WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
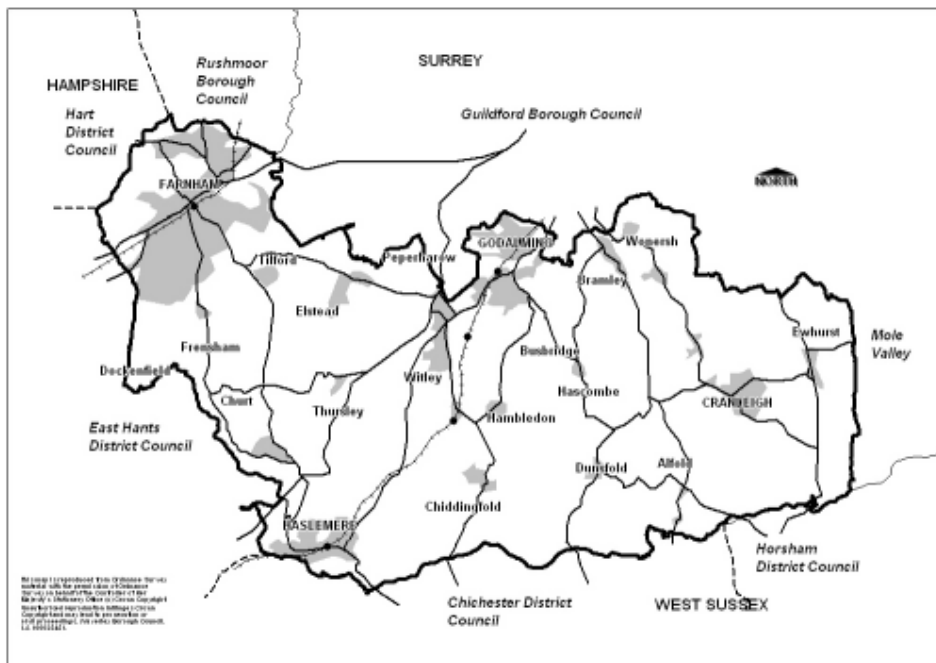
CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

DRAFT SPATIAL PORTRAIT

Waverley Borough, which has a population of 116,000, is located in the southwest corner of Surrey. It is predominantly rural and extends to some 345 sq km (133 sq miles).

The Borough contains four principal urban settlements of varying size. Each has a defined town centre area and one or more conservation areas as well as a high number of listed buildings. About 72% of the population of Waverley live within one of the four main centres.

Waverley has a large number of villages of varying size and character, and there are 21 separate town/parish councils in the borough. The number of shops and services, including the presence of a post office and health facilities vary according to the size of village.

Farnham is the largest settlement, having a population of approximately 36,000. Functionally, it has links with other centres outside Waverley, including Guildford and the string of settlements in the Blackwater Valley.
Godalming has a population of approximately 21,000. The size and range of services is less than Farnham, and it is significantly influenced by Guildford, which is only 10 km (6.2 miles) away via good road and rail links.

Haslemere, which has a population of approximately 15,000, lies in the southwest corner of the Borough, close to the boundaries with West Sussex and Hampshire. This small country town has a large rural catchment, which extends into Hampshire and West Sussex.

Cranleigh has a population of approximately 12,000. It has a more limited range of services within its large village centre, but these are very good for a settlement of its size and location.

All four towns have a good range of leisure and cultural facilities and shops. The Borough's shopping centres retain a good percentage of resident's expenditure. Waverley has a good number of primary schools across the Borough, particularly in the more urban areas, and each has at least one secondary school. There are also opportunities for further education and a relatively high number of private schools spread right across the area.

Communications and Infrastructure

Roads

The main road connections in Waverley are north-south, with relatively poor connections east-west. There are no motorways within the Borough and the only national trunk road is the A3 London-Portsmouth road. Hindhead is significantly affected by this road, and work has started on a major Highway scheme, which involves taking the traffic through a tunnel bypassing it. This work is due to be completed in 2011.

Rail Services

In terms of rail links, Farnham is on the London – Alton line; with Farncombe, Godalming, Milford, Witley and Haslemere all on the London – Portsmouth line. Cranleigh does not have a rail link and there are no direct east-west rail links in the Borough. Waverley's railway lines are very well used, and there is growing concern from users about the current and future capacity of the trains.

Bus Services

Bus services are relatively frequent within the main urban areas, and considered stronger in these locations, but services are much more patchy and infrequent within the rural areas. Buses across Waverley are at capacity at school travel times.

The limited road connectivity and the limited public transport infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, does affect the accessibility for residents, particularly those without access to a car, to jobs and services/facilities such as shops, education facilities, health services and leisure and recreational facilities.

Social Profile

Age

Waverley has an ageing population, with a relatively high proportion of people above retirement age. This trend is set to continue with a significant percentage increase forecast in the number of people over 60 over the next 20 years. The results of this are striking, and are consistent with forecast national trends. These increases have implications for maintaining residents' independence, longer-term care services and community safety. There is expected to be a decline in the number of people aged 40- 49 of some 8.5% in Waverley over the next 20 years.

Ethnic Groups
Some 97% of the Borough is white, with just under 2% being black, Indian, Pakistani or mixed origin. The remaining 1% is made up from other ethnic groups.

Deprivation
The 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation shows that Waverley is the 7th least deprived area in the whole of Britain. Some wards however, score relatively highly in terms of barriers to housing because of a lack of affordability. The Borough does not score very well in some parts on access to services such as supermarkets, secondary schools, libraries, doctors and banks because of the rural character of the area.

Health
Waverley is generally a healthy borough. 75% of the population said that their health was 'good' in the 2001 Census. It has a low mortality rate generally, with a correspondingly high life expectancy. The Borough is well served for doctor's surgeries, however, some village residents do need to travel by car to access their nearest facility, and there is no accident and emergency facility at any of the hospitals in the Borough. Many of the health problems experienced are those associated with an ageing population.

Housing
Waverley is an affluent area, as demonstrated by high house prices, high incomes, households with more than two cars and the relatively high proportion of children who attend private schools. However, there are identified small pockets of relative deprivation, typically in medium- sized housing estates on the periphery of the main settlements.

Waverley is an area of high demand for housing. The average house price is twelve times the average household income, and some 75% higher than the average for England and Wales. There is therefore a significant need for affordable housing across the Borough. The quality of the housing stock in Waverley is generally good. and 80% of properties in Waverley are owner occupied.

Economic Profile
Waverley has a buoyant economy, with low unemployment. There are a limited number of single large employers, with majority of businesses employing less than ten people. A significant percentage of the resident workforce travels outside Waverley to their place of work. There are also many people who work in Waverley but live outside the Borough, due in part, to the relatively high house prices. A concern identified in the Regional Economic Strategy is that a lack of affordable housing is a threat to sustainable growth in the region.

A high number of people working within Waverley are employed in knowledge-driven occupations such as business and finance and computer/ telecommunications, and the Borough's residents have a high knowledge score.

Employment growth over the past decade has been modest, being constrained by the relatively scarce supply of undeveloped employment land in the District. Despite performing a relatively local employment role, the borough's businesses serve a customer base which extends well beyond the geographical boundary.

Waverley's towns tend to compete with those outside the Borough rather than with each other, due to the geography of the Borough and the indirect links between the towns. Guildford influences all four towns, but others include Aldershot, Camberley and Basingstoke to the northeast, Petersfield and Chichester to the southwest, and Horsham and Dorking to the south and east. Each town has a number of well-established employment areas that complement the retail and business opportunities in its town centre. There are a number of small industries located within the more rural parts of the borough, and while these may not be considered to be in the best locations, they are historically well established and provide useful and valued local employment opportunities.

Environmental Profile
The distinctive natural environment in Waverley is generally of a very high quality. Some 80% of the countryside is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are also significant ecological assets within and close to the Borough, and numerous areas which have one or more local or national policies to protect them. However, there is the need for awareness that these habitats could alter in response to climate change. Waverley's landscape has a distinctive wooded character, at 31%, which is the highest proportion in the country.

Waverley has a rich historic heritage, with 45 Conservation Areas, and over 1,600 listed buildings.

Many of the residential parts of Waverley have a distinct semi-rural character. Haslemere and Godalming have wooded hillsides surrounding them, while in Cranleigh there is a much more rapid transition from urban to rural, with common land extending into the heart of the shopping centre. A number of the villages have produced Village Design Statements, carried out by local organisations in partnership with Waverley, and these seek to identify the principles, design features and quality standards that they value.

The Borough also has, in common with Surrey as a whole, relatively high car ownership, and the impact of vehicles has contributed to the identification of three Air Quality Management Areas in Waverley. These affect parts of the centres in Farnham, Godalming and Hindhead.

Cross – Border issues
Waverley's geographical location means that it has common boundaries with not only two other Surrey districts, but five districts in two other counties. The impact of these areas, and any significant new development in them on Waverley is an issue to be considered. The most significant cross-border to consider may well be the potential Eco- town at Bordon and Whitehill in East Hampshire.

Main Issues Arising From the Spatial Portrait
Waverley clearly benefits from an attractive environment and has an enviable general level of prosperity. Nevertheless, there are a number of specific issues that need to be addressed:
- In line with national trends, Waverley has an ageing population. Meeting the varying needs of older people in terms of service provision will be a challenge,

whilst ensuring that the Borough remains attractive and accessible to young people
- House prices in Waverley are amongst the highest in the region. Achieving the delivery of new housing which meets local needs will be one the most critical issues to be addressed. Within the context of the scale of provision determined by the South East Plan, the particular need evident in Waverley is to achieve more housing which is affordable – to provide for first time buyers and others with a need to live in the District, but who are currently unable to pay market house prices
- The impact of the relatively high levels of traffic, high car dependency and the limited public transport facilities in some parts of Waverley have social, economic and environmental consequences.
- The need to understand and take into account the significance and impact of cross- border issues on the range of Waverley's services and environment.
- Having regard to the dispersed settlement pattern and the range of sizes of Waverley's settlements, a key issue will be in relation to access to services and determining the best approach to the provision of housing and related development across the borough.
- Ensuring that when new development is proposed, an appropriate level of investment in local infrastructure takes place.
- Supporting Waverley's economy, recognising key characteristics such as the high proportion of small firms, the rural economy and the impact on business of factors like the need for more affordable housing and the high levels of in and out commuting for work.
- Take into account the potential effects of climate change when considering future development
- Sustaining the attractive environment will remain a key objective in planning for Waverley's future.
- Ensuring that the design of new development takes proper account of the distinctive character and environment of Waverley.

Sources:
Local Knowledge,
2001 Census,
 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation,
Surrey's Interim Sustainable Community Strategy 2008: Surrey County Council

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