



Surrey Heath Local Development Scheme 2025-2028



February 2025

Surrey Heath Borough Council

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I. Introduction

- I.1. This Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out Surrey Heath Borough Council's programme for completing the preparation of the Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 – 2038 which was submitted for independent Examination in December 2024.
- I.2. Following the publication of new [National Planning Policy](#) in December 2024, the Government has requested all local authorities to submit a new LDS by March 2025. Due to changes in the standard method and the resultant increase in the annual local housing need figure for Surrey Heath, the Council will be required to start the preparation of a new Local Plan later in 2025 once new national plan-making reforms are in place. This LDS therefore also includes an indicative timetable for this further Local Plan, referenced as the Local Plan Review 2026.
- I.3. The Local Development Scheme outlines the Local Plan content and a timetable for each stage of Local Plan preparation. As set out above, this will be subject to change for the Local Plan Review 2026.
- I.4. This Local Development Scheme covers the time period 2025 – 2028 and updates the previous LDS which covered the period 2024 – 2027.
- I.5. The Local Plan is accompanied by other planning documents including:
 - **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** – see Section 2
 - **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>.
 - **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)** - produced annually and includes information on how the policies in the Local Plan are being delivered.
- I.6. The timetable for preparing the Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038 is based on current legislation and national planning policy and guidance. However, the Government is changing the way in which Local Plans and supplementary guidance are prepared through measures set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. The timetable for the Local Plan Review 2026 is based on the requirements in the LURA to produce a Local Plan within 30 months, although much of the detail on the plan-making process is still to be published and confirmed.
- I.7. Further information on the Local Plan, supporting evidence and other related documents can be viewed on the [Councils website](#).



1.8. For further queries please contact the Planning Policy and Conservation team at:

Planning.policy@surreyheath.gov.uk or Telephone: 01276 70100

1.9. The LDS was agreed by Executive on 11th February 2025.



2. The Development Plan for Surrey Heath

2.1. 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 2011 – 2028, (2014);
- Saved Policies 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;
- Surrey Minerals Core Strategy, 2011;
- Surrey Waste Local Plan, 2019 – 2033; and
- Windlesham Neighbourhood Plan, 'made' on 12 June 2019

2.2. The Council is at a late stage in preparing a single new Local Plan to cover the period to 2038. This Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 – 2038 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. Further information regarding progress on this Local Plan can be found [here](#) and in Table 2 below.

2.3. 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 [here](#).

Other relevant planning documents

2.4. 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

2.5. These documents will be carried forward to support the future Local Plan. They can be viewed [here](#).

2.6. Information on the content and timetables for further planning guidance that supports the implementation of Development Plan policies will be made available on the above webpage when they are available.

2.7. 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) as well as appropriate evidence to support the content of the Local Plan. These are defined in the Glossary.



3. Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 – 2038 Scope and Timetable

3.1. Table 1 sets out more detail on the scope of the current submitted Local Plan and Table 2 sets out the timetable for key stages of its production up to adoption.

3.2. 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 Scope

Item	Description
Document Profile	Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038
Coverage	Borough Wide
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.



Table 2 Local Plan Timetable

Local Plan Stage	Details	Dates
<p>Consultation on Issues and Options and Preferred Approach; and</p> <p>Revised Scoping Report and Interim Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>This is an early consultation stage seeking views on broad policy approaches and accompanied by an Interim Sustainability Appraisal.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>June – July 2018</p>
<p>Consultation on a Draft Plan and Draft Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>(Regulation 18)</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March – May 2022 and August – September 2022</p>
<p>Publication of a Pre-Submission Plan (statutory 6 weeks) and Final Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>(Regulation 19)</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>August - September 2024</p>



Local Plan Stage	Details	Dates
<p>Submission of the Plan and supporting evidence to the Secretary of State for Examination</p> <p>(Regulation 22)</p>	<p>The Council sends the Plan, the evidence base and any representations received from the consultation above to the Secretary of State for independent examination.</p> <p>The Plan will be assessed to see if it is legally compliant and meets tests of 'soundness' set out in national policy.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>December 2024</p>
<p>Examination Hearing sessions (subject to Inspector availability)</p>	<p>The Examination will usually include public hearing sessions run by the Local Plan Inspector and based around matters and questions set by the Inspector. The Examination may result in a set of proposed Modifications to the Local Plan which will be subject to consultation.</p>	<p>Spring/Summer 2025</p>
<p>Inspectors Report (estimate – depends on complexity of the Examination and the need for consultation on Modifications)</p>	<p>The Inspector will issue a written report recommending modifications to the Local Plan.</p>	<p>Autumn 2025</p>
<p>Local Plan adoption</p>	<p>The Council adopts the Plan as part of the Surrey Heath Development Plan for the purposes of determining planning applications.</p>	<p>Autumn 2025</p>



4. Surrey Heath Local Plan Review 2026 – Indicative Scope and Timetable

- 4.1. As set out previously, the Council will be required to start the preparation of a new Local Plan in Summer/Autumn 2025 (dates advised by Government at Planning Advisory Service training events January 2025). However, the detail of the new plan-making process has not yet been published and the details of secondary legislation are not yet known. The following indicative scope and timetable are therefore based on consultation material published by the previous Government.
- 4.2. Table 3 sets out indicative detail on the scope of the proposed Local Plan Review 2026 and Table 4 sets out an indicative timetable for key stages of production up to adoption. The scope of this Local Plan will also be informed by the Government's intention to introduce national development management policies.
- 4.3. The Adopted Policies Map showing the policy and site allocation boundaries will be revised as necessary upon the adoption of the Local Plan.



Table 3 Local Plan Review 2026 Indicative Scope

Item	Description
Document Profile	Surrey Heath Local Plan 2026 – 2043
Coverage	Borough Wide
Subject-indicative and subject to future changes to national planning policy	<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.



Table 4 Local Plan Review 2026 Indicative Timetable

In the absence of further detail at this time, the following indicative stages and timetable are based on the preparation stages set out in the previous Governments [planning reform consultation, 2023](#). The start date is informed by advice from the Government at NPPF training webinars in January 2025 that details of the plan-making process will be published in Summer/Autumn 2025. The timetable will be updated once further details of the new plan-making process are published by the current Government.

Local Plan Stage	Indicative Details	Indicative Dates
Scoping and early participation stage	Including requirements to “notify” the public and stakeholders including statutory bodies and “invite” participation; prepare or update the local plan timetable and give a minimum of four months’ notice before the intention to formally commence the 30 month plan preparation. Evidence gathering starts including a Green Belt Review	Autumn 2025
Plan visioning and strategy development	Visioning for the area and the first formal consultation on the Plan.	Spring 2026 – Autumn 2026
Evidence gathering and drafting the plan	Finalise the evidence base and following previous feedback finalise the Plan for further consultation.	Autumn 2026 – Autumn 2027
Engagement, proposing changes and submission of the Plan	Second public consultation on the Plan and submission for examination.	Autumn 2027 – Winter 2027
Examination	Undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate. May include further consultation on proposed modifications.	Winter 2027 – Autumn 2028
Local Plan adoption	The Council adopts the Plan as part of the Surrey Heath Development Plan for the purposes of determining planning applications.	Autumn 2028



5. Programme Management and Responsibilities

- 5.1. The scope and timetable for production of the submitted Local Plan 2019 - 2038 is set out in Tables 1 and 2. An indicative timetable for the Local Plan Review 2026 is set out above in Tables 3 and 4. Any essential adjustments to the programme will be made as part of the next review of the LDS and following publication of further details of the Government's proposed plan-making reforms.
- 5.2. 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

- 5.3. All decisions of the Executive are subject to call in by Scrutiny Committee. The Local Plan will be reported to Full Council for endorsement and for agreement to final adoption of the Plan.

Risk Assessment

- 5.4. 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 studies that will require the use of external consultants. To meet the LDS timetable there will be a need to ensure that issues such as procurement are considered at an early stage in the plan making process and there is an appropriate budget available. There will be the requirement to project manage work procured to ensure limited slippage in the process.
 - 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 and a policy approach 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 continue plan-making reforms set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. There is a strong likelihood that further detail on these reforms and secondary legislation will impact on the Local Plan Review 2026 timetable.
- 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.

Monitoring and Review

5.5. 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.

5.6. A review may also be needed following changes to, and publication of, plan-making policy and legislation.



6. Glossary of Terms

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

Abbreviation	Explanation
AAP	Area Action Plan A Development Plan Document forming part of the Local Plan for a specific area, such as the Camberley Town Centre AAP.
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 documents that form part of the Local Plan.
CS&DMP DPD	Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD Part of the Councils current Local Plan.
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 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 is a compulsory requirement under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the 2002/42/EEC European Directive.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Councils approach for involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation and revision of the local plan and supplementary planning documents.



Abbreviation	Explanation
SEA	<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>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.</p>
SHBC	<p>Surrey Heath Borough Council</p> <p>Surrey Heath Borough Council is the Local Planning Authority.</p>
SPD	<p>Supplementary Planning Document</p> <p>These are documents that provide further information and detail to the policies within the Local Plan and how they can be met.</p>

