

Surrey Heath Borough Council

Executive

28th February 2022

Surrey Heath Local Development Scheme 2022 – 2025

Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Adrian Page – Planning and People
Strategic Director/Head of Service	Bob Watson/Gavin Chinniah
Report Author:	Jane Reeves – Planning Policy Manager
Key Decision:	No
Wards Affected:	Whole Borough

1. Summary and purpose

- 1.1 Local Authorities are required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the future planning documents the Council will be producing within a three-year period and the timescales and key milestones for their preparation. The Council last published an LDS in 2021 covering the period to 2024.
- 1.2 The proposed LDS attached at Annex 1 focuses on the preparation of a new Surrey Heath Local Plan and sets out the milestones and timescales to adoption in 2023. It replaces the current LDS which covers the period 2021 – 2024. The purpose of this report is to seek Executive agreement to the revised Local Plan preparation timetable.
- 1.3 The key stages and dates for preparation are set out in the following table:

Local Plan preparation Stage	Date
Consultation on Issues and Preferred Options	June - July 2018
Consultation on a Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) (THIS STAGE)	March – May 2022
Consultation on Gypsy and Traveller allocations	Summer 2022
Consultation on a Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19)	January – February 2023
Submission to the Secretary of State for Examination	June 2023
Inspector's Report ¹	October 2023
Adoption	December 2023

¹ Inspectors Report and adoption dependent on the Planning Inspectorate and the timetable for the Local Plan Examination and the need for consultation on any proposed Modifications to the Plan

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that:the Surrey Heath Local Development Scheme (LDS) attached at Annex 1, covering the period 2022 – 2025 be agreed and published on the website.

3. Background and Supporting Information

- 3.1 The new Surrey Heath Local Plan, once adopted, will replace current planning policies in the saved Local Plan, 2000, the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document and the Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan. It will provide a robust and up-to-date planning framework for future development in the Borough.
- 3.2 The timetable set out in the LDS is based upon current planning policy and legislation. The need for a new LDS has arisen due to a delay in preparing the Draft Local Plan for consultation and hence changes to the Draft Plan consultation dates and subsequent stages are required. The delays have arisen due to the need to determine a robust spatial strategy as well as exploring additional mitigation options for the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and continued investigation of options for Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
- 3.3 The Government is proposing new planning reforms which, if introduced in the next eighteen months, may impact upon the Local Plan scope and timetable. Other risk factors are set out later in this Report and Section 7 of the LDS.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The LDS focus is on the production of the new Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038. The Government has set a requirement for up-to-date Local Plans to be in place by December 2023 or risk Government intervention in the plan making process.
- 4.2 A Local Plan Issues and Options consultation took place in summer 2018. The revised LDS timetable reflects delays to the preparation of a draft Local Plan for consultation and subsequent changes to the remainder of the timetable. Consultation on the proposed Submission Local Plan is now anticipated in early 2023 with adoption in December 2023.
- 4.3 The LDS also identifies the preparation of the following two Supplementary Planning Documents which will be prepared to support policies in the new Local Plan. Timetables for these will be placed on the website once these are drafted:
- Parking Standards SPD
 - Climate Change and Green Infrastructure SPD

- 4.4 A draft LDS was considered and supported by the Local Plan Working Group in January 2022.

5. Proposal and Alternative Options

5.1 The available options for the Executive to consider are:

- i. to approve the LDS as set out in Annex 1 of this report; or
- ii. to approve the LDS as set out in Annex 1 of this report with changes; or
- iii. to not agree the LDS as set out in Annex 1 of this report.

6. Contribution to the Council's Five Year Strategy

6.1 The LDS sets out a timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan which once produced will help to deliver on the following themes:

- i. **Environment** - enhance and improve access to the Borough's cherished green spaces and natural environments for the enjoyment of generations to come, balancing our commitments to housing delivery and economic growth.
- ii. **Environment** – tackle Climate Change, working with communities and partners.
- iii. **Health & Quality of Life** – provide infrastructure that would support our ambition to ensure everyone can access a safe, quality home to meet their needs.
- iv. **Economy** – invest in our towns, villages and communities, supporting our existing businesses and attracting new ones.
- v. **Economy** – work with partners to improve to the Borough's infrastructure.
- vi. **Effective & Responsive Council** – advocate on behalf of our community on issues outside our direct control.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 There are no immediate resource implications arising beyond those allowed for within current budgets. Resources will be needed in the following two financial years to deliver the Local Plan and these will be sought through the usual budget setting process.

8. Section 151 Officer Comments

8.1 There are no additional budgetary implications of this report outside of existing budgets.

9. Legal and Governance Issues

9.1 The preparation of a Local Development Scheme and Local Plan are statutory requirements of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Local Plan must be prepared in line with relevant legislation as well as having regard to national planning policy and guidance. The Secretary of State can intervene to put a new LDS in place where the current one is out of date.

10. Monitoring Officer Comments

10.1 No matters arising.

11. Other Considerations and Impacts

11.1 No matters arising.

12. Environment and Climate Change

12.1 The LDS sets out a timetable for the production of the Local Plan and in itself does not give rise to any impact upon environmental matters or climate change.

13. Equalities and Human Rights

13.1 No matters arising.

14. Risk Management

14.1 The LDS identifies the risks to meeting the Local Plan milestones and sets out some mitigation to each risk. Of note are that the Draft Local Plan does not yet include sufficient Gypsy and Traveller sites to meet the needs identified in the technical background evidence and a further consultation on this issue will therefore be needed in the summer 2022. In addition, the date for submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination is now later than previously proposed. The timetable for Examination and the receipt of the Inspector's Report prior to the adoption of the Plan by December 2023 will be challenging, although this part of the process will be the responsibility of the Planning Inspectorate rather than the Council.

14.2 The Government is also proposing changes to planning policy and legislation although at this time the extent and exact timing of these is not known and will need to be monitored as the plan progresses.

15. Community Engagement

15.1 The LDS sets out the stages at which the Local Plan will be subject to consultation.

16. Annexes

16.1 Annex 1 – Draft Local Development Scheme 2022 – 2025

17. Background Papers

17.1 None.



Draft
Local Development Scheme
2022-2025

Foreword

This document rolls forward the Council's current Local Development Scheme (LDS) to identify the scope and timetable for the preparation of a new Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038.

It covers the time period 2022 – 2025 although it also identifies work done before that time where appropriate.

This LDS was agreed by Executive on xxx.

This document was produced by the:
Planning Policy and Conservation Team
Regulatory Services
Surrey Heath Borough Council
Surrey Heath House
Knoll Road
CAMBERLEY
Surrey GU15 3HD

E-mail: planning.policy@surreyheath.gov.uk
Telephone Number 01276 70100

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out Surrey Heath Borough Council's programme for preparing a new Local Plan. It outlines the Local Plan content and a timetable for each stage of the Local Plan preparation. The LDS also identifies other documents that are to be prepared by the Council to support the Local Plan.
- 1.2 This Local Development Scheme updates the previous LDS which covered the period 2021 to 2024.
- 1.3 The Local Plan is accompanied by other planning documents including:
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
 - Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
 - Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)
- 1.4 Throughout this document a number of abbreviations are used in place of the full terminology. These are set out in a Glossary of Terms which can be found at the back of this document.
- 1.5 The timetable for preparing the Surrey Heath Local Plan is based on current legislation and national planning policy and guidance. However, in August 2020 the Government published a Planning White Paper seeking views on radical reforms to the planning system and in 2021 announced proposals for a Planning Bill. At the current time there is no clarity as to what planning reforms will be taken forward, or of the timetable for such reforms. In line with Government advice, the Council is therefore progressing with the Local Plan under current legislation until such time as it can no longer do so or it is not prudent to do so having regard to any transitional arrangements.
- 1.6 Further information on the Local Plan, supporting evidence and other related documents can be viewed on the Council's website at <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy>

2. The Purpose and Content of the Local Development Scheme

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) states that Local Planning Authorities must prepare and maintain a scheme to be known as the Local Development Scheme.² The scheme is expected to specify which documents are to be development plan documents (DPD's), the geographic areas the DPD's will cover and a timetable for their preparation and review of these documents.³
- 2.2 The LDS has 3 main purposes. These are:
- To inform the public and stakeholders of the policy documents that will make up the Local Plan and the timescales in which they can expect these documents to be prepared;
 - To establish and reflect Council priorities and to enable work-programmes to be set for preparation of the documents; and
 - To set a timetable for the review of the documents once they have been prepared.

3. The Development Plan for Surrey Heath

- 3.1 The current Development Plan for the Borough, i.e. documents containing adopted planning policies is made up of the following:
- Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2028, 2012;
 - Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan (2014);
 - Saved Polices from the 2000 Surrey Heath Local Plan;
 - Saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan which relates to development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area; and,
 - Windlesham Neighbourhood Plan, 'made' on 12 June 2019.
- 3.2 The Council is preparing a single new Local Plan to cover the period to 2038. This Local Plan will set out strategic policies on issues such as housing and employment, allocation of sites for development and Development Management policies. This Plan will, on adoption, replace all of the current Development Plan policies, except any contained in Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.3 Surrey Heath currently has one 'made' Neighbourhood Plan covering the Parish of Windlesham. As set out above, this Plan also forms part of the Development Plan for the borough. Two further areas are designated as Neighbourhood Plan Areas. Further information on neighbourhood planning in the Borough can be found at <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning> .

² S15 (1) of the Planning & Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

³ S15 (2) of the Planning & Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

4. Other relevant planning documents

4.1 The existing Development Plan is supported by a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). These set out further information as to how policies will be implemented and the expectations from applicants in meeting policy requirements. The following SPD's have been adopted by the Council and will continue to be a significant material consideration in determining planning applications unless they are withdrawn or replaced:

- Deepcut SPD
- Developer Contributions SPD
- Infrastructure Delivery SPD
- Lightwater Village Design statement
- Local Heritage Assets SPD
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy SPD
- Camberley Town Centre Masterplan and Public Realm SPD
- Residential Design Guide SPD
- Western Urban Area Character SPD
- Yorktown Landscape Strategy SPD
- West End Village Design Statement SPD

These documents will be carried forward to support the future Local Plan. They can be viewed at <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents>

4.2 Two further SPDs have currently been identified to be prepared during the LDS period 2022 – 2025. These are:

Parking Standards SPD

This will set out standards for vehicular and cycle parking across the Borough as well as the expectation for provision of electric vehicle charging points.

Climate Change and Green Infrastructure SPD

This will set out detailed guidance on how new development can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, deliver a Green Infrastructure Strategy and provide further guidance for the delivery of biodiversity net gain.

4.3 Information on the timetables for these SPDs and on any additional SPDs will be made available on the above webpage when they are available.

4.4 In preparing the Local Plan the Council must prepare a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)⁴ as well as appropriate evidence to support the content of the Local Plan.

4.5 The Council must also produce an annual Authority Monitoring Report which includes information on how the policies in the Local Plan are being delivered.

⁴ See Glossary for further detail on these assessments

5. **Statement of Community Involvement**

- 5.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will consult the local community and other interested parties on developing planning policy for Surrey Heath, and on significant planning applications. The current SCI can be viewed at <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/SCI>.

6. **The Timetable for the Preparation of the Local Plan**

- 6.1 **Table 1** sets out more detail on the scope of the Local Plan and the timetable for key stages of production up to adoption in 2023.
- 6.2 The Adopted Policies Map showing the policy and site allocation boundaries will be revised as necessary upon the adoption of the Local Plan.

Table 1 Local Plan Summary Programme and Timetable 2022 – 2025

Document Profile	Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038
Coverage Status	Borough Wide Development Plan Document (DPD)
Subject	<p>The Local Plan will set out the Council’s approach to strategic policies, land allocations and detailed policies to help deliver the vision and objectives for the Borough; including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outlining the requirement for new housing/economic land across the Borough and how these requirements will be met;• Allocating sites for housing;• Specific place based policies;• Policies relating to provision of affordable housing, specialist housing and Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation;• Green Belt policies;• Site specific policies for employment sites;• Boundaries of retail centres, and a strategy for Camberley Town Centre;• Infrastructure provision;• Policies on green infrastructure and nature conservation;• Policies on the historic environment.

Timetable:

Local Plan Stage	Details	Date
Consultation on Issues and Options and Preferred Approach; and Revised Scoping Report and Interim Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment	This is an early consultation stage seeking views on broad policy approaches and accompanied by an Interim Sustainability Appraisal.	June – July 2018
Consultation on a Draft Plan and Draft Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (Regulation 18)	This is an early consultation stage seeking views on draft policies and site allocations and accompanied by an updated Interim Sustainability Appraisal and supporting evidence.	March – May 2022
Consultation on Gypsy and Traveller allocations	A specific consultation on potential site allocations to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers over the Plan period.	Summer 2022
Consultation on a Pre-Submission Plan (statutory 6 weeks) and Final Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (Regulation 19)	The Council publishes its 'final' version of the Plan that it intends to submit for Examination. Updated/additional supporting evidence including a Sustainability Appraisal Report and Habitat Regulation Assessment is also published.	January – February 2023
Submission of the Plan and supporting evidence to the Secretary of State for Examination (Regulation 22)	The Council sends the Plan, the evidence base and any representations received from the consultation above to the Secretary of State for independent examination. The Plan will be assessed to see if it is legally compliant and meets tests of 'soundness' set out in national policy ⁵ .	June 2023
Examination Hearing sessions (subject to Inspector availability)	The Examination will usually include public hearing sessions run by the Local Plan Inspector and based around matters and questions set by the Inspector.	August 2023
Inspector's Report (estimate – depends for example, on complexity of the Examination and the need for consultation on Plan Modifications)	The Inspector will issue a written report recommending modifications to the Local Plan.	October 2023
Local Plan Adoption	The Council adopts the Plan as part of the Surrey Heath Development Plan for the purposes of determining planning applications ⁶ .	December 2023

⁵ See para 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁶ This date is dependent upon the need to do any further consultation on Modifications to the Local Plan (prior to the Inspectors Report), and on receipt of the Inspectors Report.

7. Programme Management and Responsibilities

- 7.1 The scope and timetable for production of the Local Plan is set out in Table 1. Any essential adjustments to the programme will be made as part of the next review of the LDS.
- 7.2 The Local Plan is a key corporate project and along with other key corporate projects is monitored quarterly through the Councils internal performance monitoring systems.

Council Procedures and Reporting Protocols

- 7.3 All decisions of the Executive are subject to call in by Scrutiny Committee. The Local Plan will be reported to Full Council for approval as Policy Documents of the Council at the Submission and Adoption stages.

Risk Assessment

- 7.4 The main areas of risk to the proposed programme are considered to be from the following:
- Staff Changes – the loss of any member of the Policy team is a risk to the overall timetable in that local and technical knowledge is lost with that staff member, including in terms of work undertaken so far on the Local Plan as well as potential gaps in resources in the time it takes to recruit replacement staff.
 - Project Management –Whilst there is a high level of expertise within the Policy Team there are some supporting evidence studies that require the use of consultants and input from other agencies such as Surrey County Council. Early procurement and good project management will be required to meet the timetable, however, resources in other agencies that are critical to some studies such as the Transport Assessment are outside the control of the Council.
 - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) – the Council must ensure that any long term strategy does not have a significant effect on the integrity of the SPA. The need for agreement with third parties and the need for sufficient mitigation through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to ensure that housing can be delivered will continue to be a risk.
 - Delivery of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation – finding acceptable and deliverable sites to meet future needs for pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople is potentially a risk to meeting the Local Plan timetable.

- Changes to planning legislation and guidance – the Government has set out its intention to reform the planning process including changes to the way in which local plans are prepared. The timetable for introducing these reforms, and their exact nature is not yet known so it is possible that future changes will impact on the timetable set out in this LDS.
- In many instances the delivery of the long term planning strategy is by other responsible organisations. Delivery may be affected by a range of different factors. The Council will work closely with delivery agencies through the preparation of the Local Plan documents.

7.5 In addition to the above, the long-term impact of Covid-19 on the way in which consultations can be carried out and on other elements of the Local Plan preparation process continue to have potential implications at the time of preparing this LDS.

Monitoring and Review

- 7.6 The LDS will be reviewed through the annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which will be produced to the year ending 31st March. The AMR includes:
- Progress on plan preparation milestones;
 - Information on the extent to which policies within the Development Plan are being achieved against key indicators and targets;
 - A recommendation as to whether any policies need reviewing.

Glossary of Terms

Throughout this document a number of abbreviations have been used as follows:

AMR	Authority Monitoring Report. An annual report which includes an update of how Local Plan policies are being delivered.
DPD	Development Plan Document. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 refers to these as the Local Plan. It is the main planning policy document produced by the Council and forms the statutory development plan for the area.
CS&DMP DPD	Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD. The Council's current Local Plan and is a Development Plan Document.
LDS	Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out Surrey Heath Borough Council's programme for preparing future planning documents. It outlines what documents the Council will be working on and a timetable for the production of these documents.
SA/SEA	Sustainability Appraisal incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a tool used to appraise planning policy documents in order to promote sustainable development. Social, environmental and economic aspects are all taken into consideration. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a compulsory requirement under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the 2001/42/EEC European Directive.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Council's approach for involving the community in the preparation and revision of local development documents and planning applications.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of plans and programmes. In plan making it is usually incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal document.
SHBC	Surrey Heath Borough Council. Surrey Heath Borough Council is the Local Planning Authority.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document These are documents that provide further information and detail to the policies within the Local Plan and how they can be met.