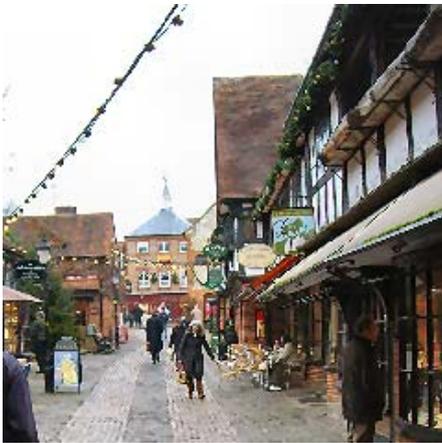


# Topic Paper: Living and Working

Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation

February 16<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009





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# 1 Living and Working

## Waverley Borough Council | Core Strategy Topic Paper: Living and Working

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This topic paper sets out the issues that have been identified for the Borough that planning policies in the Core Strategy will have to deal with relating to:

- **Housing Need and Demand:** providing the right accommodation in the borough that meets our resident's housing needs and demand.
- **Employment:** maintaining the local economy through ensuring that there is enough land for jobs and shops
- **Town Centres and Shopping:** protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town and village centres through the provision of shops and other services.
- **Leisure, Recreation and Tourism:** supporting the maintenance and delivery of leisure and recreation for local residents and Waverley as a destination for visitors

1.2 It then looks at the different planning policy options for dealing with the issues and where possible, sets out what the Council considers are the main advantages and disadvantages of each option to help you decide what approach the Core Strategy should take.

### HOUSING NEED AND DEMAND

1.3 This part of the Topic Paper looks at the issues relating to meeting housing need and demand in the Borough, in terms of affordable housing and housing type, size and mix.

#### 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.

**1.4** In July 2006 the Council consulted on an issues and options report for its Housing Development Plan Document. Although a new PPS3 <sup>(1)</sup> Housing was published by the Government after the consultation later that year, the responses received are still a relevant source of evidence for preparing housing planning policy.

### Statement 1

**We need to ensure that the provision of affordable housing within the Borough meets housing need.**

## Background

**1.5** Housing need refers to affordable housing.

### Definition of Affordable Housing in PPS3: Housing

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**1.6** Waverley has a significant need for affordable housing. The Council's Housing Needs Survey 2005 identified that an additional 622 affordable houses are required within the Borough every year to meet housing need. The Council is updating its housing needs figures through evidence gathered as part of its Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

**1.7** Existing policy in adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan for affordable housing has only resulted in 470 affordable dwellings in the seven years between April 2001 and March 2008.

**1.8** The need for affordable housing does not just affect Waverley. The draft South East Plan includes a target that 35% of all new housing in the region should be affordable. The issue in Waverley is that presently only larger developments usually

1 Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing: November 2006

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provide a proportion of affordable homes and then this is normally only up to 30%. This makes it impossible to fully meet local needs or to meet the overall target set for the region. One of the key challenges for the Local Development Framework will be to increase the amount of affordable housing.

**1.9** PPS3: Housing allows Councils to set their own site size thresholds and percentages sought, provided it can be justified and have assessed their economic viability. The Council has commissioned an Affordable Housing Viability Study to assess the potential impact on viability of a range of possible options for site size thresholds and percentages sought. This study will help us decide the preferred option for affordable housing.

### Main Policy Context

- National Policies - PPS3: Housing
- Draft South East Plan
- Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy

### Main Sources of Evidence

- Housing Needs Survey
- Affordable Housing Monitoring
- Feedback from consultation events to date

### Issue H1

**What should the site size thresholds be for requiring a proportion of affordable housing?**

### Why is it an issue?

**1.10** The existing site size thresholds for requiring affordable housing in new developments in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 are as follows

**Table 1.1 Existing Site Size Thresholds in the Waverley Brorough Local Plan 2002**

<b>Settlements with a population over 3000</b>	Sites that are 0.5 ha or larger or where the development provides over 15 extra new dwellings
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**Settlements with a population of 3000 or less**

Sites that are 0.2 ha or larger or where the development provides at least 5 extra new dwellings

**1.11** The problems with the existing thresholds in securing affordable housing is that many developments are below the site size threshold set out in the policy and therefore make no affordable housing contribution. From a total of 255 completions between April 2007 and March 2008, there have only been 37 affordable housing units that have been secured through the policy in the local plan. This can be because the sites available for housing development under existing planning policy are, by nature, small because they are within identified settlements. It may be also because some developers put forward proposals just under the thresholds. This is because a proportion of affordable houses reduces the overall value of a development.

**1.12** PPS3: Housing states that in setting appropriate site size thresholds for requiring affordable housing, the Council needs to take into account the viability of developments.

**Possible Options**

**Option H1A**

Keep the existing site size thresholds as set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a tried and tested approach - it has delivered affordable housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many housing developments are below the thresholds.</li> <li>It could be considered as an unfair on developers of larger schemes.</li> <li>It is unlikely to deliver the overall target for affordable housing.</li> </ul>

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### Option H1B

Lowering the site size thresholds set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is likely to result in an increase in overall supply of affordable housing.</li><li>• It would be a fairer approach as smaller sites would need to provide affordable housing.</li><li>• The Council can respond to identified housing need better.</li><li>• Tighter control over the delivery of affordable housing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It could negatively affect the viability of development resulting in less schemes coming forward.</li></ul>

### Option H1C

Remove the site size threshold completely and require an affordable housing contribution on all new housing developments.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It will increase the overall supply of affordable housing particularly in the smaller rural settlements where the thresholds are already lower than settlements with a population of 3000 or more.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It could negatively affect the viability of development resulting in less schemes coming forward.</li></ul>

### Question H1

Out of Option H1A, Option H1B or Option H1C, what approach should the Council take on site size thresholds for affordable housing?

**Issue H2**

**Should the Council increase the amount of affordable housing required on development sites?**

**Why is it an issue?**

**1.13** The policy on affordable housing in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 is that at least 30% of the new dwellings on site should be affordable (this minimum percentage drops to 25% where the density of the development overall is at least 40 dwellings per hectare).

**1.14** In practise the current policy only delivers 25% to 30% affordable housing on qualifying sites. This is less than the targets in the Surrey Structure Plan and the draft South East Plan in relation to the percentage of all new housing that should be affordable. Therefore, with regard to these targets, and the local need for affordable housing, the Council needs to decide whether the percentage of affordable housing required in the adopted Local Plan should be increased.

**Possible Options**

**Option H2A**

Keep the existing percentage set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 required on sites.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a tried and tested approach and has delivered affordable housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is difficult to meet the overall target for affordable housing in the South East Plan.</li> <li>It limits the amount of affordable housing making it harder to meet local need.</li> </ul>

### Option H2B

Increase the percentage required on sites from that set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 required on sites.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It will increase the overall supply of affordable housing.</li><li>• The Council is better able to respond to identified needs.</li><li>• It could achieve the target set out in the draft South East Plan.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It could negatively affect the viability of development resulting in less schemes coming forward.</li></ul>

### Question H2

Out of Options H2A or H2B, what approach should the Council take on the amount of affordable housing required on development sites?

**1.15** The work on the Affordable Housing Viability Study is looking at a further option to introduce a sliding scale of percentages linked to site size thresholds (i.e. smaller schemes provide a lower percentage of affordable housing). Such an approach is only likely to be justified if there is clear evidence in viability terms to support a lower requirement for smaller schemes.

**1.16** Depending on the outcome of the Affordable Housing Viability Study the Council may also want to consider whether there is a justification for having different thresholds depending on the size of the settlement or locations where land values or identified housing need differs.

**1.17** PPS3: Housing, states that affordable housing should be provided on the application site so that it contributes towards creating a mix of housing. However, where it can be fully justified, off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision of broadly the same value may be acceptable. It should set out the approach to seeking developer contributions for affordable housing. If site size thresholds are reduced then it is likely that there will be more development where a financial contribution would be better than getting on site provision. This matter would need to be addressed in the Core Strategy or any related LDF document.

### Issue H3

## How do we ensure that the tenure of affordable housing provided meets need?

### Why is it an issue?

**1.18** Within the Borough there are different levels of need for different types of tenure of affordable housing, either social rented or intermediate housing.

#### Definitions of affordable housing tenure in PPS3: Housing

##### Social rented

Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords. It may also be managed by other affordable housing providers but will have the same tenancy agreements agreed by the local authority or housing corporation.

##### Intermediate housing

Housing that is at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. This can include shared equity housing such as Homebuy, or other shared ownership homes for sale and intermediate rent.

**1.19** The mix of tenure will affect the community mix of both the area and any surrounding residential areas. It could also affect the the financial viability of development because the provision of shared ownership as opposed to social rented housing can sometimes make a scheme more viable. The current policy (Policy H5) in the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 does not specify the mix between social rented and intermediate housing. These tend to be negotiated on a site by site basis. However, the Local Plan does explain that where there is public subsidy, social rented accommodation should be provided

**1.20** The advice in PPS3: Housing is that Development Plan Documents should set separate targets for social rented and intermediate affordable housing and specify the the size and type of affordable housing required.

**1.21** The Draft South East Plan seeks 25% of all new housing to be social rented and 10% should be other forms of affordable housing.

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**1.22** The Council's Housing Needs Survey 2005 recommended that 75% of all new affordable housing should be in the form of social rented, with the remaining 25% as intermediate tenures (including shared ownership).

### Possible Options

#### Option H3A

Negotiate the mix between social rented and intermediate housing on a site by site basis.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It is flexible to allow the split to meet the specific circumstances of housing need and other local factors.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developers may not be clear at the outset what the split should be and would make it difficult to financially appraise schemes.</li><li>It could be based on market factors rather than housing need.</li><li>It could result in long negotiations to agree the split in tenure.</li></ul>

#### Option H3B

Specify in the policy the mix between social rented and intermediate housing that will be expected.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It would be clear to developers from the start what split in tenure would be required and it could be factored into developer's negotiations with landowners at an early stage</li><li>It would avoid long negotiations to agree the split in tenure.</li><li>It is more likely to deliver the proportion of social rented housing needed in the Borough.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It may not be flexible enough to adapt to market changes.</li><li>It may not be flexible enough to respond to local need and specific site issues.</li></ul>

**Question H3**

Out of Options H3A or Option H3B, what approach should the Council take in relation to the split between social rented and intermediate affordable housing?

**Statement 2**

**The Council needs to consider the best way of securing affordable housing to meet the needs of rural areas and villages.**

**Background**

**1.23** There are high levels of affordable housing need in rural areas and smaller settlements. This is because there are limited opportunities for housing development within rural areas and smaller settlements because there are fewer sites. Also house prices in rural areas can tend to be higher than homes in the larger settlements which makes them less affordable.

**1.24** This means that many people who have a connection with the settlement they work in or were brought up in can not afford to live there. It also means that the mix of people who live in the community can be lost as only those people who can afford to live in the village can do so.

**1.25** Currently, Policy H6 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 already allows for small schemes of 100% affordable housing within or adjoining certain settlements where there is a local need. There are two issues that come out of the present policy approach:

- It is a reactive policy in that sites can not be identified in advance; and
- It only applies to certain settlements.

**Main Policy Context**

- National Policy - PPS3: Housing, PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.
- Sustainable Community Strategy

**Main Sources of Evidence**

- Housing Needs Survey
- Affordable Housing Monitoring
- Feedback from consultation events to date

### Issue H4

#### Should the Council try to identify and allocate “rural exception sites”?

#### Why is it an issue?

**1.26** Policy H6 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 allows "rural exception sites". These are developments outside specific rural settlement policy boundaries that are solely for affordable housing. They are exceptions because in normal circumstances housing development would be unacceptable. However, the affordable housing must be justified, should be small scale and for people with a local connection.

**1.27** Rural exception sites are only built if they are put forward and proposals meet all the criteria that are set out in the Local Plan. Whilst a number of such schemes have been developed in Waverley in places like Dunsfold and Elstead, the policy is a reactive one because the proposals only tend to emerge following landowner interest. This raises the question of whether the delivery of such schemes could be improved if sites were identified and allocated in advance.

**1.28** New advice set out in PPS3 since the Local Plan was adopted, says that Councils can now allocate rural exception sites solely for affordable housing in their development plan documents.

#### Possible Options for dealing with Rural Exception Sites

##### Option H4A

Maintain the current approach set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 of just having a criteria based policy for dealing with rural exception sites.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The schemes are usually community led and therefore not imposed.</li><li>• The policy has been successful in delivering affordable housing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is a reactive policy as it relies on sites being suggested, rather than a strategic co-ordinated approach.</li></ul>

### Option H4B

In addition to a criteria based policy like the one in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002, identify and allocate rural exception sites solely for affordable housing.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The process is more proactive as suitable locations for affordable housing could be strategically co-ordinated for development rather than relying on sites being put forward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May result in some landowners being reluctant to bring sites forward if they consider that the identification and allocation of a site would increase the chance of obtaining planning permission for market housing in the future.</li> </ul>

### Question H4

Out of Options H4A or H4B, what approach should the Council take on the question of whether or not to try to allocate rural exceptions sites in advance?

### Issue H5

**Should the Council extend the “rural exceptions site” policy to all villages?**

#### Why is it an issue?

**1.29** The existing policy on rural exception sites in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 allows rural exception sites solely for affordable housing only within or adjacent to the rural settlements specified in Policy RD1 that are set out in the Table below.

**Table 1.2 Rural Settlements subject to Policy RD1 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002**

Alfold	Elstead	Shamley Green
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Alfold Crossways	Ewhurst	Thursley
Bramley	Frensham (inc. Millbridge and Shortfield Common)	Tilford
Chiddingfold	Grayswood	Witley
Churt	Hascombe	Wonersh
Dockenfield	Milford	
Dunsfold	Rowly	

**1.30** However, there is also identified housing need in other smaller villages. Under the present policy, development within or adjoining to these settlements is not acceptable.

### Possible Options

#### Option H5A

Maintain the existing approach of allowing rural exception sites only for those villages with a settlement boundary that are defined under Policy RD1 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The policy has been successful in delivering rural housing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There is no opportunity to address identified housing need in the smaller rural settlements.</li></ul>

### Option H5B

Extend the "rural exception sites" policy to all the rural settlements in Waverley.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may deliver more affordable housing and address housing need in smaller rural settlements.</li> <li>• It could boost the vitality and viability of smaller settlements.</li> <li>• It can contribute to community mix and retain connections to settlements for local people who presently cannot afford to live there.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relative impact of rural exception site development on smaller settlements could be greater than the impact of similar sized schemes on a larger rural settlement both visually and in terms of community mix.</li> <li>• Smaller rural settlements are less likely to have local facilities such as schools and shops and the lack of public transport links to facilities in other settlements will mean either a need to travel by car or isolation for residents.</li> </ul>

### Question H5

Out of Option H5A or Option H5B, what approach should the Council take on the question of whether or not to extend the rural exception sites policy to apply to all rural settlements in Waverley?

### Statement 3

**We need to ensure that the type and mix of housing meets needs and demand and contributes to a mixed community**

### Background

**1.31** The Government considers that planning policies should help ensure that new homes are built that will meet market demand as well as provide affordable homes that will meet the need. Unlike affordable housing, where Councils can specify the tenure to meet the type of affordable housing that is most needed, the advice to Councils is that they should set out policies for market housing that will reflect what households

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there are in the area and the type of housing they want. This includes not just household size but specific groups that have specific housing requirements such as the elderly, students and families.

**1.32** It is also important that there is a mix of different types of houses because it will contribute to or create a mixed community of different socio-economic groups and creates or maintains the viability and vitality of an area.

### Main Policy Context

- National Policy - PPS3: Housing
- Draft South East Plan
- Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy

### Main Sources of Evidence

- Housing Monitoring
- Feedback from consultation events to date

## Issue H6

### How do we ensure that the type and mix of housing meets demand?

#### Why is it an issue?

**1.33** Advice set out in the Government's PPS3: Housing states that the mix of market housing should reflect demand and the profile of households requiring market housing to sustain mixed communities.

**1.34** Policy H4 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 requires that new housing developments provide a proportion of smaller units. It applies to all development of more than three dwellings and requires at least 50% of all dwelling units to be two bedrooms or less, and not less than 80% of all dwellings to be three bedroom units or less and no more than 20% of all dwelling units to exceed 165 sq. m.

**1.35** The reason for this is partly because 44% of dwellings in Waverley are detached and 28% are semi-detached dwellings (2001 Census). On the other hand there is a lower proportion of smaller terraced housing and flats which may be more affordable to households entering the housing market.

**1.36** The existing profile of households in the Borough is that the average household size in Waverley is 2.36 persons with 67% of households in Waverley containing one or two persons. Policy H4 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 was devised as a means of addressing the mismatch between the size of existing housing stock and the small and decreasing household size.

**1.37** The Strategic Housing Market Assessment is intended to provide more up-to-date information on the likely future demand for market housing, which will assist in deciding the extent the Council should seek to influence the mix of market housing.

**Possible Options**

**Option H6A**

Specify the mix of market housing required based on either Policy H4 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 or any different mix that is identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It seeks to address the imbalance between types of homes in the Borough.</li> <li>If the emphasis is on small dwellings then it may indirectly deliver more homes that are at affordable prices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It may be an inflexible approach as it does not take into account specific site or local circumstances.</li> <li>The provision of small units does not necessarily mean that they will be at an affordable price.</li> <li>Household size does not necessarily mean that they want a house size that exactly meets their immediate needs as many have aspirations for larger homes.</li> </ul>

**Option H6B**

Negotiate different size and types of houses on a site by site basis.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is less prescriptive.</li> <li>The developer may be better able to respond to site and local circumstances over time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The market does not necessarily deliver the type and size of houses that meets local housing need.</li> <li>It could lead to further imbalance between smaller and larger homes.</li> <li>Negotiations with developers could be time and resource costly.</li> </ul>

## Question H6

Out of Options H6A or Option H6B, what approach should the Council take in relation to the type and mix of new housing?

## Issue H7

**How do we meet the housing needs of particular groups?**

### Why is it an issue?

**1.38** The Council is undertaking a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. When completed, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment will provide information on the characteristics of particular groups in Waverley and their housing requirements. These groups include the following:

#### Box 1

##### Groups identified with having special housing need

- ethnic minorities,
- limiting long term illnesses,
- key workers,
- older persons,
- families, students and
- rural households.

**1.39** Currently, the adopted Local Plan states that supported housing for those with special needs will be encouraged and development will be acceptable in principle in residential areas and other locations within towns and settlements. The provision of housing for specific groups is important to ensure that there is accessibility to the services and facilities that they use.

**1.40** It is also important as it contributes to the mix of different groups of people within a community. This diversity can help the viability of an area or a settlement.

## Possible Options

### Option H7A

Specify targets and allocate sites for providing different types of housing for groups who have special housing needs.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will help to meet the specific needs of groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It could be too prescriptive and not flexible enough to meet a change in circumstances and housing need.</li> <li>Control over types and sizes of homes should be sufficient to meet all needs</li> </ul>

### Option H7B

Keep the existing approach to providing special housing needs set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 where it is encouraged in suitable locations but not set out as a target.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will respond to the housing market, local circumstances and changes to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The market does not necessarily deliver the type and size of houses that meets specific housing need.</li> </ul>

### Question H7A

Out of Options H7A and Option H7B, what approach should the Council take in relation to the provision of housing for groups with special needs?

### Question H7B

Are there any groups, in addition to those identified in Box 1 above, that have special housing needs that the Council should be identifying? What specific housing concerns do these groups have?

**1.41** There is a requirement on all public sector funded housing to be built to Lifetime Homes Standards by 2011, with an aspiration that all new housing will be built to these standards by 2013. These are dwellings that have been constructed so that they can be adapted over time to meet changing needs. However, as it is only an aspiration for private housing, is there still a need to identify the type and size of housing and specify its requirement?

**1.42** Policy CC5 of the Proposed Changes to the draft South East Plan states that in order to reflect a significant increase in the proportion of older people in the region, Councils should address issues that include:

- The need to adapt the existing housing stock and make provision in new housing to support older people living independent lives in their own homes.
- The provision of reasonable access to services.

### Option H7C

The Council should require a proportion of private market dwellings in new housing developments to be built to "Lifetime Homes Standards" to ensure that the housing stock adapts to different groups' needs over time.

### Question H7C

Do you agree with Option H7C? Yes or No?

**Statement 4**

**We need to meet the future accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.**

**Background**

**1.43** Waverley is required to consider the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The following table sets out the current provision of accommodation within the Borough.

**Table 1.3 Current Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling showpeople accommodation in Waverley**

Number of authorised sites	Pitches	Caravans	Existing Policy in the Local Plan
<b>10 Gypsy sites</b>	91	171	Identified on the proposals map and safeguarded for Gypsy occupation
<b>2 Travelling showpeople sites</b>	6	11	Not identified on the proposals map and not currently safeguarded

**1.44** There has recently been a consultation on options for the distribution of new pitches for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople across the region as a partial review of the draft South East Plan. When completed, the review will provide a specific allocation for each district. In Waverley's case this is likely to range from 23 to 39 pitches from 2006 up to 2016. When the final figure has been agreed, probably in 2010, then the Council will need to find sites to accommodate the pitches.

**1.45** The intention is that any site specific allocations for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople would be set out in the proposed Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which is due to follow the Core Strategy. However, the Core Strategy should set the framework for identifying and assessing suitable sites.

**Main Policy Context**

- PPS3: Housing
- Circular 01/2006: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites
- Circular 04/2007: Planning for Travelling Showpeople.

**Main Sources of Evidence**

- Gypsy Traveller and Traveller Accommodation Assessments
- ODPM Caravan Counts

## Issue H8

### **How should the Council identify and allocate new sites to meet the requirement for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches?**

#### **Why is it an issue?**

**1.46** Government Circulars 01/2006: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites and 04/2007: Planning for Travelling Showpeople states that Councils will need to provide pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople set out in the South East Plan . This will be in addition to the existing provision in the Borough. Although the Core Strategy will not directly identify and allocate the sites it will need to set the criteria for deciding where they should go.

**1.47** The risk of not providing the number of pitches required in the South East Plan is that identified need will not be met, the number of unauthorised sites could increase and the Borough's enforcement powers to stop them would be reduced. The Government may also take legal action to impose sites in the Borough. The issue at this stage therefore is to assess the possible options for identifying new sites to meet future needs.

**1.48** Circular 01/2006 and 04/2007 gives advice about the location of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites in rural areas and the Countryside.

**1.49** For Gypsies and Traveller sites, the Government advise that in Green Belts sites are normally inappropriate development and alternatives should be explored before Green Belt locations are considered. However, it recognises that in some areas, the extent of the Green Belt will constrain and limit opportunities for finding Gypsy and Traveller sites. Changes to the Green Belt boundary should only be used in exceptional circumstances where no other sites outside the Green Belt exist to meet identified need. If land is to be released exceptionally it needs to be brought forward through the plan making process and specifically allocated as a Gypsy and Traveller site only. Councils can also use the rural exception site policy as set out in PPS3: Housing. In doing so they must identify the use of the rural exception sites for Gypsies and Travellers and consider the local connection of residents of the site.

**1.50** For Travelling Showpeople sites, there has to be very special circumstances to justify allowing them in the Green Belt.

**1.51** For Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites, the advice for areas with nationally recognised designations (SSSIs, NNRs, AONBs, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens) is that they should, like other development, only be

granted if they do not compromise the objectives of the designation. However, local landscape and local nature conservation designations should not be used to refuse sites.

**1.52** Sites on the outskirts of built up areas, and in rural or semi rural settings may be acceptable. The suitability of the site will depend on how available are alternatives to the car for accessing local services and how it respects the scale of, and does not dominate the nearest settled community.

**1.53** In the light of the current Government Circulars, the following considerations are suggested as being relevant for assessing where Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites should go.

## Box 2

### **Suggested factors to consider when assessing where new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople should be located**

- It is within an existing built up area.
- It is adjacent to an existing built up area.
- It is on Previously Developed Land.
- It is in a location that is accessible to local services and facilities using an alternative to the car.
- It is within or adjacent to an existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site.
- It is within the Green Belt.
- It would have an impact on an area which has a nationally recognised designation (i.e. AONB, SSSIs, NNRs, AONBs, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens)?
- It would have a detrimental visual impact on the appearance of the area?

## Question H8A

Which of the factors to assess where new sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople should go, as set out in Box 2 above, are the right ones?

## Question 8B

Which other factors to assess where new sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople should go need to be taken into account ?

### EMPLOYMENT

#### Introduction

**1.54** Waverley is required to support the South East region's wider goal of delivering sustainable economic growth. This can partly be achieved through policies that provides an adequate supply of land for industrial and commercial uses. Although shopping and recreational uses also contributes to economic growth this section of the Topic Paper only deals mainly with this use as defined under the B Use Class of the Town and Country Planning Act Use Classes Order 2006). Issues relating to retail, leisure and tourism can be found in the next sections of this Topic Paper.

#### 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 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 support the vitality and diversity of the local economy in both the towns and the countryside.

#### Statement 5

**We need to ensure employment policies in the Core Strategy delivers an appropriate supply of land for commercial and industrial uses**

#### Background

**1.55** Waverley has a strong economic base, built upon an entrepreneurial ethos, and dominated by a high number of micro and small sized businesses. Although there are not many large businesses within Waverley, these small businesses play an important support and servicing role to the larger businesses in the South East region. Because of their important role as a hub for economic activity, Waverley has focused on supporting the businesses and the employment opportunities found within its market towns.

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Furthermore, although Waverley lies outside the sub region of the Western Corridor and the Blackwater Valley, its economy contributes to this sub region's objective of dynamic growth because of its proximity to it.

**1.56** Most of the jobs in the Borough are in banking and finance, distribution, hotels and restaurants, and public services. However, although Waverley provides jobs for the local employment market, nearly half of its residents travel to work outside the Borough. The amount of jobs available within Waverley is only 8,800 less than the number of working people who live here. The high level of commuting out of the Borough reflects the relatively limited range of job opportunities available within Waverley to match the highly qualified nature of its resident workforce. This also means that the jobs that are available within the Borough are often filled by people who live outside the Borough.

**1.57** Draft Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, requires employment policies to promote a positive approach to planning for economic development. Policies should be flexible to ensure that the type of employment use on allocated sites is not restricted to a specific use so that the jobs that are created can respond to changing circumstances.

**1.58** The underlying principle of the draft South East Plan is that the Core Strategy employment policies should help Waverley contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the region. The Draft South East Plan recognises that the main opportunities for this are through Smart economic growth, and the focused growth of key sectors.

### **Smart Economic Growth**

Includes: increasing the number of businesses using the existing workforce, developing land and using employment floorspace more efficiently through technological innovations so that a higher business value is returned on footprint used, and reducing road congestion and pollution levels by promoting public transport and behavioural change.

### **Main Policy Context**

- National Policies: PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms, Draft PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Draft South East Plan,
- Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy

### **Main Sources of Evidence**

- Regional Economic Strategy (SEEDA)

# 1 Living and Working

## Waverley Borough Council | Core Strategy Topic Paper: Living and Working

- Surrey Economic Partnership Strategy
- Outcomes of Consultations and Stakeholder Involvement

### Emerging Issues

**1.59** National and Regional planning policy requires Local Authorities to ensure that there is an adequate supply of appropriate employment land to meet the likely requirements of the economy and that it is flexible enough to react to the changing requirements of the market.

**1.60** It is important for Waverley to have an adequate supply of jobs that meets residents skills and qualifications if the Council wants to reduce commuting in and out of the Borough. If we are to reduce congestion, pollution and increase people's quality of life, by cutting down on travelling to work, then there needs to be jobs close to where workers live.

**1.61** Waverley is currently undertaking an Employment Land Review which is still under preparation by our consultants, Atkins, This will be a crucial element of the employment evidence base for the Core Strategy and will provide:

1. an assessment of the portfolio of existing employment land and premises;
2. details of the local economy and business community;
3. likely future employment land and premises requirements;

**1.62** Until the Employment Land Review is completed, it is not possible to fully detail the likely employment related issues that will need to be considered as part of preparing the Core Strategy. However, there are some issues that have emerged from the national and regional policy context, existing evidence and from the initial work on the Employment Land Review. These are set out below and we feel that the Core Strategy will need to consider them.

#### Box 3

##### Emerging Employment Issues

- The approach the Council should take in relation to the retention of suitable existing employment land.
- The approach the Council should take in relation to the provision of additional industrial and commercial land.
- The approach the Council should take in relation to rural employment and rural diversification.

## Question E

Are there any other employment issues, in addition to those set out in Box 3 above, that you think should be considered in the Core Strategy? Please explain your reasons.

## Issue E1

### How do we protect existing suitable employment land?

#### Why is this an issue?

**1.63** There is pressure to change existing industrial and commercial sites so that they can be used for housing or for other uses. This is because these alternative uses can have a higher land value.

**1.64** The Council needs to ensure that there are adequate employment of the right type and at the right place to meet local employment needs. If valuable employment sites are lost, then it may have a detrimental effect on the local economy or could potentially put pressure on to develop new greenfield sites for employment purposes.

**1.65** On the other hand, the Council recognises that it would be unreasonable to let sites that are unsuitable or no longer needed for industrial and commercial use to remain empty and unused.

**1.66** The current policies within the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 therefore look to safeguard suitably located and well established employment land provided it meets specific criteria. These are set out in the Box 9 below.

## Box 4

### **Criteria for determining suitability of industrial and commercial sites under Policy IC2 and IC3 of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002.**

- The site does not have a material adverse impact on the local environment or nearby residents.
- It lies within or close to a housing area which can provide a source of labour.
- It is conveniently located to customers/markets and other firms.
- It is located where the highway network can satisfactorily absorb the traffic generated.
- It is conveniently located served by public transport and/or accessible from nearby residential areas by foot/bicycle.

## Question E1A

Which of the criteria for determining the suitability of existing industrial and commercial land set out in Box 4 above are the right ones?

## Question E1B

Are there any other criteria for determining the suitability of existing industrial and commercial land that should be taken into account?

## Issue E2

**What approach should the Council take in relation to additional land and buildings for industrial and commercial use?**

### **Why is this an issue**

**1.67** Subject to the findings of the Employment Land Review, it may be that we will need to consider identifying additional land for industrial and commercial purposes. Whilst the land for industrial and commercial uses will not be directly allocated by the Core Strategy, it will be necessary for it to provide the policy framework to enable the delivery of these opportunities if required.

**1.68** Policy RE3 of the Proposed Changes to the South East Plan states that using evidence from Employment Land Reviews and from market intelligence provision should be made for a range of sites and premises in locations set out as follows:

1. They are or will be accessible to the existing and proposed labour supply;
2. They make efficient use of existing and underused sites and premises, through increasing the intensity of use on accessible sites;
3. Focus on urban areas; and,
4. They promote the use of public transport

**1.69** The following are the suggested options for deciding where to allocate land for industrial and commercial purposes.

### Box 5

#### Possible Options for locating Industrial and Commercial Development

1. On previously developed land.
2. Within or adjoining the main settlements of Cranleigh, Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere.
3. The expansion and redevelopment of existing employment sites.
4. New identified and allocated sites.
5. Within or adjoining rural settlements.
6. Accessibility to residential areas and other services and facilities
7. Accessible by public transport

### Question E2A

Which of the options in Box 5 above for deciding the broad locations for new industrial and commercial land should the Core Strategy consider?

### Question E2B

Are there any other options for the location of new industrial and commercial land that we have not considered?

## Statement 6

**We need to ensure that rural employment policies meets the needs of the economy.**

**1.70** With such a large proportion of the Borough being in the countryside and the importance of rural communities, the delivery of rural employment is an important consideration. National Planning policy guidance states that whilst economic growth should be focused around the urban areas and that there are constraints on development in rural areas and the Green Belt, it also recognises that rural areas have an important role to play in the economy. Rural employment helps deliver objectives to increase access to jobs, services and facilities without the use of the car and to ensure that there is a mix of uses which adds to the vitality and viability of rural communities.

**1.71** The guidance notes that non-traditional opportunities should be explored, such as ‘telecottages’ in rural areas as well as ‘telecentres’ in the suburbs.

### Main Policy Context

- National Policies: PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms, Draft PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Draft South East Plan
- Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy

### Main Sources of Evidence

- Regional Economic Strategy (SEEDA)
- Surrey Economic Partnership Strategy
- Outcomes of Consultations and Stakeholder Involvement

## Issue E3

**How do we deal with the re-use of buildings in the countryside?**

### Why is this an issue?

**1.72** Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings for employment purposes before being considered for any residential redevelopment. This is because it contributes to the rural economy and helps create sustainable communities

more than housing does. However, Policy RD7 of the adopted Waverley Local Plan 2002 recognises that there may be buildings that are more appropriate to be used for residential or institutional use and does not specify that re use for employment is a priority.

**Possible options**

**Option E3A**

Continue with the existing policy on the re-use of buildings in the countryside which allows for a range of uses, not just employment use, as set out in the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It allows buildings to be used for the most appropriate or viable use.</li> <li>• It could ensure the most efficient use of land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An opportunity for using a building that contributes to the rural economy could be lost</li> <li>• It is not fully in accordance with PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas which states that employment use is preferred.</li> </ul>

**Option E3B**

Place a clear requirement that the re-use of buildings in the countryside for employment purposes is a priority.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It encourages buildings in the countryside to be reused for employment purposes which will help the rural economy and create sustainable communities.</li> <li>• It still allows buildings to be used for housing, but only if employment use is inappropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It could be regarded as too prescriptive as it limits options for bringing rural buildings back into use</li> </ul>

### Question E3

Out of Options E3A and Option E3B, what approach should the Council take in relation to the reuse of rural buildings?

### Issue E4

**What should the Council's approach be in relation to the location and scale of any new employment development in rural areas?**

#### Why is this an issue?

**1.73** The openness, landscape quality and the use of the countryside for farming or for leisure needs to be protected from development. However, this protection needs to be balanced against the needs of the rural economy and creating sustainable settlements. If the Council chooses to allocate land for employment purposes in the rural settlements then what scale of development will not have an impact on the countryside? Similarly, if employment sites extend or redevelop, either within or adjacent to rural settlements or on isolated sites in the countryside, what is the appropriate scale?

**1.74** The following are suggested matters that should be considered when determining the most appropriate location and scale

#### Box 6

##### **Suggested Criteria for considering on the location and scale of any new Industrial and Commercial Development for Rural Areas**

- Priority to sites within settlements or on other previously developed land.
- Closeness of the employment site to the built up area of an existing settlement.
- The size of the settlement.
- The amount of traffic and parking generated.
- The storage of plant/materials and machinery.
- Height of surrounding buildings.
- Potential impact on residential amenity.
- Potential impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

**Question E4A**

Which of the criteria for considering the location and scale of any new industrial and commercial development in rural areas, set out in Box 6 above, should be considered in the Core Strategy?

**Question E4B**

Are there any other criteria for the location and scale of new industrial and commercial development in rural areas that we have not considered?

**TOWN CENTRES AND SHOPPING****Introduction**

**1.75** Each of the four centres has a Town Centre Area and a Central Shopping Area. These were originally defined in the 1999 Replacement Waverley Borough Local Plan, and have not been changed since that time. The Town Centre Areas are those in which town centre uses are encouraged in accordance with the sequential test set out in PPG6. The Central Shopping Areas reflect the main concentration of shops within the town centres.

**1.76** The Council recognises the importance of a lively, vibrant and viable town centres to residents, workers, businesses and visitors to the Borough. Local centres provide an important and often vital service to those residents who want or need to shop locally.

**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 support the vitality and diversity of the local economy in both the towns and the countryside.

To support the vitality and viability of the town centres in Waverley, together with the distinctive roles they play and their links with the surrounding areas.

### Issue TCR1

How do we maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere/Weyhill and Cranleigh?

#### Why is it an issue?

**1.77** The Waverley Borough Town Centre Retail Study 2008 <sup>(2)</sup> states that in general terms, all four of Waverley's main shopping centres, Farnham, Godalming, Cranleigh and Haslemere/ Weyhill lie in the shadow of Guildford to varying degrees. Shoppers looking for convenience or comparison goods <sup>(3)</sup> come to Farnham from the Farnborough and Aldershot areas and this may be due in no small part to the relative quality of the shopping environments.

**1.78** Godalming, Cranleigh and Haslemere / Weyhill are well supplied with convenience stores, and surveys carried out as part of the Retail Study show that residents use these centres for this kind of shopping to a high degree, and this is termed as 'retention of local expenditure'. In this they are successful centres. However, their retention of expenditure in most comparison goods categories is low, especially for clothing and footwear, and this may be due in part to the close proximity to Guildford.

**1.79** Over the last few years, healthchecks have been carried out for Haslemere, Cranleigh and Godalming. Farnham underwent a 'Visioning' exercise in 2007, <sup>(4)</sup> in which it was recognized under the heading 'Vibrant Farnham' that protecting and enhancing the town's vibrancy - as a place to live, work and play posed a series of interrelated challenges. If the town was to be made more attractive to young people, then the nature of the retail mix would need to change, but any change would need to be sensitive to the town's character and history. Neither should it undermine the quality and choice of services available to the town's older population.

**1.80** Godalming's Draft Healthcheck <sup>(5)</sup> highlights the importance of independent retailers and specialist stores, but has concerns about the high number of charity shops in the High Street. The range of pubs and restaurants keeps Godalming Town centre alive in the evenings, and the various markets, both permanent and seasonal are also highlighted as being important in bringing shoppers to the town. It is felt that the relocation of Waitrose in .... from the centre of the High Street has changed the dynamics

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2 Waverley Borough Town Centre Retail Study: Chase and Partners: August 2008

3 Convenience retailing: the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers and confectionery. Comparison retailing: the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis, such as clothing, furniture, household and recreational goods.

4 Steps Towards a Vision for Farnham - March 2007

5 Godalming Together: November 2008

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of the town, with areas to the west becoming quieter, and the healthcheck proposes several measures to try and re-distribute customers to all areas of the town, including more markets and a town trail.

**1.81** Haslemere's Healthcheck was carried out in 2003 and is currently under review. <sup>(6)</sup> This has highlighted that local people are particularly pleased with the wide range and quality of shops and restaurants, but amongst the aims the healthcheck lists the need to reduce the number of empty premises and derelict sites in Haslemere, and to increase economic activity and vitality in the town. Responses to a survey indicated that another foodstore would be welcome, and a preference for boutique style shops rather than chains. There is concern about Weyhill, which has a number of empty shops and 'has a poor image'. There is strong support for a market and a town square.

**1.82** As part of the 2003 Healthcheck, the Haslemere and Village Rewards scheme was launched to encourage shoppers to support local businesses. This successful scheme has received national press attention and awards.

**1.83** Cranleigh's Healthcheck <sup>(7)</sup> was carried out in 2002/2003, and a review questionnaire was published in October 2008. The results of this are not yet available. In the 2003 document, support was high for the range and quality of independent retailers in the village, however, it was stated that the retail mix did not cater for young people's needs. It was also indicated that although some ad hoc promotional activity took place, the shopping area was not comprehensively managed, and greater co-ordination was required to ensure that the village can compete with larger centres. A major concern for Cranleigh's business community was the leakage of people to shop outside the village.

**1.84** Overall, evidence in Waverley's Town Centre Retail Study shows that our towns are all currently strong and successful. However, most major centres outside Waverley are all in the process of adding to and improving what they offer to customers. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the amount and type of floor space that needs to be provided to ensure the continued vitality of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere/Weyhill and Cranleigh, and it would appear from the healthchecks that each of the towns is aware of the need to enhance the vitality and viability of its centre.

### Planning Policy Context

**1.85 PPS6: Planning for Town Centres: 2005.** This document makes clear that the Government's key objective is to promote vital and viable town centres by planning for growth and focusing development, wherever possible, there.

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6 Your Haslemere: Haslemere Healthcheck Review 2008

7 Action for Cranleigh December 2003

# 1 Living and Working

## Waverley Borough Council | Core Strategy Topic Paper: Living and Working

- Local planning authorities are encouraged to plan positively for the growth and development of town centres by, inter alia: assessing the need for further main town centre uses, and ensuring there is the capacity to accommodate them, and
- planning for the expansion of centres and identifying appropriate sites in development plan documents

**1.86** Local planning authorities should adopt a proactive, plan-led approach to planning for town centres. Such an approach involves:

- making better use of existing land and buildings, including, where appropriate, redevelopment, and
- where necessary, extending the centre.

**1.87** In this connection, advice is given that opportunities within existing centres should be identified for sites suitable for development or redevelopment. Planning authorities are urged to ensure that the number and size of sites identified for development or for redevelopment are sufficient to meet the scale and type of need identified. Where growth cannot be accommodated in existing centres, PPS 6 advises that planning authorities should plan an extension of the primary shopping area (if there is a need for additional retail provision) or plan for the extension of the town centre to accommodate other town centre uses. The important point is made that extensions of primary shopping areas should be carefully integrated with the existing centre, both in terms of design and accessibility.

**1.88** Specific advice is given on the role of plans. In this way, local planning authorities are urged to work with stakeholders and the local community to address the issue of what is needed in their town centres in terms of additional retail floorspace, and to set out criteria based policies for assessing and locating new development proposals, including development on sites not allocated in development plan documents

**1.89** 2.9 PPS 6 also provides specific guidance to local planning authorities when allocating sites. In this connection it asserts that local planning authorities should:

- assess the need for development ( through the Plan- Making process see Para 1.185)
- identify the appropriate scale of development,
- apply the sequential approach to site selection,
- assess the impact of development on existing centres,
- ensure that locations are accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport.

**1.90** Advice is given that in assessing quantitative need, expenditure growth should be analysed in relation to the classes of goods to be sold within the broad categories of comparison and convenience goods. In considering qualitative need issues, a key consideration for local authorities is to provide for consumer choice by ensuring that a range of sites is brought forward to meet the needs of a variety of retailers.

## Waverley Borough Council | Core Strategy Topic Paper: Living and Working

**1.91** The sequential approach is a key part of contemporary retail policy advice. It requires that locations are considered in the following order:

- first, locations in appropriate existing centres, where suitable sites or buildings for conversion are available, or will become available within the development plan period, taking account of the appropriate scale of development,
- edge of centre locations, and
- out-of-centre locations, with preference given to sites which are or will be well served by a choice of means of transport, and which have a high likelihood of forming links with the centre.

**1.92** PPS 6 recognises that market towns and centres serving more rural areas provide not only a range of shops and services but also a potential focus for economic development and rural-based industries – including markets for locally-produced food and other products and tourism. Some centres have declined in recent times and remain vulnerable to economic cycles and changing lifestyles. As such the Government is committed to helping market towns and smaller centres by encouraging regeneration and strengthening their role as vital service centres. Local planning authorities are encouraged to adopt policies that recognise this role and support their continued vitality and viability.

**1.93** Government guidance in PPS6 also says that local authorities should define a network and a hierarchy of centres each performing their appropriate role to meet the needs of their catchments. Doing this may help us to ensure that there is a more even distribution of town centre uses, and that people’s everyday needs are met at the local level. The evidence gathered by the Borough Council, and received from the Towns and Parishes as part of the construction of the Waverley Settlement Hierarchy will assist in creating such a network and hierarchy in the future.

**1.94 Proposed Changes to PPS6 Consultation July 2008:** The Government published for consultation proposed changes to PPS6, following the Planning White Paper of May 2007. The proposed changes mostly relate to development control matters. Competition issues are also touched upon but not in any great detail, as this part of the PPS is currently subject to a legal challenge.

**1.95** Overall there is little substantial change to the advice given on the plan-making process. Although the need test has been removed for development control purposes, need must still be assessed for plan-making.

**1.96 Draft South East Plan – policies TC2 and TC3.**

**1.97** The Strategic Network of centres is identified in draft Policy TC2; this identifies those centres that are expected to be the focus of major developments - defined as 10,000 sq m or more. Whilst neighbouring Guildford is identified as a Primary Regional Centre (recommended by the Regional Assembly to be changed to a “centre for significant change”) none of the town centres in Waverley Borough are identified in draft Policy TC2.

**1.98** 2.32 The draft South East Plan states that an additional 4 million sq m of gross retail floorspace will potentially be required by 2026 throughout the Region (outside London). Whilst the Primary and Secondary Regional Centres included in draft Policy TC2 are expected to be the focus of major development, growth will not be restricted to these centres and the Plan recognises that the complete network of centres includes “other towns which provide the main retail and other services in a local area.” Local planning authorities are encouraged to set out other centres that complete the network within their area and should “review their needs using robust data and analysis to provide strategy for their future development.”

**1.99** TC3 relates to new development in Town centres, and emphasises that large scale development should be directed to those town centres which are identified in the Strategic network. Although Farnham is not included in this network, the draft South East Plan states that Waverley Borough Council should work on the development of Farnham “reflecting” its links with the Blackwater Valley sub-region. Surveys on shopping patterns carried out as part of the South East Plan and the Waverley Town centre Retail Study show that Farnham draws a significant number of customers from this region.

**1.100** **Saved Structure Plan Policies** include policies relating to the location of development (LO1), town centres (LO3) and retail development (LO8).

**1.101** **Saved Local Plan Policies.** The majority of Town Centre and Shopping policies have been saved, the exceptions being those which referred to Key sites which have been developed since the adoption of the Local Plan. The Town Centre Retail Study states that the existing shopping and town centre policies in the Local Plan give the Council a good degree of flexibility in terms of development control. These policies are not overly prescriptive and are broadly in line with prevailing national policy, though some updating will be necessary as these policies pre-date PPS 6.

### Main Sources of Evidence

- Town Centres Retail Study 2008
- Town Centre Healthchecks
- Settlement Hierarchy Audit

### Possible Options for dealing with this issue

**1.102** A need has been identified for both comparison and convenience floorspace in all four centres. There are differing levels of need in each centre, but all have the common development constraints of historic cores, many listed buildings of varying sizes, many of which are seen by operators as too small for their needs, conservation areas and all are to some extent, limited by their physical layout and geography. Accommodating the additional floorspace is not therefore a straightforward issue, and there are a number of possible options to deal with this.

### Option TCR1A

Maintain the current approach to enhance and maintain vitality and viability as and when opportunities arise, without making specific provision to accommodate or encourage further growth.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less pressure on Waverley’s town centres in terms of parking, traffic, pollution etc</li> <li>• May be better able to balance the retail needs alongside the physical environmental constraints that exist in the historic town centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence shows that standing still is akin to decline. This may be acceptable in the short term, but with other centres outside the Borough progressing with major developments, customers may go elsewhere, where there is more choice on offer.</li> </ul>

### Option TCR1B

Actively promote the identification of sites in the main towns, based on the principles of the sequential approach (e. Town centre sites, followed by edge of centre, then out of centre)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach may, over time, meet the medium and long term demand for convenience and comparison floorspace without detriment to the character of the existing town centres.</li> <li>• This will clarify the medium and long- term situation for developers and direct development to the right places. If the sites are deliverable, the demand for convenience and comparison floor space would be satisfied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may only be achieved through allowing extensions to the larger stores that have the space to expand. Careful monitoring would be needed to ensure that this would be not to the detriment of the smaller stores in the town centres.</li> <li>• It is likely that the rate of provision would be slow.</li> <li>• Physical environmental constraints within the town centres may increase the likelihood of sites outside centres being promoted for new retail development.</li> <li>• Sites are likely to be in multiple ownerships and contain other uses which may need to be accommodated elsewhere, leading to a lengthy site assembly and development process.</li> </ul>

### Option TCR1C

Review the current town centre and / or Central Retail area boundaries in the Local Plan with a view to identifying more areas where there may be opportunities to meet future needs for retail floorspace.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This would bring any future proposals under the Central Shopping Area policies.</li><li>• May provide more flexibility in terms of finding suitable sites to meet any additional needs for retail floorspace.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Constraints in and around each of the town centres mean that there are few obvious areas that could accommodate new retail development satisfactorily.</li></ul>

### Option TCR1D

Continue to protect existing shops in the core shopping areas from changing to non-retail uses.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains the predominance of shops over other uses in the town centres to protect the retail core.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May result in more long term vacant premises or temporary occupiers, including charity shops.</li> <li>Could limit opportunities for other town centre uses to find appropriate premises.</li> </ul>

### Question TCR1

Out of Options TCR1A, TCR1B, TCR1C and TCR1D, what approach should the Council take in relation to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh? (you may select more than one option)

### The Issue

#### Issue TCR2

How do we maintain, support and enhance the roles of local shopping areas and village shops?

### Why is it an issue?

**1.103** Local and village shops are vitally important in an area such as Waverley. The area has many rural villages, some of which have only one village shop and/or post office. These shops are often a focus for community life for residents who need or want to shop locally, without using a car. Village, local shops and particularly post offices are increasingly coming under pressure to change from retail uses, and while the Council cannot prevent the closure of uneconomic shops, it is necessary to make sure that all

reasonable efforts are made to retain a retail use in the villages. Local parades of shops are also important in more urban areas as they provide a convenient 'top-up' shopping facility within walking distance from home, for those who wish to do their bulk shopping elsewhere.

### Planning Policy Context

#### **1.104 PPS6: Planning for Town Centres: 2005** (and PPS6 consultation July 2008)

**1.105** A network of local centres is essential to provide easily accessible shopping for everyday needs and should be the focus for investment in more accessible local services, including health and other small-scale community facilities as well as shops. PPS6 states that the need for local shops and services is equally important within rural and urban areas and as well as protecting these, local authorities should seek to remedy deficiencies, by taking a positive approach to strengthening local centres and planning for shops and local services. Villages should provide a range of facilities, shops and services at a scale appropriate to the needs and size of their catchment areas. They should provide a focus for appropriate economic development and rural-based industries including markets for locally produced food and other products.

**1.106 PPS6 consultation July 2008** is equally supportive of village and local shops, with the Ministerial foreword referring to them as "an absolute lifeline to those who find it hard to get about, especially the elderly and infirm....they are a place where people meet, get to know each other, talk about the issues that matter to them." The paragraphs of the current PPS6 relating to local centres have not been changed in the consultation document. Local authorities should, where appropriate, seek to protect existing facilities which provide for people's day-to-day needs and seek to remedy deficiencies in local shopping and other facilities to help address social exclusion.

**1.107** The Settlement Hierarchy Audit carried out with the Town and parish Councils will identify those rural and local centres which have the most shops and other facilities, and also those which are most vulnerable and at risk.

**1.108 Saved Local Plan Policies.** Policy S2 of the 2002 Local Plan seeks to retain local and village shops and to promote areas which serve the shopping needs of the local community. It does this by having regard to the importance of the retail use to the local community, and only allowing a change of use if criteria relating to marketing, character, appearance and traffic has been satisfied. The Town Centre Retail Study 2008 refers briefly to this policy, stating that the consultants consider the existing policy to be appropriate as it offers sufficient control and flexibility.

**1.109** Policy S3 relates to farm shops and shops forming part of petrol filling stations. These can also serve a vital function in rural areas, helping the demand for fresh local produce, reducing local transportation costs, providing local employment and contributing to the diversity of the local economy.

#### Comment

**1.110** It is recognised that supporting local shops is an important issue in Waverley, and has been promoted through Local Plan policy and national policy. As the Council intends to continue the approach of providing the application of relevant national policy, by it has not identified any specific choices or options for consideration as part of this consultation.

#### Question TCR2

**Are there any other matters relating to local and village shops that we should consider in the Core Strategy?**

## LEISURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM

#### Introduction

**1.111** This section of the Topic paper deals with the issues of leisure, recreation and tourism within Waverley. It considers some of the issues that the Core Strategy will need to address. In particular it deals with the following:

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- How can the Core Strategy support the maintenance and delivery of leisure and recreation facilities and opportunities for the local community
- How can the Core Strategy support Waverley's role as a destination for visitors.

### 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.

To support the vitality and diversity of the local economy in both the towns and the countryside.

### Issue 1

#### How can the Core Strategy support the maintenance and delivery of leisure and recreation facilities and opportunities for the local community

#### Why is it an issue

**1.112** Leisure and recreation facilities are essential parts of the quality of life of the Waverley community. Through the Local Development Framework, the Council has role in supporting the delivery of new and improved facilities that may be required, and helping to safeguard important existing facilities. This support may take a number of forms including:

- Supporting or promoting the provision of new or improved facilities where there is an identified deficit in provision. For example, where such a need has been identified through the Council's Cultural Strategy;
- Having policies that seek to safeguard existing facilities;
- Securing the provision of new/improved facilities, or financial contributions towards the provision of facilities, where needed to offset the additional demands arising from new housing development.

**1.113** The provision of new or improved recreation facilities can have wider benefits, such as supporting the drive to encourage healthier lifestyles and to reduce obesity. These facilities may be formal (such as sports pitches or indoor sports facilities) or informal, such as measures aimed at promoting more walking or cycling.

### Planning Policy Context

**1.114** National

**1.115** Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPPG) 17 deals with "Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation". It states that open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life. It states that well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental in delivering broader Government objectives. The objectives of PPG 17 are:

- Supporting an urban renaissance
- Supporting a rural renewal
- Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
- Health and well being
- Promoting more sustainable development

**1.116** PPG17 refers to the need for local authorities to have information on existing facilities and an understanding of the different needs of the population for open space and built sports and recreation facilities.

**1.117** Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3: "Housing" also deals with open space issues in the context of new housing development. It refers to the importance of taking account of the needs of children and ensuring that there is good provision of recreation areas, including private gardens, play areas and informal play space.

**1.118** The Draft South East Plan

**1.119** Policy S5 of the draft South East Plan deals with cultural and sporting activity. It says that increased and sustainable participation in sport, recreation and cultural activity should be encouraged. The policy sets out a number of areas where the Local Development Framework has a role to support the implementation of this. These include encouraging participation by disadvantaged and socially excluded persons/groups and locating facilities where they can be accessed by a range of modes of transport.

**1.120** Local Policies and Strategies

**1.121** The Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 (which is currently the subject of consultation) sets out 10 priorities to deliver the vision for Surrey. Some of these are directly or indirectly related to leisure and recreation, namely:

- Improve learning, health and employment outcomes for children and young people, particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged

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- Promote healthy lifestyles, particularly targeting groups and communities at most risk
- Create better, more sustainable developments that deliver more social, environmental and economic benefit.

**1.122** The Waverley Cultural Strategy has six key themes:-

1. Improve opportunities for young people
2. Improve access to cultural and leisure facilities for all
3. Maximise availability of internal and external resources
4. Reduce the fear of crime and engender citizenship
5. Improve health and well-being
6. An attractive, sustainable environment

**1.123** It contains an Action Plan based around these themes. The Planning Department is identified as a key partner in the delivery of some of the aims set out in the Action Plan. The Action Plan for the Cultural Strategy is currently under review.

### Comment

**1.124** It is recognised the issue of leisure and recreation will need to be considered through the Local Development Framework, to provide the planning policies and strategy to support the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Cultural Strategy, and to provide the local application of relevant national and regional planning policies. However, at this stage, the Council has not identified any specific choices or options for consideration as part of this consultation.

## Issue 2

**How can the Core Strategy support Waverley's role as a destination for visitors.**

### Why is it an Issue?

**1.125** Waverley has many assets that attract visitors, including historic towns, attractive villages and highly accessible countryside. Waverley's Cultural Strategy defines tourism as "people who travel to a destination for a variety of temporary purposes." This includes people who visit the area both for business and pleasure.

**1.126** The Local Development Framework has a role in providing the planning policies and strategy needed to support the aims of the Cultural Strategy and recognise and support the valuable role that tourism plays in the local economy.

## Planning Policy Framework

### 1.127 National

**1.128** Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas" contains a section on Tourism. It states that the provision of essential facilities for tourist visitors is vital for the development of the tourism industry in many local areas. It says that local planning authorities should:

- Plan for and support the provision of general tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities;
- Allow appropriate facilities needed to enhance visitors' enjoyment and/or improve the financial viability of a particular countryside feature or attraction (provided they will not detract from the attractiveness or importance of the feature, or the surrounding countryside).

**1.129** PPS7 adds that wherever possible, tourist and visitor facilities should be housed in existing or replacement buildings. With regard to tourist accommodation, the Government expects that where new buildings are required, most should be in or adjacent to existing towns and villages.

### 1.130 Draft South East Plan

**1.131** The Draft South East Plan contains policies dealing with Rural tourism (Policy TSR2), Tourism attractions (Policy TSR4), Tourist Accommodation (Policy TSR5) and Visitor Management (Policy TSR6). These set out the regional policy framework for dealing with these issues through the Local Development Framework.

### 1.132 Local Plans and Policies

**1.133** Tourism is addressed in the Waverley Cultural Strategy and its associated Action Plan (see section above on Leisure and Recreation for more details on the Cultural Strategy).

**1.134** With regard to the Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2008, although tourism is not a priority in itself, the visitor economy in the County has a role in supporting the broader economic priorities of the SCS.

## Comment

**1.135** As with leisure and recreation, the issue of tourism and the role it plays in Waverley will need to be considered through the Local Development Framework. However, it is another topic where, at present, there are not distinct options or choices identified as part of this consultation.

### **Question LRT1**

**Are there any other matters relating to leisure, recreation and tourism that we should consider in the Core Strategy?**



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