

East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan Examination Statement from Guildford Borough Council

Gavin Stonham, Senior Planning Officer
Gavin.stonham@guildford.gov.uk

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1. The purpose of this document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out background information for the examination of the East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan and to provide a statement from Guildford Borough Council, which sets out the Council's views on the document.

2. Legal requirements

- 2.1 The Council has reviewed East Horsley Parish Council's submission documents against the requirements of regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and other relevant legislation and is satisfied that the required documents have been submitted, and that the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) have been met.

3. Statement from Guildford Borough Council

- 3.1 The Council made detailed comments on the Regulation 14 version of the neighbourhood plan, which suggesting ways to improve the effectiveness of the plan's policies, as well as pointing out whether they would meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)¹. The basic conditions test is the one the inspector will consider at examination, so this is what this statement solely focuses on.

Basic conditions

- 3.2 We believe that the East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan meets most of the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)². However, we have concerns that it may conflict with the following conditions:
 - a. having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan).
 - d. the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 3.3 The reasons for our concern are set out below.

¹ [excluding 2b, c, 3 to 5 as required by 38C(5)]

² [excluding 2b, c, 3 to 5 as required by 38C(5)]

- 3.4 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states that '*Proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies in the draft neighbourhood plan*'³. It also states that policies '*should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence*'⁴.

Policy EH-H1: Housing Mix

- 3.5 The target percentage ranges for housing types in Policy EH-H1 do not match the percentage need figures set out on page 3 of East Horsley Parish Council's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The table on page 3 of the HNA, which breaks housing need down by age band, indicates that only between an estimated 1% and 8% of housing need in East Horsley from 2017 to 2033 is likely to be from first time buyers. However, policy EH-H1 requires 15%-25% of all new dwellings to be homes that would be appropriate for this housing type category. The HNA indicates up to an estimated 80% of estimated housing need during the next 17 years to be from the elderly, or 'downsizers' (table 3 and para. 1.9). Policy EH-H1 on the other hand requires a combined total of 40%-60% of new dwellings in these categories, which is quite a lot less.
- 3.6 The discrepancy between these figures suggests that Policy EH-H1 is not fully supported by the evidence in the HNA. The reliability of the data in the HNA should be reasonably up-to-date as the methodology in that document states that it is based on data in the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2015), adjusted to reflect the particular features of the neighbourhood area. The SHMA sets out the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area in accordance with paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, whilst the SHMA breaks down housing need according to number of bedrooms, the overlaps between the housing type categories in the HNA and in policy EH-H1 (1-2 bedrooms, 2-3 bedrooms and 3-4 bedrooms) are confusing and make it difficult to draw the clear links between evidence and policy required by paragraph 41 of the NPPG.
- 3.7 Without revision of this policy, or clearer evidence to support the figures within it, we are concerned that it may result in over provision of housing for certain groups in the community and under provision for others.
- 3.8 Paragraph 41 of the NPPG states that appropriate evidence must support neighbourhood plan policies whilst paragraph 41 states that neighbourhood plan policies should take account of latest and up-to-date evidence of housing need. We therefore ask that the examiner consider whether the current-worded policy fully meets **basic condition a.** and **basic condition d.**, or if it needs revision to do so.

Policy EH-H2: Bungalows

- 3.9 Although the HNA indicates significant demand for homes for the elderly, the only evidence supporting policy EH-H2 (which requires at least 10% of all dwellings built on sites of more than 20 dwellings to be bungalows) to which the plan refers is the household survey by Surrey Community Action (referred to on page 3 of the Analysis of Housing Types).

³ Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 41-040-20160211

⁴ Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306

- 3.10 The household survey was distributed to households in the parish, and although it achieved a reasonable (54%) response rate, we are concerned that the results of that alone may not be robust enough evidence, as required by paragraph 41 of the NPPG. The SHMA considers the need for various housing types across the entire Housing Market Area, which includes needs of residents from other parts of the borough, or elsewhere in the HMA, that may be interested in properties of the type that could become available to buy or rent in East Horsley. We feel therefore that the policy may need at least some cross-references to evidence in the SHMA to support the household survey's findings.

Policy EH-H6 Thatcher's Hotel site

- 3.11 The Council removed policy A36: Hotel, Guildford Road, East Horsley, which allocated this site in the 2016 version of the Proposed Submission Local Plan for 48 homes, from the 2017 version following a recent appeal for redevelopment (under planning application 15/P/0235). The inspector's report, dated 9th February 2017, gave the current 2003 adopted Local Plan policy T4 substantial weight in his decision to refuse this appeal and concluded that there was insufficient evidence to justify loss of the hotel.
- 3.12 We have no objection to policy EH-H6, as we feel that the housing allocation does not conflict with the Local Plan, which is now silent about the site. Criterion (g) of policy EH-H6 states that the hotel's loss must be appropriately justified in accordance with the Local Plan. This means that a developer would have to provide justification in accordance with adopted policy T4 (or its emerging replacement policy E6) before we could consider approving a proposal for residential development on this site. This seems to us to be a reasonable approach.

Policy EH-H7 (c) East Horsley Design Code: New Roads

- 3.13 Our comments on the Regulation 14 draft version of the neighbourhood plan commented that it was unclear how grass verges can be laid out to encourage cycling and walking (bullet point iii of the draft plan) as they are not substitutes for footpaths and not suitable for walking or cycling on. The Submission Version of the Plan has removed this sentence but left in the requirement for grass verges alongside new roads rather than tarmac pavements. Bullet point 7, core planning principle 11 of the NPPF states that planning should '*...actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable*'. The examiner is therefore asked to check whether there may be a conflict between this part of the policy and **basic conditions a. and d.**

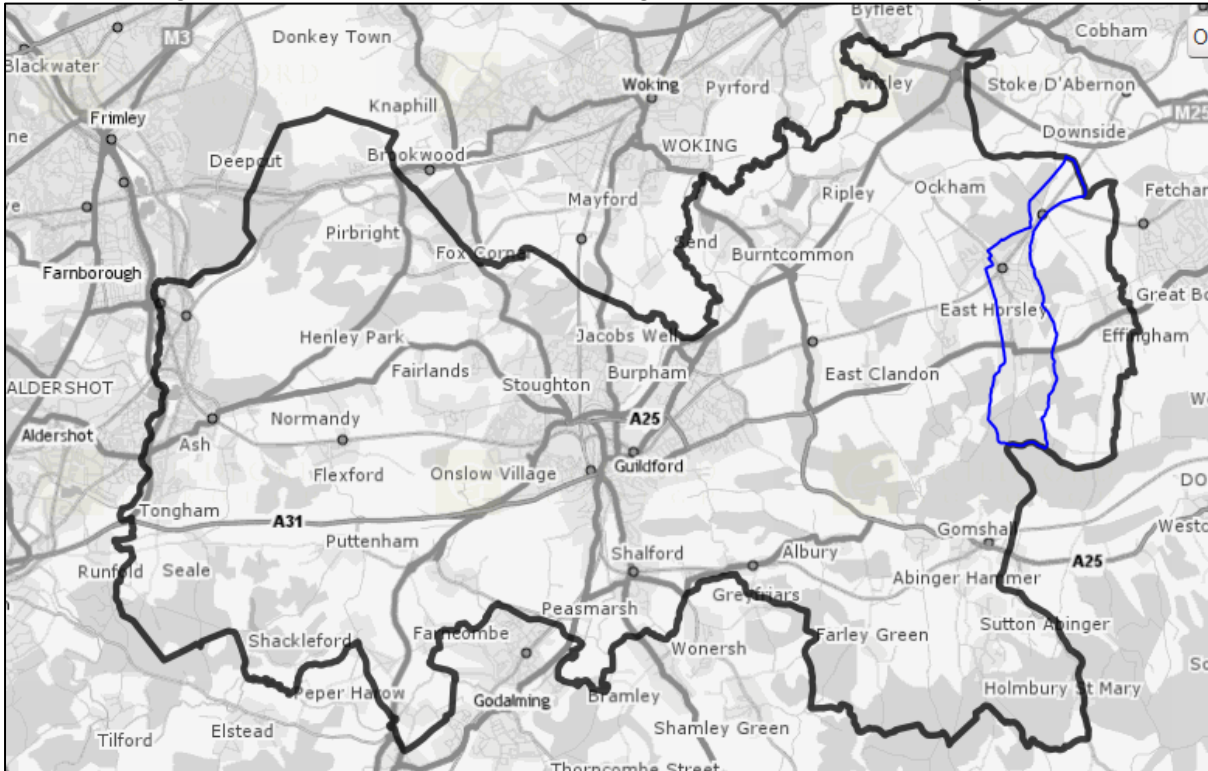
Policy EH-LE1: Retail centres

- 3.14 Bullet point (c) of this policy is not preceded by the word 'or'. This implies that loss of existing retail and service units must result in new A1 retail provision for every change of use in the locations specified. This is obviously not possible if change of use from an A1 use to another use class within classes A2 to A5 or classes D1 or D2 is involved. The second paragraph of the policy clarifies that the policy would permit change of use from A1 to other uses. We would ask the examiner to consider whether it would be more consistent to add an 'or' at the end of bullet point (b), as we feel this may be more compliant with NPPF paragraph 23, which states that planning policies should facilitate a competitive and diverse retail offer in town centres.

4. Information to support the examination

Location of the plan area

- 4.1 The East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan relates to the East Horsley Neighbourhood Area, which covers the parish of East Horsley. East Horsley is a parish in the east of Guildford borough (see maps below; parish and neighbourhood area boundary in blue).



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Description of the plan area

- 4.2 East Horsley is a rural parish with a village of around 1,500 homes. The whole of the parish is designated as Green Belt.

East Horsley village

- 4.3 For a detailed map of the neighbourhood area and its relationship to surrounding parishes, see **Appendix 1**.
- 4.4 The village settlement extends beyond the parish boundary into West Horsley parish in the north-west. A small number of homes in the settlement are also in Effingham parish to the northeast.
- 4.5 The village is the largest settlement in the borough outside the towns of Guildford and Ash, and has two shopping parades, one towards the southern end of the settlement and a larger parade near the railway station. The settlement is built along the main road that runs through it north/south from the A3 to the A246 Epsom Road, as well as along Forest Road. Homes are also built between and around these roads. The housing is of varied age and much of the settlement is of relatively low density, comprising predominantly detached homes with large gardens.

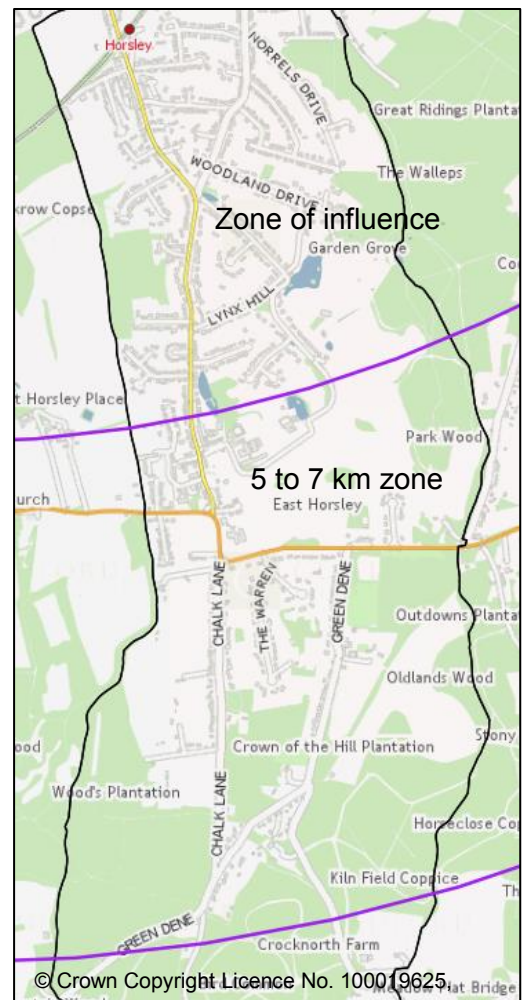
- 4.6 Further detail about the settlement is in the Settlement Profiles document: <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/infrastructureanddelivery>
- 4.7 The village has a settlement boundary drawn tightly around the built area, but excluding areas of development south of the A246.

Outside the village

- 4.8 East Horsley parish has a rural feel despite its larger sized settlement. The roads that run through the settlement are tree-lined and the homes mostly set back from the road. The two shopping areas have a distinctive architecture unlike many shopping parades in urban areas.
- 4.9 The land to the east and west of the settlement is a mix of open fields and woodland. The parish is situated in the Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands landscape character and is a gently shelving area founded on London Clay rising from an altitude of 30m in the north to around 90m in the south at the base of the chalk downs. Historic mansions and parklands are a prominent feature of Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands.

Special Protection Areas

- 4.10 The northern part of the parish and most of the settlement falls within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) zone of influence set at 400m to 5km from the edge of the SPA. When new dwellings are created within this zone, the developer must either provide or fund avoidance measures in the form of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), and fund mitigation measures in the form of a contribution to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) project. SANGs are alternative recreation spaces that soak up increased recreational pressure on the SPA brought by new housing. The SAMM project delivers access management measures on the SPA.
- 4.11 The remainder of the settlement falls within the 5-7km zone where large-scale developments may have to provide avoidance and mitigation measures, assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.12 Please see the [Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy](#) for more information.



Strategic Context

Current local plan

- 4.13 Guildford Borough Council's current Local Plan consists of the saved policies of the Local Plan 2003. The proposals map is available online here:

<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/planningmap>

- 4.14 The Local Plan 2003 is online at

<https://getinvolved.guildford.gov.uk/consult.ti/LPSS2016/consultationHome>

Emerging local plan

- 4.15 The Council consulted on a Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Local Plan: Strategy and Sites between 9 June and 24 July 2017. The consultation documents are available online at

<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/proposedsubmission>

- 4.16 The Proposed Submission Local Plan proposes to inset the village from the Green Belt, to extend the settlement boundary and deliver sites within and adjoining the village. Detailed maps of the proposals can be viewed at the following web pages:

Map of Horsleys (East Horsley):

<https://getinvolved.guildford.gov.uk/consult.ti/pslpss17/viewCompoundDoc?docid=8815316&sessionid=&voteid=&partId=8824116>

Map of Horsleys – East Horsley (South):

<https://getinvolved.guildford.gov.uk/consult.ti/pslpss17/viewCompoundDoc?docid=8815316&sessionid=&voteid=&partId=8824052>

- 4.17 The Council's Local Development Scheme published on 21 February 2017 (see <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/lids>) sets out the next stages and the timeframes for delivery of the new Local Plan. The Proposed Submission Local Plan Strategy and Sites (2017) used a housing figure drawn from the Joint West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017 Guildford Addendum (see <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/shma>). This document sits alongside and updates the West Surrey SHMA (2015) to take account of the latest economic projections and latest mid-year population estimates. The 2017 SHMA Addendum proposes a borough-wide housing need figure of 654 homes per year for the Plan period (2015-2034).

Further information

- 5.1 The evidence base for the East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan can be found at the following web page:

<http://www.easthorsley.info/index.php/select-a-page/neighbourhood-plan/evidence-base/category/20-ehnp-evidence-base>

- 5.2 The Guildford Land Availability Assessment (LAA), which includes information on the sites in the Proposed Submission Local Plan and East Horsley Neighbourhood Plan, can be downloaded in PDF format from the following web page:

<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/landavailabilityassessment>

Appendix 1 Map of East Horsley Parish/East Horsley Neighbourhood Area

