The Council is preparing conservation area appraisals and management plans for each of the Borough's conservation areas. Detailed policies relating to development within and adjacent to conservation areas, and to development affecting listed buildings and sites of archaeological interest, will be contained in the Development Control Policies DPD. The Council will prepare further guidance on design such as design briefs and design statements to help create better environments. These will be published as Supplementary Planning Documents.

#### **Indicators**

- Percentage of conservation areas where appraisals and management plans have been completed
- Number of listed buildings within the Borough on the national 'Buildings at Risk Register'
- Number of "locally listed" buildings on the Council's local 'Buildings at Risk' register
- Number of potential archaeological sites where development has taken place without investigation
- Regular review of the quality of design in completed new development, in collaboration with other partners

#### **Targets**

- Conservation Area appraisals: an increasing proportion until all are completed
- A reduction in the number of buildings on the national 'Buildings at Risk Register'
- A reduction in the number of buildings on the local 'Buildings at Risk Register'
- A method to review the quality of design will be developed in conjunction with the Design Guidance SPD

#### **Delivery Mechanism**

- Through development control advice, negotiation and decisions
- Through guidance in SPDs, including development briefs, design statements and design guidance (including the Surrey Design Guide)
- By the preparation and publication of conservation area character appraisals and management plans
- Through designations and policies in other DPDs, including a review of relevant boundaries of protected areas and the identification of other areas of special character
- By engagement with the local community, developers and other agencies involved in securing high quality development.

## 3.8 Sustainability in New Developments

### Background - Sustainable Design

- 3.8.1 It is now widely accepted that climate change is occurring, with a major contributor being greenhouse gas emissions. The planning system can help address climate change, both through reducing our contribution to the causes, and helping existing and new development adapt to the impacts. The Council is keen to ensure the way we build is done in a more sustainable way in the future. This means in a way that minimises the resources that are used, including energy and water, and that generates less pollution, including less of the greenhouse gas - carbon dioxide. It also means development generating some of its own energy requirements through renewable energy initiatives. The South East Plan encourages larger housing and commercial schemes to provide at least 10% of the development's energy from renewable sources.
- 3.8.2 With the Government signed up to a Kyoto Protocol target<sup>1</sup> and further commitments made to reduce carbon dioxide emissions nationally<sup>2</sup>, it is important that new developments are designed and constructed in a way that minimises their impact on the environment. Additionally, the South East of England has already experienced water shortages, which are likely to be worsened through climate change and the additional demand generated by the region's growing population. It is essential to maximise the efficiency with which water is used and runoff is managed. All new developments should aim to conserve water both internally and externally and minimise the amount of water used.
- 3.8.3 The incorporation of sustainable design and energy conservation principles into new developments received considerable support in the 'Preferred Options' consultation and had very positive outcomes in the sustainability appraisal. New development can help combat the causes of climate change through reducing the reliance on energy sources that generate greenhouse gases, and can help to mitigate climate change impacts through careful design and efficient resource use. This is highly relevant when considering the long term sustainability of the Borough and the long life span of developments. With the increases in energy prices and the scarcity of water, developments that display efficient use of such resources will be in increasing demand.
- 3.8.4 The sustainability appraisal raised some important potential conflicts between the issue of sustainable design and other objectives, such as maximising the provision of affordable housing and protecting the historic environment. It is therefore important that these issues are dealt with on a case by case basis, to ensure that sites remain viable. It is likely that the falling cost of technology will reduce the impact of these requirements. High quality design can be instrumental in helping to overcome the visual impacts of new technologies in historic environments. Again, improvements in technology are likely to assist with this
- 3.8.5 Technology in this field is changing and new guidance is emerging from various sources. Government policy is still emerging. There are a number of measures available that can improve the environmental impact of a new development, and new ones are likely to emerge in the future. It would not be appropriate for this Core Strategy to provide detailed guidance on techniques or approaches; a more flexible approach is required, and one which can be updated regularly as the issue develops. The Council will therefore prepare more detailed policies to provide this guidance, and to set appropriate targets, for example for renewable energy production in new developments in the Development Control DPD.

*1 A 12.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels averaged over a period 2008 - 2012. Kyoto came into force in February 2005*

*2 Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% from 1990 levels by 2010, and 60% from 1990 levels by 2050*

*3 From the Use Classes Order: B1 (business), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution)*

## Flood Protection

- 3.8.6 The Borough contains one tributary of the River Thames - the River Hogsmill, but also a number of underground springs. Although the Environment Agency has identified the vast majority of the Borough as not being at risk from flooding, it is important to provide protection for those areas that are. Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, states that all forms of flooding and their impact on the natural and built environment are material planning considerations. With the impact of climate change being likely to increase the incidence of flooding and extreme weather events, it is important the plan takes full account of the issue. The Council recognises that the avoidance and management of flood risk can make a positive contribution to the development of sustainable communities.
- 3.8.7 The Environment Agency's floodplain maps show the limits of the floodplain. The general extent is shown diagrammatically on the key diagram. The maps show the best available information but are only indicative and are not intended to be the sole basis on which planning decisions are made. Local issues and circumstances, such as culverts and potential obstructions, also need to be considered. The Environment Agency has recommended the inclusion of an 8 meter-wide 'buffer zone' around the River Hogsmill and its tributaries. The inclusion of the area surrounding the Hogsmill as an area of 'Strategic Open Space' will help contribute towards this objective which will be covered in the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.8.8 PPS25 states that flood risk assessment should be carried out to the appropriate degree at all levels of the planning process. The Council has taken account of flood risk throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy. The Council will conduct a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to inform later Development Plan Documents where specific allocations will be made. Where appropriate, site-specific flood risk assessments will be required to accompany planning applications. In line with PPS25 the Council will apply the risk based sequential test and exception test when allocating development sites.

### Policy CS 6

**Proposals for development should result in a sustainable environment and reduce, or have a neutral impact upon, pollution and climate change. The Council will expect proposals to demonstrate how sustainable construction and design can be incorporated to improve the energy efficiency of development - both new build and conversion.**

**In order to conserve natural resources, minimise waste and encourage recycling, the Council will ensure that new development:**

- **minimises the use of energy in the scheme by using an appropriate layout, building design and orientation;**
- **minimises the emission of pollutants, including noise, water and light pollution, into the wider environment;**
- **has no adverse effects on water quality, and helps reduce potential water consumption, for example by the use of water conservation and recycling measures and by minimising off-site water discharge by using methods such as sustainable urban drainage;**
- **avoids increasing the risk of, or from, flooding;**
- **minimises the energy requirements of construction, for example by using**

**sustainable construction technologies and encouraging the recycling of materials;**

- **encourages the use of renewable energy by the incorporation of production facilities within the design of the scheme;**
- **incorporates waste management processes, for example for the recycling of water and waste. The waste hierarchy (Reduce-Reuse-Recycle-Recover-Dispose) should be applied to all stages of development design, construction and final operation.**

3.8.9 This policy will apply to all new developments. In view of the scale and characteristics of future development opportunities within the Borough, for example the emphasis on smaller sites, it is important that *all* development contributes in some way towards combating and adapting to climate change. The Council will provide further detailed guidance on how this policy will be implemented in a Development Control Policies DPD. It is envisaged that this document will incorporate targets for the provision of on-site renewables and will include requirements for developers to help mitigate carbon emissions in new developments.

3.8.10 It is the responsibility of Surrey County Council, as Waste Planning Authority for Surrey, to identify and allocate land for the development of waste management facilities in Epsom and Ewell Borough. The Surrey Waste Plan submission draft (2006) highlights the need for a new Community Recycling Centre to replace the existing facility at Blenheim Road, Epsom, but does not allocate a site. The lead in identifying a suitable alternative site in the Epsom area will be taken by the County Council and it will be their responsibility, or that of their contractors, to acquire or lease a site, and secure the necessary consents. In due course, the Borough Council's Proposals Map will incorporate any site specific allocations arising from the approved Surrey Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework.

**Indicators**

- Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk
- Further indicators and targets will be set out in the Development Control DPD and Design Guidance SPD

**Target**

- Flood risk: 100% of decisions to be made in accordance with Environment Agency advice

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through guidance in other local development documents
- Through development control negotiation and building control practices, including BREEAM and energy use assessments
- By encouragement to the building industry locally to implement emerging good practice
- By liaison and close working with other agencies including the Environment Agency, particularly in relation to pollution control, sewage treatment and flooding

## Providing for Housing and Employment Development

### 3.9 *Background*

- 3.9.1 The proposed strategy stems from the vision and objectives of the Surrey Structure Plan and the requirements of the submitted South East Plan. Its purpose is to translate the development requirements of regional policy into proposals which will bring forward the necessary land for development, at least over the period to 2022. This Core Strategy document identifies the principles involved in strategic land allocations, but only indicates the broad locations for development; the specific locations will be set out in more detail in the Site Allocations DPD.

### 3.10 *Housing provision*

- 3.10.1 The Structure Plan indicates that provision should be made for 3000 dwellings over the period 2001 to 2016. This amounts to an annual average rate of housebuilding in the Borough of some 200 homes. The submitted South East Plan proposes that the Borough makes provision for 3,620 additional dwellings over the twenty years from 2006 - 2026; this equates to an annual average of some 181 homes. Clearly the requirement may change once the South East Plan process is complete but it is considered appropriate to plan for at least that level of housebuilding (ie an average of 181 units pa) over the next fifteen years (to 2022), and to review the situation once the South East Plan has been finally approved.
- 3.10.2 The Structure Plan emphasises that new development will continue to be focussed in urban areas, particularly through the re-use of previously developed land, and that the Green Belt will be strongly defended. The South East Plan continues this approach by placing emphasis on the protection of the Green Belt and making full and effective use of the potential of urban areas. This inevitably poses some challenges for authorities such as Epsom and Ewell where the fabric of existing development is already dense and where intensification can bring with it other issues such as increased congestion, pressures on services and facilities and threat to the character and appearance of established residential areas - for example through the loss of open spaces or a change of density.
- 3.10.3 In interpreting the Structure Plan and the South East Plan at the local level the main principles will be:
- provision for housing development over a 15 year period from adoption, based on the average housebuilding rate for 2006-2026 of 181 homes per annum and the need to provide an additional 3,620 dwellings between 2006 and 2026;
  - commitment to a plan, monitor and manage approach to ensure adequate housebuilding is provided in response to the results of monitoring;
  - emphasis on the reuse of previously developed land for housebuilding (including the reuse or conversion of existing buildings);
  - provision for new housebuilding at three strategic locations within the Green Belt, to the west of Epsom, as part of the completion of the "hospital cluster", and the protection of the remaining areas of Green Belt;
  - concentration of other development within the defined built up areas of Epsom and Ewell Borough.

**Policy CS 7**

**The Borough Council will seek to ensure sufficient housing is provided to meet the Borough's housing requirements in accordance with the submitted South East Plan. In applying Policy H1 of the South East Plan, provision will therefore be made for at least 2,715 homes within the period 2007-2022 (based on the annual average of 181 new dwellings per annum).**

**Annual monitoring will be carried out to ensure that there is not a projected shortfall in housing provision against the strategic requirement for the period to 2026. This will allow the managed release of housebuilding land to provide the amount and type of homes required.**

**Depending on the results of monitoring it may be necessary to adjust the pace of the delivery of housing by bringing forward, or holding back, new development. The position will be comprehensively reviewed when the housing targets in the South East Plan are finally approved.**

- 3.10.4 The Core Strategy seeks to provide guidance to meet the requirements of the submitted South East Plan. It is recognised that for the twenty year period covered by that plan, a flexible approach is required in the Core Strategy which will enable the Council to respond to the final decisions taken on its housing targets. The proposed delivery of the amount of housing required is shown in more detail in the housing trajectory contained within the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The 2006 AMR shows that the expected provision from development is above the annualised strategic allocation for the first years of the plan period. The position will be kept under review and future annual monitoring reports will update the trajectory to demonstrate the progress towards the housing targets that have been set in the South East Plan. Until the South East Plan is approved the Structure Plan's housing requirement should continue to be met. The housing trajectory in the AMR shows that this requirement should be exceeded for at least the next two years, by which time the South East Plan should have been approved.
- 3.10.5 If there is a need to amend the approach in this Core Strategy, for example as a result of changes to the targets in the South East Plan, a review of this housing allocation policy will be undertaken. The Council proposes to prepare a Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document which will set out its overall strategy for housing provision and its approach to managing the delivery of its housing targets and trajectories.
- 3.10.6 In line with Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (November 2006) and the submitted South East Plan, the Core Strategy sets out in Policy CS7 a 15-year housing supply, from its base date of April 2007 to March 2022. The expected components of this housing land supply are summarised in the table below. Further details are provided in Appendix 1. More detailed information will be contained in the Council's housing land availability assessments and its AMR.

Expected principal components of housing land supply 2007-2022

Policy CS7 Housing provision target 2007-2022	Dwellings	2,715
Existing commitments	1691	
Windfall sites estimate	767	
Sites to be allocated	257	
	Total	2,715

- 3.10.7 Evidence shows that the Borough has a good record of delivering on its housing targets in recent years. Regular monitoring and management of housing land supply through the AMR process and the proposed Housing Delivery SPD, and continuing dialogue with housebuilders and other stakeholders, will help ensure adequate housing delivery over the period of this plan. The Borough has always relied on a significant contribution from small and medium sized windfall sites in meeting required housing provision and evidence demonstrates that such sites have come forward on a consistent basis in recent years. The built up area of the Borough is tightly bordered by the Green Belt and is relatively densely developed. A reliance on small and medium sized windfalls based on past experience is justified to avoid releasing land from the Green Belt. The need to rely on windfalls will be further tested in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment now required by PPS3. The Council is not relying on windfalls from large sites.
- 3.10.8 It is estimated that the forthcoming Site Allocations DPD will need to allocate sites for at least 257 dwellings over the period 2007-2022 to ensure adequate housing provision; the precise figure will be reviewed at the time the DPD is prepared against the overall housing target confirmed in the South East Plan. Several major sites within the built up areas of the Borough have recently been granted planning permission for housing, and development on them is progressing. Further sites will be evaluated and appraised as part of the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD, including the remaining undeveloped allocations from the Local Plan 2000. These will be considered for allocation in order to meet the housing shortfall set out above.

**Indicator**

- Number of net housing completions per annum.

**Target**

- Set out in Policy CS7

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through allocations and phasing in the Site Allocations DPD and Proposals Map
- Through the development control process
- By publishing monitoring data and a housing trajectory in the Annual Monitoring Report
- By the preparation of a Housing Delivery SPD

### 3.11 *Broad Location of Housing Development*

- 3.11.1 New housing development in Epsom and Ewell will be focused in locations that perform best in sustainability terms. The Council has used a number of sustainability principles to assess and to shape the policies within the Core Strategy. Economic and social objectives have been balanced with an assessment of the impact of new development on the environment and on the use of natural resources. In accordance with the principles of sustainability, and the results of the sustainability appraisal, development will be concentrated within the defined built up area and in the hospital cluster sites, where there is the greatest potential for the re-use of previously developed land.
- 3.11.2 Development within the existing built up areas will minimise the impact on key biodiversity features and will reduce the need to travel because of its general location close to existing services, jobs and public transport. A spatial strategy based on these principles will help safeguard the Metropolitan Green Belt. Policies in the plan will support the general principle



of making the best use of the existing housing stock in the Borough, through the adaptation and re-use of existing dwellings.

- 3.11.3 There are three former hospital sites (West Park, St Ebba's and Horton B) shown on the key diagram as strategic development locations. These sites will make a significant contribution over the next few years to meeting the housing targets in this plan. These sites are within the Green Belt and it is proposed that they will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD as Major Developed Sites in line with Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts. This approach is a continuation of the Council's existing strategy towards the hospital cluster, as shown by the approved development briefs for the sites.

**Policy CS 8**

**New housing development will be located within the defined built up area of Epsom and Ewell and within the three hospital cluster sites of West Park, St Ebba's and the remaining part of Horton B. The built up area will be defined on the Proposals Map. The three hospital sites will be identified as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt.**

**Within these areas the emphasis will be on the re-use of suitable previously developed land (including the re-use or conversion of existing buildings) for housing. Subject to other policies in this plan, planning consent will be given for development within the built up areas, including infilling, redevelopment and conversion.**

**In principle the strategy will be to direct higher density development to central locations, such as Epsom town centre and other local centres, close to existing services and facilities and accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. This will enable relatively lower densities to be applied to other parts of the built up area to help retain their character and local distinctiveness. The Council will also encourage mixed use developments within the more accessible town or local centre locations. Further policies on densities will be set out in subsequent DPDs.**

- 3.11.4 The South East Plan seeks an overall regional housing density of 40 dwellings per hectare in order to make the best use of urban land and to encourage more sustainable patterns of development and services. The Core Strategy's sustainability appraisal has highlighted the potential conflict between the pursuit of higher densities and the environmental character of an area. It is therefore important that a blanket approach to applying densities is not adopted. Instead a more flexible approach is proposed in this policy.

**Indicator**

- % of housing completed on previously developed land
- Housing density policies (and related indicators and targets) will be set out in future local development documents

**Target**

- Will be specified in the Site Allocations DPD

**Delivery Mechanisms**

- Through site allocations in the future DPD and on the Proposals Map
- Through the development control process
- Through discussions and negotiations with private housebuilders and Registered Social Landlords

### 3.12 *Affordable Housing and meeting Housing Needs*

- 3.12.1 Epsom and Ewell Borough, similar to other areas in the South East, is an area of high housing demand and high levels of owner occupation. As a consequence many first time buyers, some key workers and lower income households find it difficult to gain a foothold in the local housing market.
- 3.12.2 In 2004 the Council adopted as a key priority, “to secure additional key worker, social and affordable housing”. This is reflected in the Community Strategy which lists as a key objective, “Providing affordable housing and improving the recruitment of key workers.” This is seen within the Community Strategy as a way of contributing to its over-arching theme of seeking a caring society and a thriving economic community. The provision of affordable housing is therefore one of the Council’s clear priorities and helping provide the right mix of dwelling sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, is an important function of this plan.
- 3.12.3 For the purposes of this plan and the operation of the Council’s housing strategy, ‘affordable housing’ is that provided with subsidy, either as social rented housing or intermediate affordable housing,, as an on-going resource for people who are unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local private sector housing market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes. It therefore means housing where the subsidy allows the asking price or rent to be substantially lower than the prevailing market prices or rents in the Borough.
- 3.12.4 The Council commissioned a housing needs survey in 2004 which highlighted the nature and extent of the need for affordable housing in the Borough. This provides the basis for more detailed guidance on the need for dwelling size, type and tenure, and the needs of particular groups in the community. Delivering a better balance between the supply and the demand for housing is an important driver behind policies for affordable housing in this plan. For example the Borough is experiencing a decline in household size which is likely to result in a continuing shift in demand for certain types of dwellings. Regular housing needs surveys will help the Council to remain aware of such needs and adapt the detailed implementation of policies to take these into account.
- 3.12.5 The 2004 survey identified an annual affordable housing shortfall of 518 units. This is some ten times greater than the current delivery level from acquisitions, new units or conversions, resulting in substantial levels of unmet housing need each year. When re-lets are taken into account the net outstanding unmet local housing need is 395 dwellings annually. The provision of this number of units is clearly not deliverable or sustainable in the context of previous and planned future construction rates, and the environmental constraints within the Borough. There is a high level of local need but only limited sites on which affordable housing can be secured. This highlights the importance of delivering the maximum number of affordable dwellings from the new housing development that will take place over the period of the plan.
- 3.12.6 Both the Surrey Structure Plan and the submitted South East Plan contain strategic targets for the provision of affordable housing as a proportion of all new housing completions. Within the London Fringe sub-region overall there is a requirement for 40% of new housing to be affordable. Prior to submission of the South East Plan, and having considered the results of the 2004 Housing Needs Assessment, the Council adopted an overall target to ensure that at least 35% of all new housing completions in Epsom and Ewell Borough are affordable. This equates to the provision of 950 new affordable homes over the period 2007 to 2022

based on total provision set out in Policy CS7. These should comprise a tenure mix of 70% social rented, and 30% intermediate affordable housing. These targets will be kept under review by the Council, and may be changed as a result of: monitoring and future housing market assessments; significant changes in the availability of additional funding; and changes in overall housing provision for the plan period.

- 3.12.7 Past and predicted future patterns of housebuilding suggest that the number of sites likely to come forward for housing in Epsom and Ewell Borough above the national threshold of 15 units and 0.5 hectares is limited. The high level of housing need and the limited overall supply of potential land for housing, therefore justifies the lowest reasonable threshold for securing affordable housing, without inhibiting development or prejudicing the overall supply of new housing. We must also take into account that the sustainability appraisal has raised the issue that applying a threshold for affordable housing contributions may encourage developers to build at lower densities.
- 3.12.8 Because of these circumstances, in order to achieve its overall target, it is the Council's view that it is appropriate and necessary for smaller housing schemes to make a reasonable contribution towards the provision of affordable housing. However because some smaller sites may be less viable than larger sites it is recognised that in adopting a percentage requirement care must be taken not to discourage development from taking place and thereby restricting the supply of housing overall. Policy CS9 sets out a sliding scale of provision based on the number of dwellings proposed.
- 3.12.9 The delivery of the target expressed in Policy CS9 will depend upon some sites being developed for up to 100% affordable homes, including land currently owned by the Borough Council, or under the control of Registered Social Landlords. Encouragement will be given to maximising the potential of land within the urban area of Epsom and Ewell to provide housing which meets affordable housing needs.

#### **Policy CS 9**

**The Council has a target that overall, 35% of new dwellings should be affordable. This equates to the provision of 950 new affordable homes over the period 2007 to 2022.**

**New housing developments should include a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures which help meet identified local housing needs and contribute to the development of mixed and sustainable communities.**

**Taking into account the viability of the development proposed and other planning objectives, the Council will negotiate to achieve the provision of affordable housing as set out below:**

**Residential developments of between five and fourteen dwellings gross (or on sites between 0.15ha and 0.49ha - irrespective of the number of dwellings proposed) should include at least 20% of dwellings as affordable.**

**Residential development of 15 or more dwellings gross (or on sites of 0.5ha or above) should include at least 40% of dwellings as affordable.**

**The Council will seek to ensure that the affordable housing remains affordable to successive as well as initial occupiers through the use of planning conditions or a planning obligation.**

**Advice on the detailed operation of this policy, the definition and nature of the local housing needs to be met, the tariff system to be used, and the mechanisms for delivery of the affordable housing, will be set out in the Developer Contributions SPD.**

- 3.12.10 This policy will provide the basis of detailed negotiation with residential developers. In all cases the Council will seek the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing in negotiating on individual schemes and will have regard to its affordability and tenure-balance targets; the suitability of the site for different types of affordable housing provision; and the economics of site provision, taking into account any abnormal site development costs, the availability of subsidy and any other relevant planning requirements. The 20% and 40% figures in the policy will be regarded as baseline targets and developers will need to demonstrate why the particular targets could not be met in any specific case. The contribution this policy makes to meeting the overall 35% affordable housing target for Epsom and Ewell will be kept under review.
- 3.12.11 Other than in exceptional circumstances the provision of the affordable housing should be made on site. Where there are specific and overriding site constraints, or where development-specific issues inhibit the provision of affordable housing, off site provision or financial contributions may be acceptable. In these instances, the proposal will need to reflect the fact that the facilitating site will be developed for 100% private market housing, and the proportion of affordable housing units sought, or financial contribution offered, calculated accordingly. This may also be required where, following negotiation, the units to be developed do not match the housing needs of those requiring affordable dwellings.
- 3.12.12 In addition to on-site contributions from developers, meeting the overall levels of affordable housing proposed in this plan, and achieving the required balance between social rented and intermediate affordable housing, will depend upon continued financial subsidy from a variety of sources. These sources include the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP), via Housing Associations, and contributions from the Council's capital reserves or from landholdings. The level of public funding subsidy required will vary between the different types of affordable housing being provided. It is the Council's intention to deploy negotiated commuted sums where appropriate to top up NAHP funding should this be necessary. The Council considers that based on recent levels of public funding, the affordable housing targets in this plan are achievable. However should there be a significant reduction in the level of funding through the NAHP, the Council may need to reconsider its housing programme and its affordable housing targets. Further information on the level of subsidy funding available for specific affordable housing schemes, and on the current availability of public funding to support the Council's housing programme, will be made generally available in the Developer Contributions and Housing Delivery SPDs, and to individual developers as part of the proposed 'open book' approach to site viability assessment.

#### **Indicators**

- Number of affordable housing units completed per annum (and as a % of total net completions)
- Number of social rented and intermediate affordable housing units per annum (and as a % of total affordable housing completions)

#### **Targets**

- Number of affordable units is set out in Policy CS9

- The affordable housing tenure mix of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate affordable housing is set out in the supporting text

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through the proposed Developer Contributions SPD which will set out the nature and extent of contributions from developers
- Through negotiations between development control and residential developers
- Through the preparation of site development briefs
- By joint liaison and close working with housing agencies including the Council's Housing Department, Registered Social Landlords and housebuilders

### 3.13 *Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*

- 3.13.1 It is Government policy that local authorities should make adequate provision for gypsies and travellers. Circular 01/2006 requires provision to be made on the basis of the results of local authority Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments. These joint studies are currently underway in Surrey. When completed they will provide a comprehensive information base relating to the needs and requirements of gypsies and travellers, as well as for travelling showpeople.
- 3.13.2 Indications are that in the South East as a whole there is likely to be a shortage of authorised sites to meet an identifiable unmet need. It is intended that an early partial review of the South East Strategy will provide a strategic view of needs across the region, and will identify the number of pitches required for each local authority area. However in the meantime local authorities are expected to present in their Core Strategy documents, the criteria for the location of gypsy and traveller sites which will guide the allocation of sites in the relevant DPD (in this case the site allocations document). Policy CS10 provides the broad context for any such allocations.
- 3.13.3 The County Council manages gypsy sites at two locations within the Borough which together provide 30 pitches. There is an existing privately owned showpeople's site in the Borough. Until the Gypsy Accommodation Assessments are completed, and information is made available on the scale of unmet needs, there are no specific proposals made in this Core Strategy for additional pitch provision. This position will be reviewed when the results of the surveys are known and the South East Plan has been reviewed. Representative organisations will be consulted at an early stage if there is a need for additional provision.

**Policy CS 10**

**Provision will be made for additional sites for gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople if a need is identified in the joint accommodation assessments currently being undertaken or in the South East Plan Review. Where additional sites are required they will be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD. The selection of any such site will take into account the policy objectives of the Core Strategy, the needs of future occupiers and the likely availability of any site for its intended occupiers. The Development Control DPD will include a criteria based policy for the consideration of applications on any other sites.**

**Indicator**

- Number of pitches provided for permanent gypsy and traveller accommodation and pitches for travelling showpeople, against the requirements identified in the South East Plan and needs in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

**Target**

- Target will be set in future DPD following the revision of the South East Plan

**Delivery mechanism**

- Through the development control process
- Through the allocation of any necessary and appropriate sites in the Site Allocations DPD

### 3.14 *Employment Provision*

#### Background

- 3.14.1 The spatial strategy is based upon the need to sustain and enhance the Borough's economic performance. The Community Strategy recognises the difficulties some local companies have in recruiting staff, and the impact this can have on their competitiveness. The importance of maintaining a thriving economic community is recognised as a key objective of the Strategy, particularly because of the pressure placed on the local economy by the proximity of London and other employment centres. The Council recognises that a suitably vibrant employment market is a great advantage to any area, providing jobs and incomes to workers, and an array of other social and economic benefits.
- 3.14.2 The Borough of Epsom and Ewell is an area of low unemployment (1.8% at the time of the 2001 Census) which provides a variety of workplaces and a good cross section of employment opportunities for residents. However, many residents commute to jobs outside the Borough because of the proximity of London and good transport links with surrounding areas. Although the economy of the Borough cannot be divorced from adjoining employment centres, the Council wishes to continue to assist the reduction of longer distance out commuting by the provision of a range of local jobs.
- 3.14.3 An employment land review, conducted in 2005/06, considered the Borough's existing employment structure and workplace provision for B1, B2 and B8<sup>3</sup> uses, and assessed likely future needs. The review established that approximately half of those employed were in jobs which require B1, B2 or B8 floorspace and that, generally, a suitable range of such employment premises existed within the Borough to meet the needs of the local economy. The majority of this floorspace is located within Epsom town centre and the Longmead and Nonsuch industrial estates, with many of the smaller premises (<250m<sup>2</sup>) being within Epsom Town Centre and Ewell Village. Nonsuch Business Park has been identified in the draft Surrey Waste Plan as a potential urban site for accommodating waste development. This may inevitably restrict the opportunities that exist within the site for employment generating development.
- 3.14.4 There has been little commercial development in the last ten years, with a large number of premises having been constructed prior to the Second World War. The Council is aware that the market's current preference for residential development may often be in direct competition for employment land. In order to help safeguard the economy the plan aims to

protect a suitable amount and range of employment premises, especially those located in sustainable locations such as Epsom town centre.

- 3.14.5 Data sources indicate that over the next ten years there will be an increase in the numbers of economically active in the Borough looking for work. Because of the excellent “connectivity” the Borough enjoys with other employment centres, especially London, it would not be possible to attempt to balance the number of those looking for work with the number of local job opportunities. However, with sustainability principles in mind, the Council will support an approach which encourages a scale of employment opportunities broadly in line with this predicted increase in economically active population. Regular monitoring of floorspace levels will be essential to ensure that the needs of business are being adequately provided for.
- 3.14.6 In addition to employment opportunities within the B1, B2 and B8 land uses, the Borough offers many employment opportunities within the education, healthcare, retail and hospitality industries, all of which make a valuable contribution to the economy. In addition the Epsom Racecourse and the local racehorse training industry are an important part of the economy of the Borough, as well as a significant part of its heritage. Overall these employment opportunities are of great importance to the community and form an essential part of the Borough’s social and economic fabric. Providing a choice of suitable accommodation will contribute to making the Borough an attractive location for businesses and will encourage a diverse mix of jobs.
- 3.14.7 In interpreting strategic planning policy at the local level, and to address the issues raised by the Sustainability Appraisal and meet the aims of the Community Strategy, the main principles will be:
- Ensuring sites are available for a range of sizes, quality and locations in order to meet the range of needs of business, including start up, move-on and expansion accommodation;
  - Encouraging the regeneration and intensification of some designated existing business and employment areas where there are good prospects for employment, and supporting an improvement in the quality of accommodation that is available in those areas;
  - Recognising that in some locations there may be opportunities to transfer sites to other uses without undermining the role of the key areas of business activity in the Borough;
  - Encouraging other means of securing what is termed “smart growth” (economic growth which does not rely on imported labour or require more land - such as more flexible working practices, greater use of technology or home-working).
- 3.14.8 Within the overall strategic context of restraint there is little scope for large scale additions to the amount of employment land that already exists within the Borough. What is already there, is also under increasing pressure from competing uses. Achieving these principles will therefore involve a variety of policies which will provide protection to well located employment sites, as well as supporting the creation of some additional opportunities for development / redevelopment to meet the changing and future needs of businesses.

#### **Policy CS 11**

**Losses of employment land will be resisted in the strategic employment areas of the Nonsuch and Longmead Industrial Estates and within Epsom town centre and Ewell village centre. Regeneration of employment premises and intensification of employment uses will be encouraged in these locations.**

**A cautious approach will be adopted to losses of employment land elsewhere. The Site Allocations/ Development Control DPDs will set out detailed policies for the redevelopment of employment sites within strategic employment areas and elsewhere and will define sites where particular policies apply.**

**The Council will support and facilitate new working methods that seek to increase productivity without significant increases in workforce and which limit the need to travel, such as home working.**

- 3.14.9 The strategic employment areas will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD. Encouraging employment opportunities in these sustainable locations will provide a greater choice of transport modes for workers, which will help to reduce reliance on the car and therefore congestion. Support of new working methods will also help to reduce commuting.
- 3.14.10 The biggest threat to achieving the right amount and location of employment space comes from the need to satisfy the Borough's housing targets, especially as the Council is focussing development on previously developed land in order to protect the Green Belt and surrounding countryside. The sites which are at greatest risk of being lost are the unprotected employment sites. Therefore, to ensure the requirements of different sectors and types of firm in the Borough are being met, and so as not to compromise their likely future needs, applications will be assessed by criteria based policies set out in subsequent DPDs and any losses will be carefully monitored. Regular employment studies, which monitor the provision of employment against the needs of the local economy, will help to inform the Council's decisions.

#### **Indicators**

- Amount of employment floorspace gained and lost per use class (in Epsom town centre, Ewell village, defined employment areas and rest of Borough)

#### **Target**

- Will be set in future DPDs against the background provided by Employment Needs Surveys

#### **Delivery Mechanism**

- Through the development control process
- By the identification of key employment areas in the Site Allocations DPD / Proposals Map
- Working with key business agencies including the local Business Partnership and with members of the Local Strategic Partnership
- Through surveys of local employers



## Meeting Community Needs

### 3.15 *Background*

- 3.15.1 It is an important principle that developments should make adequate provision for the infrastructure necessary to serve them, and that any adverse impact on existing services and infrastructure is mitigated. New development should not make existing services and facilities worse for local people. The Council supports the principle of new development being required to make a contribution to the community facilities and infrastructure that are necessary to serve the development concerned. Developers will be expected to fund or contribute towards the necessary improvements or new provision to serve the needs of the residents of the new development.

### 3.16 *Developer Contributions to Community Infrastructure*

- 3.16.1 This principle will be applied to the provision of a range of infrastructure. This could include, for example, transport, housing, public open spaces and play facilities, and social, educational, leisure and cultural facilities that bring benefit to the local community and help promote social cohesion. Developers are expected to consult with such facility / infrastructure providers to ensure the needs of the development will be met.
- 3.16.2 The Council will generally seek agreement on the form that such a contribution might take before the granting of planning permission for the development. This will be based on policies in this plan and forthcoming local development documents, and on evidence of need. Development will not be permitted unless the infrastructure and facilities directly required to service it can be made available at the appropriate time. The Council may require developments to be phased in step with the necessary infrastructure provision.

#### **Policy CS 12**

**Developers must be able to demonstrate that the service and community infrastructure necessary to serve the development is available. Where implementation of a development would create the need to provide additional or improved community facilities and infrastructure, or would exacerbate an existing deficiency in their provision, developers will be expected to make the necessary provision.**

**Where the developer is unable to provide the required facility directly (preferably on site), the Council may require a proportionate financial contribution from the developer, normally secured by means of a legal planning obligation, towards its provision elsewhere.**

- 3.16.3 Requirements under this policy will be related in scale and kind to the development proposed and be consistent with principles set out in Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations. Monies received will be devoted to such provision. In view of the restricted nature of future housebuilding in Epsom and Ewell, which is likely to be concentrated on smaller sites within the urban area, contributions from individual developers may be pooled. This will help secure provision of a facility at an appropriate site in a fair and equitable way.

**Indicator**

- % of developments that would potentially create, or add to, a deficit in service or community infrastructure provision, that make good the potential deficits

**Target**

- All development to make good potential deficits

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Through the proposed SPD on developer contributions
- Through development control negotiation and decision making

### 3.17 *Community, Cultural and Built Sports Facilities*

- 3.17.1 A good variety and geographical spread of community, built sports and cultural facilities add to the quality of life for residents, workers, visitors and those who study in the Borough. Sports facilities encourage healthy living; community facilities promote social interaction and inclusion; and cultural facilities help develop understanding and appreciation of arts and culture, often outside people's normal sphere of life. The Community Strategy also promotes 'life long learning' and the Borough's educational establishments are key to ensuring such opportunities are readily available. In line with the South East Plan, the Council will continue to work closely with the education sector to ensure its needs can be met. Epsom and Ewell contains several institutions which provide important and valued community facilities that meet needs arising from beyond the boundaries of the Borough; these include The District General Hospital and providers of higher / further education, including North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOL) and The University College for the Creative Arts (UCCA).
- 3.17.2 The sustainability appraisal emphasised that the provision and retention of such facilities is integral to achieving sustainable communities. Planning policy can assist in achieving this objective through helping to maintain a balanced provision of facilities, by supporting their increased accessibility and use, and by providing a positive framework in which emerging proposals will be considered. The Council will work with other agencies as they develop their plans, to help ensure the necessary new facilities are provided at the right time and in the right locations.
- 3.17.3 A key theme of the Community Strategy is the need to work towards a more harmonious and inclusive society. It identified the need for improved services and facilities for young people (particularly teenagers). This priority has been adopted by the Council and is embraced in the preparation of the Epsom and Ewell Borough Youth Plan and associated Action Plan, which aims to support the more effective coordination of agencies involved in providing youth services. The Core Strategy will support initiatives which will help enrich the overall quality of life in the Borough, particularly where they meet the identified needs of local communities or of the wider area.
- 3.17.4 The accessibility of community and sports facilities by a wide range of travel modes is essential, particularly where they are likely to attract people from a wider area than the local community in which they are located. The Council's Leisure Strategy has the aim to ensure that services are provided to a good standard and are accessible to all. It is therefore important to maximise the use of existing facilities as, with restricted site opportunities, the scope for significant new facilities will be limited.

- 3.17.5 The Borough's open spaces, which include outdoor sport and recreation facilities, can also provide an essential leisure asset for the community. Policy CS4 sets out the broad policies to protect these areas, and the detailed designation of sites will be made in the Site Allocations DPD.

### **Policy CS 13**

**The loss of community, cultural and built sports facilities, particularly those catering for the young or old, will be resisted unless:**

- **it can be clearly demonstrated there is no longer a need for such a facility in either its current use, or in any other form of community use, or**
- **there is an appropriate alternative means of providing an equivalent facility.**

**The provision of new community, cultural and built sports facilities, and the upgrading of those existing, will be encouraged, particularly where they address a deficiency in current provision, and where they meet the identified needs of communities both within the Borough and beyond.**

- 3.17.6 The Council will endeavour, through a range of initiatives, to ensure close working with partners and other agencies responsible for the provision of community facilities and will maintain a dialogue with the community to help ensure that provision is suitable for the Borough's needs. The plans of other agencies will occur at different times over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. Policy CS13 provides a positive policy framework within which to consider proposals as they come forward.
- 3.17.7 Community facilities are defined as uses falling within Use Class D1 (non-residential institutions) such as public halls, places of worship, health centres and consulting rooms. For the purposes of this plan the definition also includes public houses. Cultural facilities in this policy refer to uses falling within Use Class D2 such as cinemas and sports halls, and for the purposes of the plan the definition also includes theatres.
- 3.17.8 The issue of developer contributions towards community facilities is included in Policy CS12 and will be covered in detail in the Developer Contributions SPD.

#### **Indicator**

- Net change in the type and number of community, cultural and built sports facilities provided each year within the Borough

#### **Target**

- No net annual loss of community, cultural and built sports facilities

#### **Delivery Mechanism**

- Through the development control process and, where appropriate, developer contributions
- By maintaining a dialogue with the community, Council partners and providers of community facilities within the Borough and in areas adjoining the Borough

## Supporting Epsom Town Centre and Local Centres

### 3.18 *Background*

- 3.18.1 Epsom town centre provides a good range and choice of facilities and caters for a wide range of needs. As well as providing services and functions for those who live, work in, or visit the Borough, it is also at the centre of a network of meeting places and social spaces in the public realm. It provides a community identity and sense of place for the community it serves. The Community Strategy recognises its role at the heart of the local community and incorporates a specific vision and strategy statement for the town centre. The South East Plan encourages further investment in services and infrastructure in Epsom on a scale which supports its role in the strategic network of town centres in the region.

### 3.19 *Epsom Town Centre*

- 3.19.1 The Council recognises the importance of a lively, vibrant and viable town centre to residents, workers, businesses and visitors to the Borough. Maintaining the vitality and attractiveness of the town centre is key to delivering sustainable development and to maintaining and improving the quality of life of the Borough's residents. Widening choice and variety will help reduce the need for longer distance travel. The Council is therefore committed to a positive and pro-active approach to town centre development and change. Its aim is to ensure that the town reaches its full potential to provide the essential range of services and facilities required, in an attractive environment that is easily accessible by all modes of transport.
- 3.19.2 The Council's vision for the town centre is therefore:
- a vibrant, healthy and safe shopping environment combined with a high quality townscape and attractive and accessible environment for all;
  - thriving day-time and night-time economies;
  - new developments which are sensitive to its conservation importance and which reinforce the distinctiveness of its different character areas and a "sense of place";
  - improved retail attractions increasing the range of types and form of shops and other High Street facilities and services;
  - an improved range and quality of cultural, leisure, social and visitor attractions, including attractive areas in which to sit and to socialise;
  - improved public transport links and facilities, combined with an enhanced pedestrian environment, providing clear and safe opportunities for movement around the town;
  - the introduction of measures to reduce the seriously detrimental impact of vehicular traffic;
  - a variety of housing, including affordable housing for those in need, close to amenities and public transport;
  - a variety of business opportunities providing a wide choice of jobs, but broadly maintaining the present balance between employment uses and other town centre activities;
  - an improved sense of safety and security for all town centre users, at all times of the day and night, and a reduction in anti-social behaviour;
  - a centre which can be planned, managed and promoted in a positive way.

- 3.19.3 The approach will be to focus and promote a variety of uses within the town centre, provided their impact reinforces this vision and can be accommodated without harm to the local community or to its townscape character. The Council will prepare a more detailed Area Action Plan for the town centre which will provide the framework for future change, identify development opportunities and facilitate the changes necessary to promote its vitality and viability.
- 3.19.4 This Core Strategy therefore provides the broad policy context within which further detailed policy development can take place.

#### **Policy CS 14**

**Measures to improve Epsom town centre, including new development, will be encouraged especially where they help it to adapt and reinforce its role in meeting the needs of the local community and acting as a focus for a range of activities (including retail, cultural, business, leisure and residential) and where they recognise and build on the distinctive character of the place.**

**Development should contribute to the following key objectives for the town centre:**

- **Creating a diversity, richness and balance of uses which will contribute to a flourishing day-time and night-time economy, help satisfy community needs and enhance environmental quality and sustainability;**
- **Ensuring that physical and land use changes recognise and build on the distinctive character different parts of Epsom town centre already have, and contribute to conserving and developing a “sense of place”;**
- **Improving the pedestrian and cyclist environments by creating new links and developing a street network which is designed with their needs in mind, and which reduces the adverse impact roads and traffic have on the town;**
- **Ensuring the town has a clear spatial structure for future growth and change and that development can be used to protect and enhance that pattern;**
- **Developing a greater sense of safety and security for users, both during the day and at night, and improving the perception of the town as active, inclusive and safe.**

- 3.19.5 The preparation of the Town Centre Area Action Plan, and other documents, will provide the detailed planning policies required to facilitate practical partnerships to help achieve these objectives. Future development proposals will be assessed against criteria-based policies in the Development Control Policies DPD which will focus on regulating change so as to maintain the right range and mix of uses, while promoting design which enhances the uniqueness and strengths of the town centre.

#### **Indicators**

- Amount of retail floorspace gained/lost within town centre, and percentage within defined primary or secondary shopping areas
- Amount and percentage of all completed residential, business and cultural/leisure development within the town centre

**Targets**

- Retail floorspace gained/ lost in town centre: Targets will be set out in the Site Allocations DPD and/ or the Epsom Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD.
- Residential, retail, business, cultural and leisure: Targets will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD and/ or the Epsom Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD.

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Preparation and implementation of the Town Centre Area Action Plan and Development Control Policies DPDs
- Through the development control process
- Assessment against criteria-based policies in DPDs which will focus on maintaining an appropriate mix and range of uses, ensuring high quality sustainable design etc
- Collaborative working with the Local Strategic Partnership and the local Business Partnership in the development and review of the “Strategy for Epsom Town Centre”

## 3.20 *Role of local centres*

- 3.20.1 Local centres provide an important and essential service particularly for residents who wish to shop locally or who are dependent on the facilities they offer. They provide local employment and reduce the need to travel. They represent a highly sustainable option which offers an alternative type of service to larger supermarkets. The Council will protect their retail viability and vitality and ensure that it is not undermined by potentially damaging development elsewhere. It will be important regularly to assess the health of the existing local centres, and to ensure development respects their scale, function and identity. The Council will also consider the need for the designation and establishment of new local centres which may not currently be identified. Local centres will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.20.2 Ewell village centre provides an important local facility, but its special historic fabric is under pressure and particular care will be needed to ensure new development enhances its vitality and viability. The Council has embarked on a Conservation Appraisal in the village which will provide an assessment of both the positive and negative features of the environment, and will define elements which should be improved. This will provide the foundation of further policies in the Site Allocations DPD which will be aimed at the revitalisation of the village centre.

**Policy CS 15**

**Measures to protect the role, function and needs of the local centres will be encouraged. The Council will resist proposals which are likely to damage or undermine the retail function of these centres or detract from their vitality and viability.**

**Stoneleigh and Ewell village are the largest local centres in the Borough and are shown on the Key Diagram. Other local centres will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD including the proposed new shopping facility at Horton (hospital cluster).**

- 3.20.3 Other policies contained in this Core Strategy, such as those for transport, housing and the environment, will have an impact on the achievement of the objectives for the economic and social vitality of the local centres. The Council will ensure that a co-ordinated approach is followed and that proposals which would be likely to undermine the role and functions of the local centres will be resisted.
- 3.20.4 More detailed policies aimed at protecting existing local centres and safeguarding the balance of uses within them will be contained in the Development Control Policies DPD. Future development proposals will be assessed against criteria-based policies which will focus on protecting and enhancing existing uses and encouraging high quality design. Specific site opportunities will be covered in the Site Allocations DPD.

**Indicators**

- Amount of retail space gained/ lost in the local centres

**Target**

- Target will be defined in Site Allocations DPD (local centres will be identified in the accompanying Proposal Map)

**Delivery Mechanism**

- Development control decisions based on policies which encourage an appropriate balance of uses within the local centre, and high quality and sustainable design
- Liaison and joint working with the Local Strategic Partnership, Chamber of Commerce and the local Business Partnership

## Managing Transport and Travel

### 3.21 *Our Approach*

- 3.21.1 Traffic congestion is a key concern amongst residents, and is reflected by its inclusion as a key priority area in the Community Strategy Action Plan. Traffic congestion costs Surrey's businesses hundreds of millions of pounds each year, with other detrimental economic, environmental and social consequences.
- 3.21.2 Car ownership is high in the Borough with 1.37 cars for each household, compared to the national average of 1.1 (Census 2001). This is a 19% increase from the 1991 levels and over 40% of households in the Borough now have two or more cars. This is a determining factor in Epsom having what some perceive as the worst traffic congestion in Surrey. It is also due to the network of roads that run through the Borough, some which connect to key roads, such as the M25 and the A3, and which are therefore used as links or when principal roads get congested. The main roads in the Borough (A24, A240 and A232) do not just provide access to neighbouring towns, but they also connect towns outside the Borough to each other, thereby creating more through traffic (e.g. Leatherhead and Ashted to Kingston or Sutton).
- 3.21.3 One of the key principles to assist in achieving more sustainable development is to reduce reliance on the private car. The Borough is the most urbanised district in Surrey, but its compact urban form does provide potential for encouraging alternatives to car travel. The approach embodied in this Core Strategy will seek to manage travel demand in an effective and sustainable way, while improving the range of choice and responding to the needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- 3.21.4 Surrey County Council is responsible for managing the highway network in Surrey and has produced a Local Transport Plan (LTP) covering the period 2006/07 to 2010/11 (March 2006). The document has five key objectives:
- tackling congestion to reduce delays
  - increasing accessibility to key services
  - improving road safety and security
  - enhancing the environment and quality of life
  - improving maintenance of the transport network
- 3.21.5 Epsom is identified as an 'all-purpose centre' and, when funds allow following the initial focus on the three regional hubs identified in the South East Plan (Guildford, Woking and Redhill / Reigate), the Borough will be a focus for measures to tackle congestion and improve the public transport system and cycle network. A specific proposal for a major highway improvement scheme - the Kiln Lane link, Epsom - is included in the LTP and in the implementation programme submitted in support of the South East Plan. This new road will greatly improve accessibility to the Nonsuch and Longmead industrial estates, with considerable benefits for pedestrians and cyclists. Land will be allocated for this infrastructure improvement in the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.21.6 The Council will continue to work closely with the Highway Authority to ensure the coordination of proposals within the LDF and the Local Transport Plan. The location of



development and the way that development is carried out are important factors in helping achieve the priorities of the Transport Plan. Choices about where new housing and employment uses are located for example, and patterns of travel that result, will be important factors in helping to reduce reliance on the private car. Encouraging alternative forms of travel and securing access to the most sustainable modes of travel such as public transport, walking or cycling, represent approaches which aim to help achieve a new balance between non motorised transport, public transport and private car use.

- 3.21.7 In line with the Corporate Plan and Council's Health Strategy the Council will aim to secure improved transport facilities that are inclusive to all members of the community, and will promote the development of Travel Plans. Additionally, the Council will aim to ensure as far as possible, development minimises traffic problems and maximises the potential benefits of accessibility and new infrastructure to the wider community. The Council will ensure that new development proposals will not compromise highway safety.
- 3.21.8 The Council will require new developments to meet specified parking standards, details of which will be contained in the Development Control Policies DPD. It is important that new developments help to mitigate any adverse impacts they may otherwise have on transport and travel. Where appropriate, S106 planning obligations will be used to ensure that new developments provide for related transport improvements and fund other appropriate mitigation measures.
- 3.21.9 In Epsom town centre, where the Community Strategy has identified the need to improve accessibility, particularly by public transport, the Council will continue to implement a parking regime that manages parking demand, while supplementing this with positive measures to reduce the demand for parking.

#### **Policy CS 16**

**Encouragement will be given to development proposals and management policies which foster an improved and integrated transport network and facilitate a shift of emphasis to non-car modes as a means of access to services and facilities. In particular the Council will work with the County Council and other relevant agencies in Epsom town centre to reduce the impact of roads and traffic movement, to support the development of opportunities for the use of public transport, and to enhance the pedestrian environment.**

**Throughout the Borough the Council will seek to ensure that highway design responds to the positive characteristics of an area and delivers a high quality public realm for all users. In creating new places, highway design should ensure that the needs of vehicular traffic do not predominate to the detriment of other modes of travel or to the quality of the environment created.**

**Development proposals will be required to be consistent with, and contribute to, the implementation of the Surrey Local Transport Plan and should:**

- **minimise the need for travel, through measures such as travel plans or the provision or enhancement of local services and facilities;**
- **provide safe, convenient and attractive accesses for all, including the elderly and disabled, and others with restricted mobility, and provide links to the existing network of footways, bridleways and cycleways, so as to maximise opportunities for their use;**

- **be appropriate for the highways network in terms of the volume and nature of traffic generated, and ensure that the safety, convenience and free flow of traffic using the highway are not adversely affected;**
- **avoid highway improvements which harm the environment and character of the area;**
- **provide appropriate and effective parking provision, both on and off-site, and vehicular servicing arrangements;**
- **ensure that vehicular traffic generated does not create new, or exacerbate existing, on street parking problems, nor materially increase other traffic problems, taking account of any contributions that have been secured to the provision of off-site works.**

**All major developments should be well located for convenient access by non-car modes, including walking, cycling and high quality public transport.**

**Land will be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD for the construction of the Kiln Lane link road.**

#### **Indicators**

- % of major residential and commercial developments that encourage the use of non-car modes of transport
- % of major residential developments located within 30 minutes public transport time of health, education, retail and employment facilities

#### **Target**

- All major residential and commercial developments should encourage the use of non-car modes of transport
- All major residential developments should be within 30 minutes public transport time of health, education, retail and employment facilities

#### **Delivery Mechanisms**

- Liaison and close working with Surrey County Council (transport division) and other key transport infrastructure providers
- Through development control by the use of more detailed policies in the Development Control Policies DPD, and through negotiation over developer contributions and S106 planning obligation monies

## **4** How will the Core Strategy be delivered?

### **4.1** *Agencies and Resources*

- 4.1.1 We recognise that we cannot achieve the vision we set out at the start of this document on our own. Many other agencies, organisations and individuals will be involved in achieving the objectives of this Core Strategy. The Epsom and Ewell Community Strategy, through the work of the Local Strategic Partnership, will be a major driver of change, as will be the work of other Borough Council and County Council services.
- 4.1.2 The delivery of the outcomes we seek has major resource implications. We recognise that the development industry has a key role to play, bringing investment to the Borough, providing new homes and jobs, helping to bring about regeneration and contributing towards the improvement of local infrastructure. Many of the proposals in this document and those that follow will depend largely upon private sector developers. Other agencies and utilities will make a significant contribution in resource terms, as will the voluntary sector.
- 4.1.3 The Borough Council will also, where appropriate, use resources beyond just its planning powers to help deliver what we propose in this strategy, including its own land holdings. The Council and other agencies will continue to work together to draw resources from other sources where this is possible.

### **4.2** *Monitoring*

- 4.2.1 Each policy in the Core Strategy contains a section on how it will be delivered and summarising what indicators will be used to measure our progress. We shall use these to check on how effective the Core Strategy's policies are in helping address the issues set out. Where appropriate, a target is also identified, or a specific reference is made to where targets will be developed in later local development documents.
- 4.2.2 The suggested indicators form part of a wider collection of indicators, which will be set out in the Council's 'Monitoring Strategy'. This will be used to assess both the performance of the LDF policies and progress towards wider sustainability and Community Strategy objectives. This is part of a collaborative approach to data and spatial analysis being developed in conjunction with the Community Strategy process.
- 4.2.3 The indicators specific to this Core Strategy will be monitored by the Council and a number of them will be reported through the Annual Monitoring Report. This will provide the opportunity to keep the effectiveness of the strategy under regular review and to highlight the need for the review of this or other documents. This can be achieved by bringing forward changes to the Council's Local Development Scheme.

## Appendix 1: Expected components of housing supply 2007-2022

15 year housing provision target (net) - Policy CS7	Dwellings	2,715
Potential Oversupply 2006-07 (275 - 181)	94	
Residual of large sites <sup>1</sup> (under construction)	351	
Forthcoming large sites (with planning permission)	888	
Forthcoming medium sites <sup>2</sup> (with planning permission)	149	
Forthcoming small sites <sup>3</sup> (with planning permission)	209	
Windfall estimate - medium sites (43 x 11.5 years) <sup>4</sup>	495	
Windfall estimate - small sites (32 x 8.5 years) <sup>4</sup>	272	
Sub-total	2,458	
Dwellings to be allocated in Site Allocations DPD		257

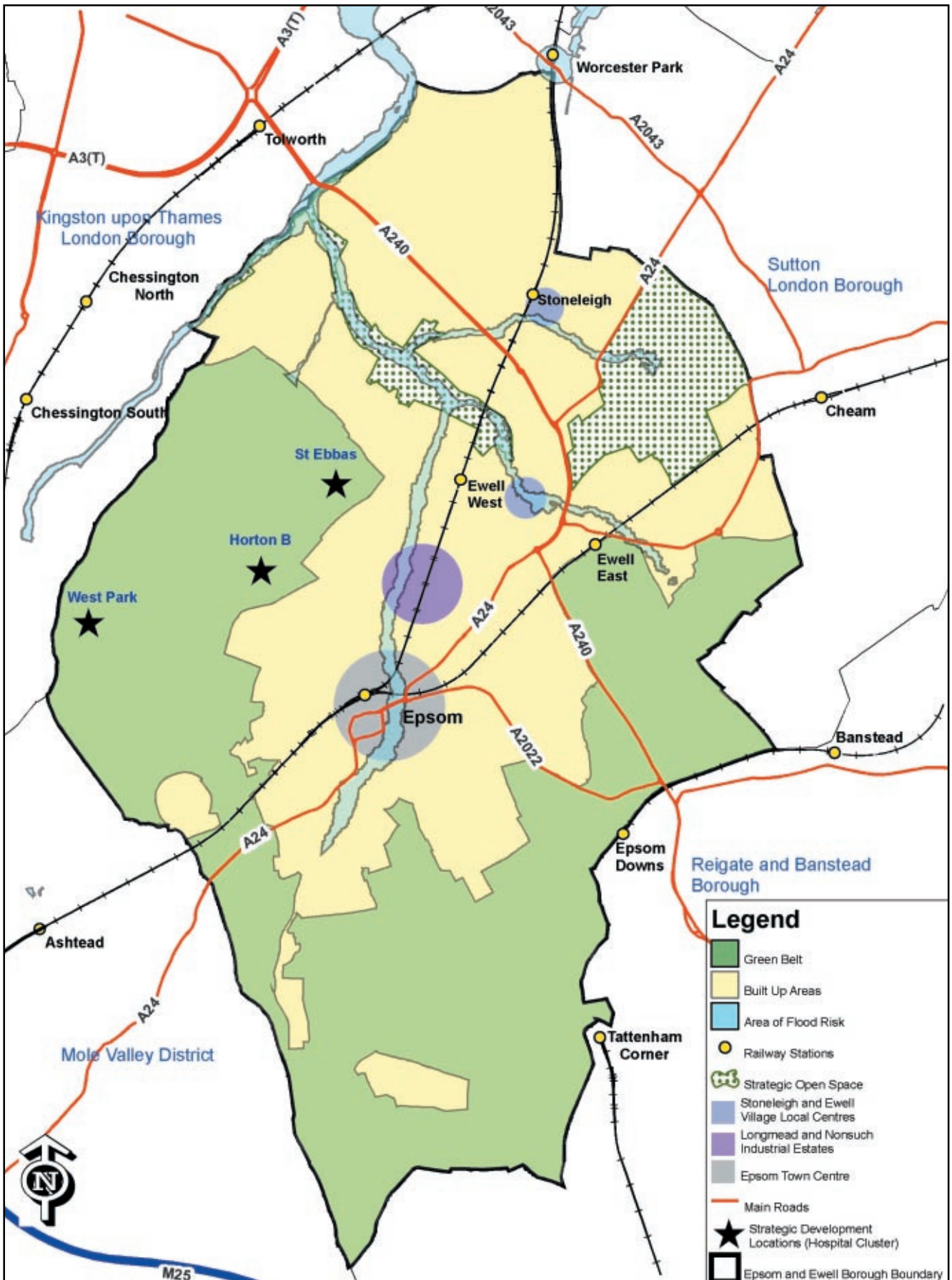
### Footnotes to Appendix 1

- <sup>1</sup> Large site provides 10 or more net dwellings on a site area of 0.4 hectares or above.
- <sup>2</sup> Medium site provides 10 or more net dwellings on a site area of under 0.4 hectares.
- <sup>3</sup> Small site provides 1 to 9 net dwellings regardless of size.
- <sup>4</sup> Detailed explanation in Core Strategy Position Paper 1 Housing Provision November 2006

## Notes

## Notes

# Epsom & Ewell Core Strategy 2007 Key Diagram





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