

# Town and Country 1

Waverley Borough Council | Core Strategy Topic Paper: Town and  
Country

### Introduction

**1.1** This Topic Paper deals with some of the broad strategic issues that will need to be considered as part of the Local Development Framework. In particular, it sets out some choices and options concerning the amount of new housing that Waverley should plan for and a range of options for the broad location of these new homes. It also considers the related community needs focusing on infrastructure and access to services. It deals with the following:-

- The Settlement Hierarchy in Waverley
- How many new homes should we plan for?
- Broadly speaking where should new homes be built?
- The role of "windfall sites"
- Whether the Council should limit the amount of unplanned housing that comes forward?
- How can the Local Development Framework support the delivery of infrastructure?
- How can planning help to ensure that people have the best access to services possible?

### The Settlement Hierarchy in Waverley

#### What is a Settlement Hierarchy?

**1.2** As part of the evidence to support the Local Development Framework, the Council has produced a "Settlement Hierarchy". The draft Settlement Hierarchy document will be published alongside the Local Development framework Topic Papers and there will be the opportunity to comment on the findings in the Settlement Hierarchy.

**1.3** The objective of a settlement hierarchy is to create a 'list' or pyramid of settlements indicating which are the most sustainable locations for development at the top and those that are least sustainable at the bottom. A number of factors are considered in deciding how sustainable a particular settlement is. The key issues are the access to a range of services, including access via public transport.

**1.4** To date the Settlement Hierarchy has focused on identifying the level of community facilities and services available within the settlements and the accessibility of these settlements to higher order centres.

**1.5** Within the hierarchy, all of the Waverley settlements are categorised under the following headings:

- Communities with Key Services;
- Communities with Local Services;
- Rural Communities with Limited Services;
- Rural Communities with Very Limited Services;
- Other Rural Communities (ribbon developments/ hamlets).

**1.6** Whilst the final hierarchy will indicate the most sustainable locations for development, it does not follow that levels of development will be equal amongst settlements at each level within the hierarchy. Levels of development will be dependent on strategic policy direction, suitable sites being available and deliverable and other development constraints such as flooding.

### **Why have we prepared one?**

**1.7** One of the primary aims of establishing a settlement hierarchy is to promote sustainable communities by bringing housing, employment opportunities and services closer together in an attempt to reduce the need for travel, particularly by private vehicle. The settlement hierarchy helps to achieve this by providing a framework which will feed into the Core Strategy DPD for directing housing growth and other forms of development towards those settlements that have a range of services and employment opportunities, and restricting it in those that do not.

### **Methodology**

**1.8** Our Settlement Hierarchy document is based on the broad structure of that already carried out in Mole Valley District. As many of the Surrey districts are working towards producing a sound Core Strategy, it is good practice to use the best documents as templates; time is saved and also this provides a consistent approach across the County, particularly as Mole Valley has many similarities to Waverley.

**1.9** We have initially identified some 42 settlements of varying sizes in the Borough, from as large as Farnham down to small areas such as Grafham, Bramley. This has been done on the basis of where information on population, housing and employment patterns within that settlement are available from the 2001 Census. The Parishes and Towns have been asked to tell us whether or not in their view, these areas are correct, and whether others should be included, but all should be considered and analysed at this stage.

**1.10** To assess the sustainability of each settlement in terms of maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and social progress, each settlement has been assessed in terms of: the number of schools, shops, libraries, community halls, churches, health facilities (including private and NHS dentists), play areas and other amenity space, public houses, restaurants/ cafes/ takeaways post offices, and banks or building societies within the vicinity; access to public transport and employment opportunities; and travel to work patterns.

**1.11** In the first instance, in order to make comparisons between the settlements and their sustainability, the results of the surveys and other collected have been assessed and the identified settlements ranked under the headings identified above. It is anticipated that further stages will include looking at environmental constraints and other opportunities. A written descriptive assessment of each settlement will be produced, and the Settlement Hierarchy created, with the most sustainable locations for development at the top and those that are least sustainable at the bottom.

### Opportunities to comment on the Settlement Hierarchy

**1.12** We have already sent out a detailed two-part questionnaire to the Town and Parish Councils in Waverley. The first part of the questionnaire seeks factual information on services etc. within the settlements, to add weight to the data already collected and confirm that it is correct. The second part is more subjective and asks for views on what the areas are like and what issues are of particular importance. This part of the survey will also influence other aspects of the Core Strategy and will also help formulate Waverley's Sustainable Community Strategy.

**1.13** The Draft Settlement Hierarchy document is available to view or download. This contains a more detailed explanation of how the hierarchy has been arrived at. This consultation provides the opportunity to comment on the findings in the Settlement Hierarchy. Questions have been included within it about the range of services and other characteristics that have been analysed. We are keen to ensure that the information we have provided is factually correct and a fair reflection of position that each settlement has within the overall hierarchy of settlements in Waverley

## The amount and location of new housing

**1.14** This topic covers both the amount of new housing that is needed in Waverley and the broad options for where this new housing should go.

### Relevant Core Strategy Objectives

- \* To deliver sustainable development that meets the needs of the existing community, whilst not compromising the quality of life for future generations.
- \* To ensure that sufficient land is available to meet both local and regional housing needs.
- \* To deliver a balance of housing and employment growth that takes account of both the need for additional housing and the need to safeguard and, if necessary, enlarge the supply and mix of premises available to meet the needs of local businesses.
- \* To contribute to the delivery of sustainable communities, by directing new development towards the most sustainable locations, where there is the best available access to jobs, schools, health services, leisure and recreation and community facilities, particularly by public transport, cycling and on foot.
- \* To ensure that the accommodation needs of the community can be met by delivering a range of housing, including affordable housing and other accommodation required to meet the needs of specific groups within the community.
- \* To safeguard the rich historic heritage and the diverse and attractive landscapes and townscapes in Waverley, and ensure that new development takes proper account of the character and distinctiveness of the area in which it is located.
- \* To protect and enhance the diversity of the wildlife and habitats that are within and around Waverley.
- \* To deliver development that is sustainable and that is located, designed and built in such a way that it addresses the causes of climate change and, where necessary, is adapted to cope with the effects of climate change.

## Planning Policy Context

### **1.15** National Planning Policies

**1.16** Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 “Housing” is the key national policy document dealing with new housing. It covers a range of matters including design, the mix of housing, housing needs, the location of housing and the amount of housing.

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**1.17** In terms of the amount of housing, PPS3 says that the level of housing provision should be determined taking a strategic, evidence-based approach that takes into account relevant local, sub-regional, regional and national policies and strategies.

**1.18** In terms of the location of housing, PPS3 says that the Government's policy is to ensure that housing is developed in suitable locations, which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. It adds that the priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. Through the Local Development Framework, local authorities are expected to set out a strategy for the planned location of new housing which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. It sets out a number of criteria to be considered when deciding where new housing should go. These include:

- The spatial vision for the area;
- Evidence of current and future levels of need and demand for housing as well as the availability of suitable, viable sites;
- The contribution to be made to cutting carbon emissions from focusing new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than private car and where it can readily and viably draw its energy supply from decentralised energy supply systems based on renewable and low carbon forms of energy supply, or where there is clear potential for this to be realised;
- Any physical, environmental, land ownership, land-use, investment constraints or risks associated with broad locations or specific sites. (Such as contamination, flood risk, physical access restrictions etc.)
- Options for accommodating new housing growth, taking account of opportunities for and constraints on development. (Examples given include of vacant and derelict sites, mixed use town centre development, additional housing in residential areas, large scale redevelopment of existing areas, expansion of settlements and new freestanding settlements).
- Accessibility of proposed development to existing local community facilities, infrastructure and services, including public transport.
- The need to provide housing in rural areas, not only in market towns and local service centres but also in villages, in order to enhance and maintain their sustainability;
- The need to develop mixed, sustainable communities across the wider local authority area, as well as at neighbourhood level.

### **1.19** The Draft South East Plan

**1.20** Policy H1 sets out the minimum number of new homes that are required in each local authority area in the period 2006 to 2026. In Waverley's case this is 5000. Policy H2 deals with arrangements for managing the delivery of new housing. Policy SP3 states that the prime focus of development in the South East should be urban areas,

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in order to foster accessibility to employment, housing, retail and other services, and avoid unnecessary travel. Policy CC7 deals with delivery of infrastructure to support development.

**Main Sources of Evidence**

**1.21** The Council has commissioned a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and an Employment Land Review (ELR). These are all nearing completion and will be important sources of evidence as the Council develops its strategy for both housing and employment development.

**1.22** The Settlement Hierarchy (see above) will also provide evidence to support choices about both the broad locations for new housing and amount of housing development directed towards different locations.

**1.23** There are existing environmental and other constraints in Waverley that will also influence the ultimate choices that the Council has. These include (in no particular order) the designated sites of nature conservation importance (such as the Thames Basin Heaths and other Special Protection Areas (SPAs); areas of landscape and heritage importance; areas liable to flooding; any areas identified as having specific infrastructure constraints. These and other factors will be relevant when the Council makes more detailed choices about where to direct development.

**1.24** Some consultations have already taken place on the issue of housing, including targeted discussions with the main infrastructure and service providers and the “Big Debate” survey and poll which gave the opportunity for residents and other interested parties to comment on broad choices for the location of housing.

**1.25** “Housing Infrastructure and the Environment” is one of the five key themes in the Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy. Key areas of work related to this include delivery of affordable housing and work on an Infrastructure Capacity Project.

**Issue 1****How many new homes should we plan for?****Why is it an issue?**

**1.26** The Draft South East Plan sets out the housing requirement for Waverley for the period 2006 to 2026. This states that provision should be made for a minimum of 5000 new homes in this period. The fact that the South East Plan housing allocations are presented as minimum requirements does not prevent a local authority from planning to deliver more housing if it were considered to be an appropriate strategy, given local

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circumstances. Therefore, it is relevant, as part of the development of the Core Strategy, to consider whether Waverley should actively plan to deliver more housing than the minimum required by the South East Plan.



## Options for dealing with this issue

**Option A****Plan to deliver the 5000 new homes required by the Draft South East Plan**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed housing allocation in the South East Plan is deemed to be an appropriate amount of housing in a location like Waverley, which is not an area identified for major growth in the region.</li> <li>• Delivering this amount of housing is likely to have less impact on the environment and local infrastructure than a strategy that seeks to deliver more housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering this amount of housing will not deliver the amount of housing needed to fully address the local need for affordable housing in Waverley.</li> </ul>

## Option B

Actively plan to deliver more than 5000 new homes in the same period

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Likely to result in the delivery of more affordable housing than would be the case with Option A. It may also increase the choice of new market housing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planning to deliver more than 5000 homes is likely to have a greater impact on the environment and on local infrastructure. Increases the likelihood that development would take place on greenfield sites</li><li>Given that only a proportion of new housing is affordable, it would take a very significant increase in total housebuilding, with the consequent impacts on the environment and infrastructure, to be able to fully meet the identified need for affordable housing in Waverley.</li></ul>

## Question 1

Out of Options A and B, what approach should the Council take in relation to the number of new homes that it should plan for?

## Issue 2

Where should new homes be built?

### Why is this an issue?

**1.27** This is one of the main issues for the Core Strategy to address. How and where can Waverley accommodate the new homes required (a minimum of 5,000 new homes between 2006 and 2026)?

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**1.28** The current approach has been to limit housing development to locations within towns and villages that have a defined settlement boundary in the current Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (saved policies). There is also a policy in the Waverley Borough Local Plan (Policy H6) that, in exceptional circumstances, allows for small scale developments of subsidised affordable housing within or adjoining rural settlements, where it is to meet local needs.

**1.29** Although they do not rule out the use of greenfield sites, national and regional policies state that priority should still be for development within urban areas and on previously developed land. In Waverley, the Council will have to take a view about how much of the required new housing can and should be accommodated within settlements and whether there is any justification for identifying greenfield sites to deliver some of the required new housing.

**1.30** · A further consideration is the issue of windfall sites. Most new housing has come forward on “windfall” sites (i.e. sites that have not previously been identified/allocated for housing). There is now a requirement to be much more pro-active in identifying “deliverable” sites and planning for housing delivery over a 15-year period. This includes a requirement to maintain a 5-year supply of “deliverable” sites. Government policy in PPS3 also states that Councils can only include an allowance for windfalls in exceptional cases, where it can be demonstrated that there are genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites from being identified.

**1.31** The Council has commissioned a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to provide supporting evidence on the options available for delivering housing. This is nearing completion and will be a valuable source of information when the Council identifies its preferred approach to housing delivery. Depending on the outcome of the SHLAA, and the approach the Council takes on the issue of windfall sites (see Issue 3 below), it may be that the Council will not be able to demonstrate that it can deliver 5000 new homes without releasing some greenfield sites (or at least holding some in reserve).

**1.32** · At this stage, the Council needs to consider its broad options for where housing should go. In presenting options for locating new housing, a number of factors will need to be considered including access to services, environmental and ecological constraints, local housing needs etc. Of the options listed below, Option A would effectively be a continuation of the Council's current approach. This would include continuing with a policy that, in exceptional circumstances, allows for small scale developments of subsidised affordable within or on the edge of rural settlements, where it is to meet an identified local need.

## Possible options

### Option A

**Development within towns and villages. This would effectively be a continuation of the Council's current policy, and would limit most new housing development to locations within the current settlement boundaries that are defined in the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (saved policies). These comprise Farnham (including Badshot Lea), Godalming, Haslemere (including Hindhead and Beacon Hill), Cranleigh and the villages identified in Local Plan Policy RD1.**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of the current approach that has been applied for a number of years</li> <li>Minimal impact on the countryside</li> <li>Likely to be in more sustainable and accessible locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential impact on the character of towns and villages if all new development has to be accommodated within existing settlement boundaries</li> <li>May not be as responsive to local housing needs</li> </ul>

### Option B

**Development within towns and villages (as Option A) together with some of the required new housing being provided on identified sites on the edge of the towns and larger villages (the Communities with Key Services and the Communities with Local Services, as defined in the Waverley Settlement Hierarchy).**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May result in less pressure on the character of towns and villages if some new housing development is allowed outside current settlement boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential impact on countryside resulting from more development taking place outside existing settlement boundaries</li> </ul>

### Option C

Development within towns and villages (as Option A) together with some of the required new housing being provided on the edge of towns and villages generally, irrespective of their size.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May result in less pressure on the character of towns and villages if some new housing development is allowed outside current settlement boundaries</li> <li>• Wider distribution of housing may be more responsive to local needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased likelihood of development impacting on the countryside.</li> <li>• Some new housing sites likely to be in less accessible and sustainable locations.</li> </ul>

### Option D

Development within towns and villages (as Option A) together with some of the required new housing being provided in a new settlement or a single major urban extension.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration of a significant proportion of the new housing in one location may make it easier to deliver some of the infrastructure needed to support development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less likely to respond to housing needs across the Borough</li> <li>• Concentration of development in one place may increase the risk of impacting on local character and local infrastructure than if new housing is more widely dispersed.</li> </ul>

### Question 2

Out of Options A, B, C or D, what approach should the Council take in relation to the broad location of new housing in Waverley?

### Issue 3

Should the Council include an allowance for "windfall sites" in its overall housing strategy?

#### Why is this an issue?

**1.33** Traditionally most new housing has come forward on sites that have not been previously identified by the Council and allocated for housing. These unplanned development sites are referred to as "windfall sites". This is an issue because Government policy in PPS 3 states that an allowance for windfalls should not be included in the first 10 years of the planned housing supply unless the Council can provide robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. Therefore, although the Government does not rule out an allowance being made for windfalls, it clearly considers that such an allowance should be due to exceptional circumstances rather than being the norm. Locally the matter is unresolved, with other local authorities, which have also relied heavily on windfalls, deciding whether to include an allowance for windfalls in their housing strategies.

**Possible options**

**Option A**

**Include some allowance for windfall sites in the first 10 years of the housing strategy**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflects what happens in reality (i.e. windfall sites do come forward)</li> <li>• May lessen the need to consider allocating greenfield sites as part of the strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These sites are unplanned and therefore the Council has to react to the development rather than taking a more proactive approach.</li> <li>• Concerns already being voiced about the effect that some windfall developments can have on the environment and infrastructure</li> <li>• Risk that this approach would not comply with Government policy if the Council cannot justify the inclusion of a windfall allowance</li> </ul>

**Option B**

**No allowance for windfall sites in the first 10 years of the housing strategy**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council can take a more proactive role in identifying and bringing forward suitable sites for housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If no allowance is made for windfall sites then it increases the likelihood that greenfield sites will have to be released in order to ensure that the required amount of new housing is delivered.</li> <li>• Even if the Council does not include an allowance for windfall sites, developers are still likely to bring them forward.</li> </ul>

### Question 3

**Out of Options A or B, what approach should the Council take in relation to windfall sites?**

### Issue 4

**In principle, should the Council seek to control the amount of unplanned housing that comes forward?**

#### Why is this an issue?

**1.34** This is linked to the question about whether we plan for more housing. In essence this is about windfall sites and the scope that the Council has to control these “unplanned” developments. The Council may decide on a strategy for delivering the required new housing, which is based on identified sites, with little or no reliance on windfall sites. However, this in itself will not prevent windfall sites from being put forward for development by landowners or developers. These unplanned developments may result in added pressure on local character and local infrastructure. If the strategy is to place less reliance on windfalls, then the Council may also wish to explore what can be done to control additional unplanned development. In the past the Council did have a policy in the Local Plan that came into effect if the Council were able to demonstrate that it had at least 5 years + 20% of housing land available. That policy was directed at large sites that were predominantly open in character (including large areas of garden land) and gave the Council the opportunity to resist development of such sites. When the Council had to seek approval from the Secretary of State to 'save' existing Local Plan policies, H2 was one of the policies that the Council wanted to keep but this was rejected by the Secretary of State.

**1.35** If the Council can demonstrate that its strategy for new housing will deliver the required amount, it may be able to control the amount of additional unplanned development coming forward on "windfall sites". If the Council were to pursue this approach, it would have to decide the criteria for any policy seeking to control these developments, having regard to issues such as impact on infrastructure, impact on character, sustainability and access to services etc.. It is not envisaged that such a policy would seek to control all windfall development. It would be unrealistic to do so and it is possible, anyway, that the Council's overall strategy will be dependent on some windfalls continuing to come forward for development (see Issue 3 above). It is also too early to set out in more detail what type of control could be put in place. However,



this consultation invites comments on the principle of whether the Council should seek to control unplanned "windfall" developments and, if so, what types of windfall developments should be controlled. This might relate to particular locations or types of developments that, if not controlled, could have a detrimental impact.

**1.36** Whether such a policy approach would be reasonable will also depend, in part, on what policy is finally included in the South East Plan. In particular, the Government has proposed changes to the draft South East Plan to make it clear that the housing allocations are intended as minimum targets. It will also be difficult to fully consider whether such a policy is reasonable until such time as all the evidence is available (i.e. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment etc.) to enable the Council to decide on its preferred strategy for delivering the required new housing in Waverley. Moreover, whilst an approach that controls the release of windfall sites may appear attractive when considering the potential impact on infrastructure etc., it may be that some windfall sites are, in fact, more suitable than sites that have been identified. For example, because they are in more sustainable and accessible locations or because they contribute to the delivery of affordable housing.

**1.37** It should be noted that irrespective of whether there is a specific policy aimed at controlling unplanned windfall development, there would still be other policies on issues of design, density etc. that apply to proposed developments within towns and villages and which deal with environmental issues, such as the potential impact on local character (these issues are dealt with in the Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change Topic Paper).

### 1.38 Possible options

#### Option A

**Do not have a policy that controls the release of unplanned windfall sites**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not constraining the delivery of windfall sites may support the aim of increasing housing delivery overall in the south east, particularly where affordable housing is included</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential that unplanned windfall developments may affect local character and place an additional strain on local infrastructure over and above the impact of planned new housing.</li><li>• Unplanned windfall sites could come forward instead of planned sites that are considered to be more suitable</li></ul>

#### Option B

**Introduce a policy that controls the release of "windfall sites" in specific circumstances, where it can clearly be demonstrated that the required amount of new housing can be delivered without reliance on these sites.**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Would enable the Council to control the release of these unplanned sites and provide additional protection for local character and local infrastructure.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unless there is adequate flexibility, such a policy could have the effect of preventing sites from coming forward that are more suitable than identified sites.</li><li>• Could lessen the amount of affordable housing that is delivered than would be the case without such a policy.</li></ul>

### Question 4

**Out of Options A or B, what approach should the Council take in relation to unplanned windfall developments that are not required to deliver the overall amount of new housing in Waverley?**

### Question 5

**If you have chosen Option B, what types of windfall developments should the Council seek to control and why?**

## Community Needs

### Introduction

**1.39** This part of the topic paper sets out the community needs issues that have been identified for the Borough which planning policies in the Core Strategy will have to deal with relating to:

- providing the new infrastructure for the community needs that are emerging;
- maintaining and protecting the existing facilities;
- access to services

**1.40** Community needs include infrastructure for education, health, public services, transport and public utilities such as supply of water and gas.

### Relevant Core Strategy Objectives

To deliver sustainable development that meets the needs of the existing community, whilst not compromising the quality of life for future generations.

To ensure that where needed, infrastructure and services are provided to support new development

To contribute to the delivery of sustainable communities, by directing new development towards the most sustainable locations, where there is the best available access to jobs, schools, health services, leisure and recreation and community facilities, particularly by public transport, cycling and on foot.

### Issue 1

How can the Local Development Framework support the delivery of infrastructure and services?

#### Why is it an issue?

**1.41** Before Local Development Frameworks were introduced, the planning policy system related to Local Plans, which were primarily concerned with the use of land. The new system of Local Development Frameworks has a wider remit, and local authorities now have to adopt a spatial planning approach. The delivery of the necessary infrastructure and services to support new development is an important part of the new planning system. It is highlighted in Planning Policy Statement 12, which sets out the Government policy on the Local development Framework and Core Strategies. It says that Core Strategies should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area. It says that the Core Strategy should draw on and in parallel influence any strategies and investment plans of the local authority and other organisations.

**1.42** The reason why the local authority has to ensure that infrastructure and services are provided is that they are essential to support new development and may also be needed in parts of the Borough where certain services are lacking. The Surrey County Council Sustainable Community Strategy identifies needs across the County under the following headings:-

- Children and young people.
- Health and well being.
- Economic development.
- Housing infrastructure and environment.
- Safer and stronger communities.

**1.43** The relevant headings for this topic paper are children and young people, health and well being and safer and stronger communities. The Strategy identifies the following priorities for these particular headings:

#### **1.44** Children and young people

- Improve learning, health and employment outcomes for children and young people particularly for the vulnerable and disadvantaged;
- Improve the safeguarding of Surrey's most vulnerable children and young people.

#### **1.45** Health and well being

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- \* Promote healthy lifestyles, particularly targeting groups and communities at most risk.
- \* Support more vulnerable people to live in their own homes and to exercise greater choice and control over their health and support arrangements.

### 1.46 Safer and stronger communities

- Improve public confidence in the ability of public services to keep Surrey safe, prepare for emergencies, and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Encourage and facilitate active citizenship to strengthen communities

**1.47** The Waverley element of the Strategy to be produced will indicate what the needs are in the Borough.

### Planning Policy Context

**1.48** The national guidance from Government on infrastructure planning and services is contained in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: "Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Through Spatial Planning" (2008) (See above).

**1.49** Policy CC7 of the Draft South East Plan sets out in detail a policy on Infrastructure and Implementation. It states that "Where new development creates a need for additional infrastructure a programme of delivery should be agreed before development begins." This is the theme of the policy, that infrastructure should be provided before development commences. (This may be reviewed in the SEP )

**1.50** The Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 includes three "saved" policies on community facilities: CF1 on retaining existing community facilities; CF2 Provision of new community facilities; CF3 Educational facilities. There are no policies on the utilities, such as gas and water, as this aspect was not regarded as a planning policy matter when the Plan was prepared.

**1.51** The Waverley Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) "Planning Infrastructure Contributions" 2008 incorporates "saved" Policy D13 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 and this states that :

**1.52** "Development will only be permitted where adequate infrastructure, services and facilities are available, or where the developer has made suitable arrangements for the provision of the infrastructure, services and facilities directly made necessary by the proposed development. The Council will have regard to the cumulative impact of development, and developers may be required to contribute jointly to necessary infrastructure improvements"

**1.53** The SPD is a tariff-based system that seek contributions from residential and some commercial developments to mitigate the impact of new development on certain services and infrastructure.

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**1.54** Policy D14 of the Local Plan states that funding can be used for a number of benefits. In summary these are :

- affordable and special needs housing. (Affordable housing was not included in the SPD itself, but is dealt with separately)
- Improvements to public transport and to facilities for walkers and cyclists.
- Social and educational services.
- Enhancement of rural and urban areas.
- Recreational and sporting facilities.
- Public art.
- Other facilities that comply with other plans and government guidance.

### Main Sources of Evidence

**1.55** The Borough Council has carried out a series of one-to-one interviews with adjoining local authorities, transport operators, public utilities like water, gas and electricity boards and other key service providers in Waverley and other organisations like the County Council (education etc.) and the PCT. The purpose of these interviews has been to find out what services are needed in the Borough and if there are any shortfalls in infrastructure. The dialogue with key infrastructure and service providers will continue as the Core Strategy is developed further, and particularly as the preferred options relating to the location of development emerge.

### Options for dealing with this issue

**1.56** The policy documents outlined above make clear that the Council must work with key service and infrastructure providers and intervene positively to ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided. This is a Government requirement, which the Council has to comply with. The issue of infrastructure provision through the Local Development Framework is likely to be addressed through a continuation of an approach that requires delivery of infrastructure associated with development, or financial contributions towards required infrastructure in lieu of specific provision. In addition, there may be specific infrastructure requirements identified by service providers, where the Local Development Framework can assist in the delivery, for example by allocating sites for infrastructure development. At this stage, however, we have not identified any specific options or choices for consideration as part of this consultation.

## Issue 2

**How can planning help to ensure that people have the best access to services possible?**

**1.57** Why is it an issue?

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**1.58** For social, economic and environmental reasons, current policies aim to ensure that as far as possible the community has good access to services. There is also the associated issue of access to services by public transport and other alternatives to the car. Access is an issue for a number of reasons. For instance, Waverley is a rural Borough and people in village communities may not have good access to services such as doctors and dentists. They may have to go into a town and if they do not have a car this could be a problem if there is not be a good bus service.

**1.59** The Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy recognises this problem. "While rural living is idyllic for some, difficulties of accessibility, limited provision of services and infrastructure, lack of affordable housing and higher living costs in rural areas can isolate others and compound the challenges facing more vulnerable people."

**1.60** A lack of public transport may also cause problems for people trying to access services in urban areas.

**1.61** Access to services may be a particular problem in areas of social deprivation. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation are based on seven different measures: education, employment, crime, health, access to housing and services, income and living environment. Whilst Waverley is a relatively affluent area, it does have places that are relatively deprived when assessed against these indicators. These include some rural areas that are relatively deprived when assessed on access to services.

**1.62** The Core Strategy Draft Spatial Portrait refers to deprivation and notes that "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."

### **1.63 Planning Policy Context**

**1.64** Government guidance Planning Policy Statement 1 "Delivering Sustainable Development" states as one of its key principles that:

**1.65** "Development plans should also contain clear comprehensive and inclusive access policies - in terms of both location and external physical access. Such policies should consider people's diverse needs and aim to break down unnecessary barriers and exclusions in a manner that benefits the entire community." (Paragraph 13 (v)) This may be achieved sustainably by "ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas." (Para 27(v)). Therefore the Government requires that local authorities have to find ways of improving access to services.

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**1.66** The Draft South East Plan Companion Document 2008, includes Policy S6 on community infrastructure which refers to access: "Local planning authorities in consultation with those delivering services using community infrastructure.....will ensure facilities are located and designed appropriately, taking account of local needs and the Whole Life Costing approach"

**1.67** The "saved" policy CF2 in the Waverley Borough Local Plan states that:

**1.68** "within the settlements defined on the proposals map, planning permission will be granted for the development, expansion or change of use of premises for community facilities provided that:....."

**1.69** (b) the location of the development is readily accessible to the population served and its layout and design maximises accessibility to people with disabilities or mobility problems."

**1.70** The combined guidance of these policies, national regional and local is that the local authority must ensure that there is access to services.

### **1.71 Main sources of evidence**

- Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy
- Waverley Borough Council Social Inclusion Strategy 2008
- Feedback from consultations to date

### **1.72 Options for dealing with this issue**

**1.73** This is another topic where the choices are limited because the existing policy framework makes it clear that planning must play its part in promoting good access to services. Therefore although it is a very important issue in itself, there are no obvious choices to be made on the principle of improving access to services. Where it will be important is when the Council makes choices about where new homes should be built and also when considering any specific requirements for new infrastructure and services.