

Camberley Town Centre Strategic Vision to 2034



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Introduction

This Camberley Town Centre Strategic Vision provides a clear direction for long-term success. It provides a focus for driving investment and regeneration, and a touchstone from which progress can be assessed and further action can be forged. It provides a basis for bringing together all those that have a stake in the future success of Camberley including land owners, businesses, housing providers, residents and investors.

At the heart of this vision are the huge opportunities for the continued transformation of Camberley, leveraging the Town's unique and inherent strengths as an enterprising, vibrant, affluent, safe and accessible place. The delivery of this vision directly contributes to the economic vitality and success of the whole borough and the quality of life of all Surrey Heath residents.





Development of the Strategic Vision

The development of the Camberley Town Centre Vision followed a period of economic uncertainty, including the global pandemic and the acceleration in the adoption of web based technologies and changing retail habits. Despite these challenges, Camberley has remained resilient and positive about the opportunities ahead. This vision encapsulates the commitment to support local businesses and the regeneration of the town.

This strategic vision was born from a collaboration between a range of key stakeholders, including Borough Council Members and Officers, local businesses, business leaders, Collectively Camberley - Business Improvement District, the Chamber of Commerce, housing providers, Surrey County Council, and local residents.

The document encapsulates a number of high priority projects that the borough council are leading. These include improving the Square Shopping Centre, new kiosks and shop refits, town centre permeability, town centre housing developments, and the creation of a civic cultural hub.

Camberley Strategic Vision



**COUNCIL
STRATEGY**
2024 - 2028

Based on consultation feedback, the evidence base and work by the council's cross-party Property and Regeneration Working Group, the following Vision has been developed:

Camberley Town Centre will be renowned for its unique and independent feel. A modern, vibrant, accessible and connected place. Offering excellent service through independent shopping, dining and top-class leisure facilities, and the location of choice in the region to meet up socially with family and friends.

Entrepreneurial spirit and a growing and active residential community will be supported by high-quality green space and public realm, a strong cultural and public service offer, great digital connectivity, an unrivalled quality of life underpinned by a strong sense of community.

The Vision for Camberley Town Centre contributes directly to and has in part arisen from the borough's Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028. This was informed by the largest public and stakeholder engagement exercise ever undertaken in the borough. The borough's Strategy sets out the following five priorities:



Protect Our Environment

We recognise that urgent action is needed to protect and sustain what we have for both current and future generations.



Deliver Effective Services with Sustainable Finances

We know that the delivery of easy to access, effective and responsive public services is what our residents expect and deserve, so we will accelerate our improvements.



Promote Healthier & More Inclusive Communities

We believe in a community where everyone can be themselves, and be valued for who they are, with the opportunity to build a good life and achieve their full potential.



Campaign for Residents

We will give residents a greater voice in shaping the council's activities and decision making. We will stand up for what is most important for local residents.



Support a Strong Economy and Create More Homes

We recognise the essential role of local business in driving our economy and creating jobs. We are passionate about the need for more quality affordable and social housing for local people.

Map of Surrey Heath



Camberley connections

-  Camberley to Heathrow
17mls 25mins
-  Camberley to Gatwick
50mls 1hr
-  Camberley to Reading
20mls 35mins
-  Camberley to Southampton
45mls 50mins
-  Camberley to Oxford
60mls 1h 15mins
-  Camberley to Waterloo
1h 20mins
-  Camberley to Paddington
1h 30mins



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Strategic Context

Camberley is the main town centre within Surrey Heath and therefore plays an essential role in the economic well-being of the Borough.

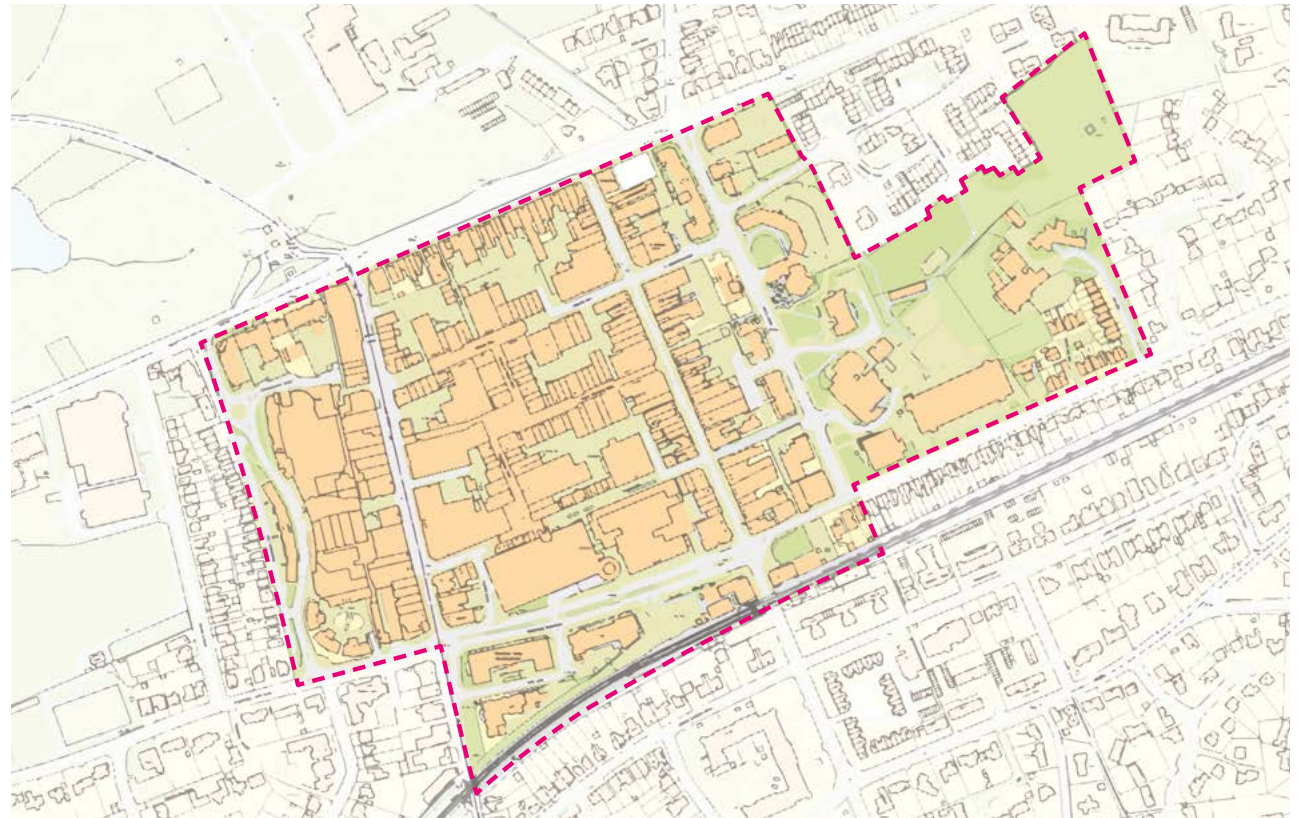
All town centres are having to change and adapt in response to changing retail and social habits and changes in economic conditions, and this Vision supports those changes needed to ensure that Camberley continues to thrive and provide for the future needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

In 2021, the council commissioned research and stakeholder engagement on the future potential of Camberley town centre. And it is this work, together with subsequent events, that has informed this Vision Statement. The geographic focus of our Vision is based on the area set out in the map on the right. However, the benefits of delivering a thriving and active town centre will be much wider reaching.

As a major landowner within Camberley, and with significant ambition for the town, the Borough Council is well-placed to lead the delivery of this Vision alongside local

partners and stakeholders. Camberley also offers significant investment and development potential which will directly contribute to the delivery of this vision and the borough's ambition to secure net zero carbon emissions

by 2050 and maintain its standing (reported through the Office for National Statistics) as one of the best places in the country for life satisfaction.





Camberley Town Centre past and present

Camberley is located in the heart of the Blackwater Valley Strategic Opportunity Area, at the north-western tip of Surrey in one of the most affluent parts of the UK. The town centre began life as a bustling commercial environment with leisure and retail to serve the Royal Military College at Sandhurst with London Road originally being the principal street. The Royal Military College remains a unique part of Camberley today, sitting just to the north-west of the town centre and with the logical grid layout that clearly demonstrates the influence of military planning.

A number of buildings and features remain in the High Street reflecting the late Victorian and early Edwardian period in which the town originally grew. Extensive redevelopment through the post-war period of the area between High Street and Park Street created an outdoor shopping precinct which followed the alignment of the original streets. This was subsequently refurbished into the indoor shopping centre, now called The Square.

The town is well connected by road being only ten minutes' drive from the M3 and within easy commuting distance from London but has limited fast services by rail to London. However, the way in which the town has evolved means that there is now an opportunity to develop the London Road frontage in a way that provides new gateways along the A30 to the heart of the town and all that it has to offer.

As a sub-regional economic centre, Camberley is conveniently located between Bracknell (8 miles), Woking (12 miles) and Guildford (16 miles), as well as centres further afield such as Reading and Basingstoke. Unlike many of these places, Camberley has excellent and uncongested road access and generous parking, as well as being well served by public transport.

In 2023, Surrey Heath was named as the least stressed place to live in the UK by the

Abbeycare Foundation, highlighting that the population has high life satisfaction with low anxiety levels.



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Camberley statistics:



3.4%
vacancy rate



Affluent
catchment area -
resident weekly
wages 20% above
national average
(£818) (SHeath)



47,500
economically
active (SHeath)



52%
independents



Low unemployment
(2%) (SHeath)



55,000 jobs
within the
Borough
(SHeath)



500,000+ average
monthly footfall



5090 businesses
with 85% employing
fewer than 9 people
(SHeath)



Highly skilled
workforce - 51%
of residents hold
an NVQ Level 4 or
above (SHeath)

Strong investment momentum and future pipeline

Throughout the pandemic and in the period following this, investment, construction and development has continued at pace in Camberley.

2021 saw the opening of the 140 unit Lumina residential scheme by Berkeley Group, and a new affordable homes scheme at Pembroke House by Clarion Housing. We also completed work on our new emergency housing accommodation which opened at the start of 2022.

Summer 2021 also saw the completion of a state of the art £22 million Leisure Centre in Camberley in partnership with Places Leisure. The centre was successfully constructed during the pandemic and delivered on time and on budget. The leisure centre has been a roaring success with attendance levels approaching 975,000 in 2023 with over 5,000 members.



The Council is committed to investing in the future of the borough and as part of this, regenerating Camberley Town Centre. Our investments in recent years have already included the acquisition of The Square shopping centre, and the purchase of the former BHS and Alders sites. We have also undertaken a significant refurbishment programme within The Square, and successfully completed major £4.2 million public realm improvements in the Town Centre.

Recognising the importance of enabling planning policy in the continued development of the Town Centre, the Council has progressed the development of new Local Plan which is on track to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in Winter 2024/2025. This includes the identification of a number of key sites for development and regeneration in the town which are set out later in this document.



Camberley's Strengths

The Vision for Camberley builds on the Town Centre's many strengths, including:



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Easy and uncongested access to the town centre from major road networks including the A30 and M3

Significant Borough Council ownership alongside strong ambition and a commitment to partnership working

Close proximity to London, the M25 Motorway and Heathrow Airport

A highly affluent and increasingly diverse catchment population with high levels of disposable income

Advanced development sites to create residential growth

Strong entrepreneurial spirit and highly engaged business leaders

A compact, flat town centre, logically laid out and accessible with a good balance of pedestrianised streets and enclosed malls

A high performing and strongly supported Business Improvement District (BID) – Collectively Camberley – with a strong programme of activities and events

Priorities for Camberley identified through stakeholder and public engagement

- A larger variety of shops, restaurants and bars and high quality experience activities
- Support for new and independent businesses
- Bring cultural services, community events and public art into the heart of the town centre and a greater emphasis on heritage
- A desire to soften and green the urban environment
- To deliver the council's aspiration to be net zero by 2030
- A continued focus on the town being clean and safe
- Creation of different types of work spaces to meet a variety of needs
- More appeal for younger residents to visit and reside in Camberley
- Creation of new homes for the community



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Camberley's Opportunities

The Vision for Camberley recognises the huge opportunity that large-scale development brings for investors, businesses, service providers and residents.

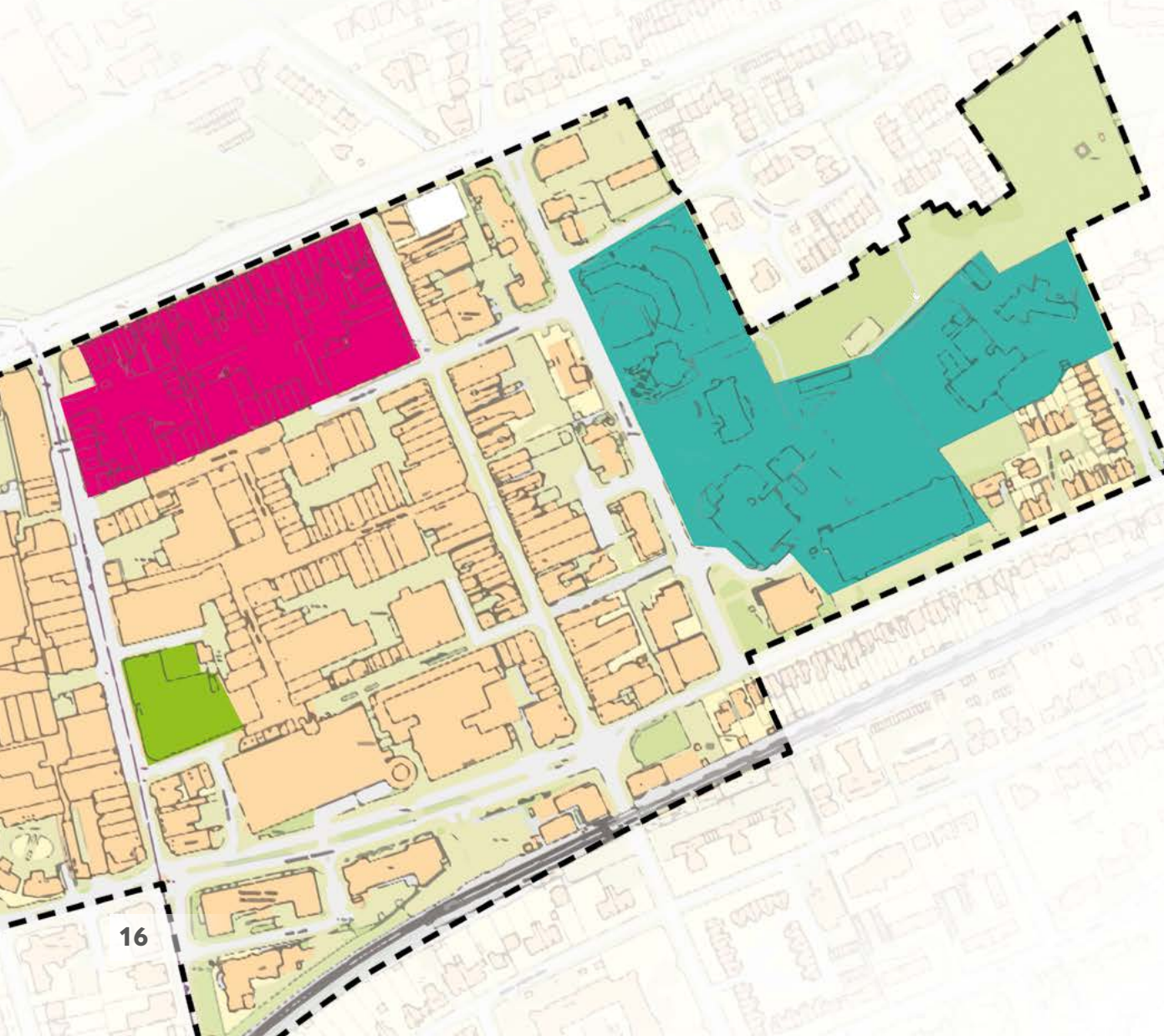
- Two major housing opportunity sites in the emerging Local Plan for Surrey Heath – the London Road site and the site East of Knoll Road
- A high demand for housing and high rental and sale values
- An opportunity to directly benefit from the reduction in daily commuting to London and other major cities
- Significant council land ownership, and a desire to leverage this for high quality development and regeneration
- Opportunity to build on the excellent national reputation of Frimley Park Hospital just outside Camberley, and the global reputation of Sandhurst Military College including their highly regarded medical corps to bring excellent health services and specialist medical training facilities to Camberley
- To build on and embrace the entrepreneurial spirit by creating more opportunities for new and emerging businesses, including new incubator hubs
- Transform Park Street and Cambridge Square into vibrant nighttime destination by promoting alfresco dining, enhancing street lighting, and fostering partnerships with local restaurants and businesses to create an inviting and lively atmosphere



Major Development Opportunities

The new emerging Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019 – 2038) sets the long term planning framework for the borough and allocates sites for 1500 new homes to be built within Camberley town centre generating a significant number of new residents for the town.

The council owns three of the significant regeneration sites in the town centre identified for redevelopment.

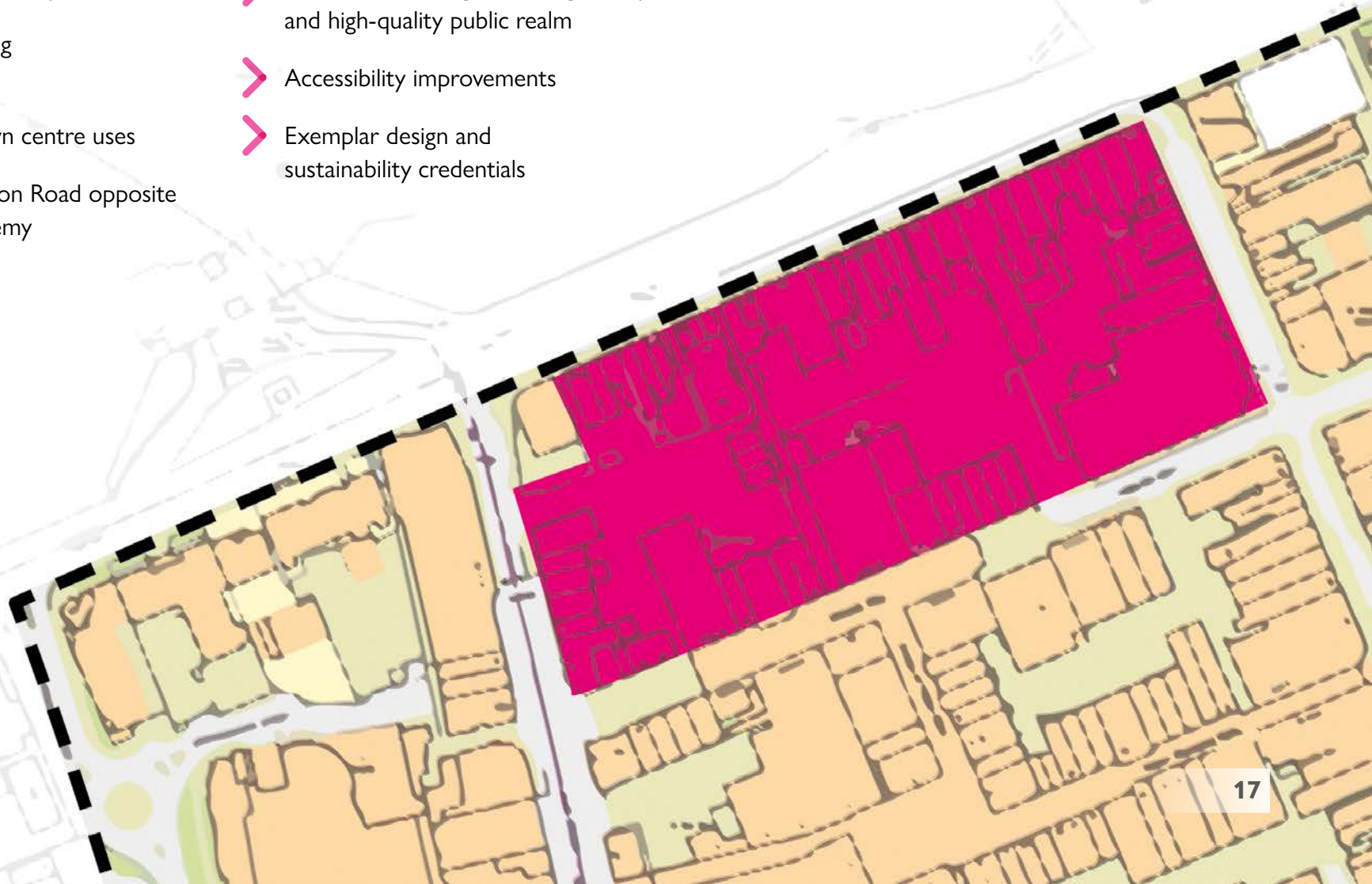


- London Road Block
- Land East of Knoll Road
- 43-57 Park Street

London Road Block

Comprises 1.9 Ha providing an opportunity for a significant residential-led regeneration scheme. The site has the potential to deliver:

- A new residential-led urban quarter
- 550 new homes including affordable housing
- Integration of other town centre uses
- A new gateway to London Road opposite the Royal Military Academy
- Creation and integration of green spaces and high-quality public realm
- Accessibility improvements
- Exemplar design and sustainability credentials



Land East of Knoll Road



Comprises up to 1.3 Ha that currently contains a mix of traditional civic and community uses. The site has the potential to deliver:

- 340 new homes including affordable housing
- Improved access to Camberley Park
- Exemplar design and sustainability credentials
- Improved linkages from Knoll Road to other town centre destinations

43-57 Park Street

This highly prominent 0.39Ha corner position site, owned by the Borough Council provides the opportunity to completely repurpose a currently under-occupied building superstructure to provide a new mix of uses, enhanced public realm and increased permeability.

- Develop a cultural hub, centred around a civic centre that integrates arts venues and alfresco dining spaces, fostering a community-focused environment that celebrates local culture and promotes social engagement

Priority Delivery Themes

Camberley has been identified as having further opportunities to fulfil its potential. Stakeholder engagement and other factors identify a wide range of opportunities for Camberley to take steps to develop further as a thriving and vibrant town centre attractive to residents, workers and visitors strengthening its role as an economic centre and as a destination of choice for retail and leisure activities.

Four overarching objectives have been identified:

- **Unique and Independent**
- **Social and Accessible**
- **Green and Sustainable**
- **Creative and Enterprising**



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Unique and Independent

- Promote Camberley as a hub for independent and artisan traders, complementing the 52% of stores and restaurants that are already independent
- Support Collectively Camberley BID programme of activities and events as well as growing additional networks within the town
- Seek to establish Camberley as a vibrant food culture hub, featuring themed artisan markets, street vendors, and a food hall dedicated to independent food retailers



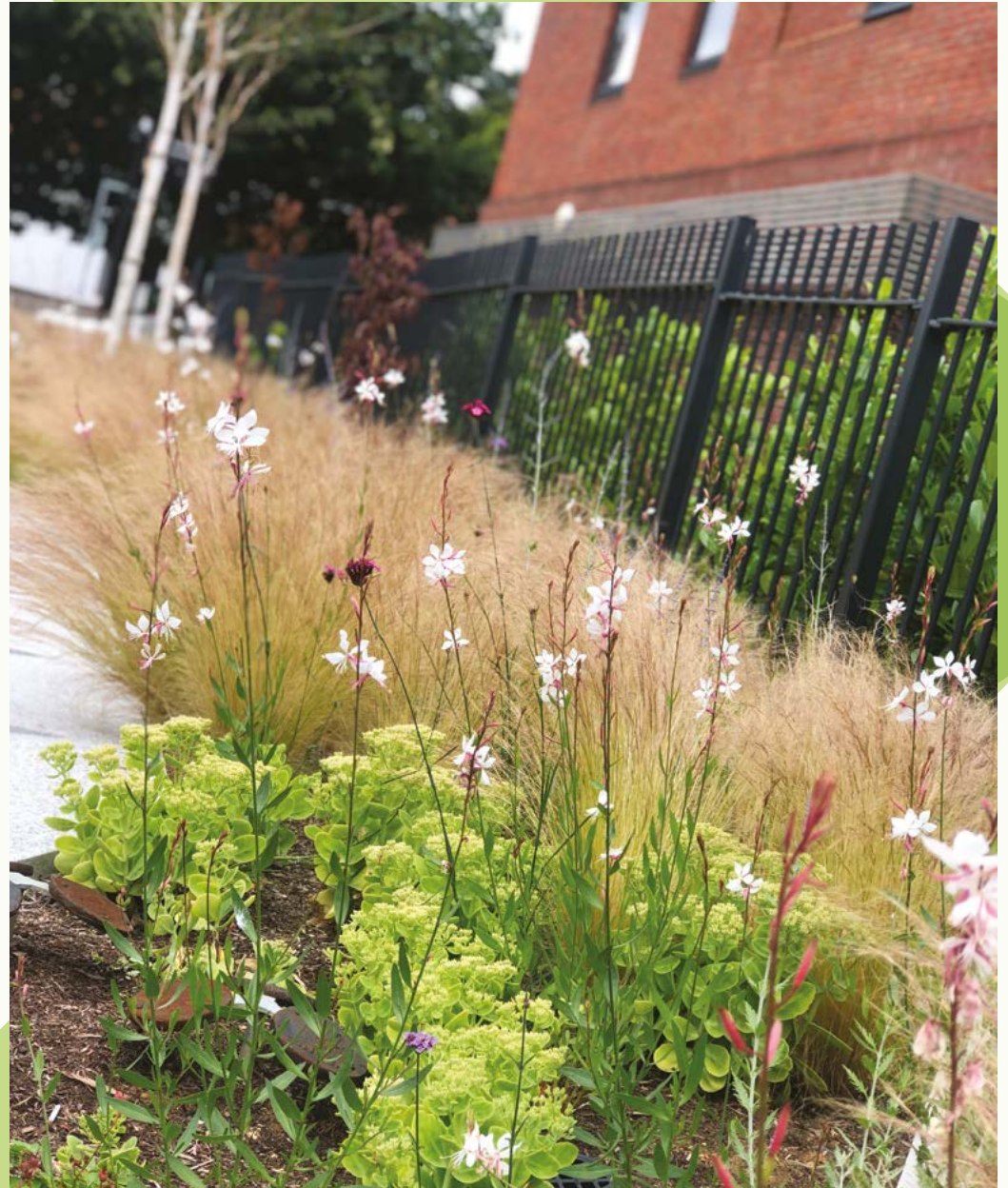
Social and Accessible

- Increase resident population through the development of 1,500 new homes, including a focus on affordability for local residents
- Create social spaces within the public realm for people to gather and embrace new cultural uses - “creating a place where everyone feels welcome”
- Increase permeability and connectivity within the town through sustainable modes of travel and improved public transport facilities



Green and Sustainable

- Introduce more green into the public realm including sustainable planting whilst improving the links to existing green spaces
- Provide enhanced green infrastructure including; more electric charging points, better cycling and walking infrastructure and better facilities for car share clubs
- Make a step change in reducing carbon emissions through improvements to publicly owned buildings including civic buildings, The Square Shopping Centre and Places Leisure



Creative and Enterprising

- Develop a town centre ecosystem through better business support, enhanced networking and entrepreneurship activities
- Work alongside private sector partners to further develop the town centre's entertainment and cultural offer
- Strengthen the reputation of being a place where businesses can succeed



Next Steps and Delivery

Track record of delivery

The council has a newly formed Property and Economic Development team with expertise drawn from across the industry. The broader council has an excellent track record of delivery aligned to strong and forward thinking leadership. The council has an eagerness to deliver in partnership with external organisations and is committed to being the catalyst for positive change.

Enabling policies and programmes

This will include formal site allocations and enabling policies will be included in the new Local Plan for Surrey Heath as well as the more detailed master planning of the key development sites in the borough and development of relevant design codes.

Site Assembly

Leveraging existing significant council ownership and acquiring further sites as part of securing full site assembly on the London Road Block and Land East of Knoll Road.





Meanwhile Uses

When vacancies arise or space is created as part of site assembly for a key regeneration scheme, a clear plan and priority for meanwhile use will be implemented.

High-Quality Design

To ensure that development is high quality and sympathetic to the local context and character and to help establish new high quality architecture into the town centre, an external design panel will be established to inform and review proposals.

Partnership working

Delivering ongoing improvements to the town centre will require partnership working with other bodies. This will include Collectively Camberley BID, Surrey County Council, local businesses and retailers and other agencies and public service providers.

Programming

To complement the improvements in the built form, there will also be a focus on developing and delivering a an exciting programme of activities and events in partnership with the Business Improvement District and with Camberley Theatre.

New Public Service Anchors

Work with NHS Partners to establish more anchor public services including Outpatient Hospital Services in the town.

Developing-out key regeneration sites

Bringing forward development in four key regeneration sites, the London Road Block site, Land East of Knoll Road and the former House of Fraser site will provide the opportunity for an enhanced mix of uses, new homes, new open space and green infrastructure and improved connectivity.



Map of Camberley regeneration sites

■ Future Regeneration Site ■ Delivered

- 1 London Road development site 550 units
 - 2 Land East of Knoll Rd
- proposed residential development
 - 3 Portesbury School
- proposed residential development
 - 4 Kings Court 79 apartments 2024
 - 5 Public Realm improvements 2025
 - 6 84-100 Park St - 61 sheltered apartments 2026
 - 7 Park Street redevelopment site
-
- 8 52 Park St 8 PRS units 2020
 - 9 Parkgate Hse 12 PRS units 2019
 - 10 Obelisk Hse 16 PRS units 2022
 - 11 Cambridge Hotel 21 PRS units 2023
 - 12 Norwich House 78 PRS units 2020
 - 13 11-13 High St 11 PRS units 2023
 - 14 Bradley Court 37 PRS units 2016
 - 15 Public Realm improvements 2020
 - 16 Camberley House 7 PRS units 2023
 - 17 Stokes Lodge 24 senior living units 2015
 - 18 Pembroke Hse 58 unit care home 2015
 - 19 Lumina 116 PRS units 2022
 - 20 The Square refurbishment 2018
 - 21 Places Leisure 2021
 - 22 Compass Hse 50 PRS units 2021
 - 23 18 Park St 7 PRS units 2020

PRS = Private Rental Sector



Regeneration Timeline

> Short term:

Changing Places: Changing Places toilets are larger accessible toilets for people with multiple or complex disabilities, with equipment such as hoists, privacy screens, adult-sized changing benches, peninsula toilets and space for carers.

Public Art: A project delivered in partnership with local schools to enliven the town centre through a series of large scale public art pieces.

The Square Kiosk Units: The Square shopping centre in Camberley will undergo development of a new café area and kiosks, adding to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the centre.

Arnold Walk: A key pedestrian route connecting Pembroke Broadway with Princess Way, will be transformed into a welcoming walkway with modern attractive lighting and colourful public art.

Pembroke Broadway: To enhance the town centre arrival point for many residents and visitors using public transport, with new low energy street lighting, “natural green” roofed bus shelters and modern bins encouraging recycling.

The Square Roof Repairs: To continue to invest in The Square Shopping Centre, ensuring that it remains an attractive place for businesses to thrive.

London Road site preparation: Funded through a £1,480,300 grant, awarded by HM Government. The grant will support the safe removal of asbestos from the former Alders building and the demolition of 125-139 London Road which are in poor condition.

> Medium term:

Portesbury School: to support the delivery of a new residential development on the former Portesbury School site.

London Road: Enabling activities and site preparation for large scale residential development.

Land East of Knoll Road: Enabling activities and site preparation for large scale residential development.

> Long term:

43 – 57 Park Street: To create a mixed use development, including a civic and cultural hub in the centre of the town.

Completion of new homes on London Road: To work in partnership with developers to deliver 340 new homes including affordable housing.

Completion of Land East of Knoll Road: To work in partnership with developers to deliver 550 new homes and a new residential led urban quarter.



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Contact us

For more information about the development opportunities available or to express an interest in becoming a development partner, contact the Economic Development team at Surrey Heath Borough Council.



Scan the QR code to access
our contact details or email us at
economic.development@surreyheath.gov.uk

