

Mole Valley Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environment Assessment: Scoping Report 2013

February 2013

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1	Introduction	1
2	The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents	5
3	Topic Based Assessment of PPPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues	14
4	Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)	65
5	Next Steps	74
■	Appendices	
1	Compliance with the European Objective	77
2	Schedule of Policies, Plans, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (Separate Document)	79
3	Short Summary of the PPPSI's (Separate Document)	80
4	Baseline Information (Separate Document)	81
5	Sustainability Objectives Compatibility Matrix (Separate Document)	82



Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1** Mole Valley District Council has prepared a new single Scoping Report (this document) which it considers is the appropriate basis for the sustainability appraisal for all local plan documents (including Neighbourhood Development Plans) which may be prepared in the next few years.
- 1.2** In the first instance the Council is preparing a Land Allocations Plan which will be a "daughter" document of the adopted Mole Valley Core Strategy. The Land Allocations Plan seeks to deliver the development requirements of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy was subject to sustainability appraisal and consequently the sustainability appraisal of the Land Allocations Plan will not repeat work which has been previously undertaken. In due course the Council will prepare a new Local Plan (to update or replace the Core Strategy) and this will require full sustainability appraisal.
- 1.3** This Scoping Report identifies the relevant plans, policies and strategies which impact plan preparation and identifies sustainability issues which should be considered; updates the sustainability baseline information; and sets out a revised suite of sustainability objectives to be used for the appraisal of alternative strategies, options or policies as appropriate. The Scoping Report has addressed this comprehensively for all sustainability themes and topics and is therefore suitable as the basis for future Sustainability Appraisal Reports.
- 1.4** This approach is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework which states that assessments should be proportionate and not repeat work already undertaken whilst still complying with the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment.

What is Sustainability Appraisal?

- 1.5** Sustainability appraisal (SA) is a process undertaken in parallel, and integral with, plan preparation to show that the plan being prepared is the most reasonable strategy. Sustainability appraisal is the testing of reasonable alternatives and different options and should consider all the likely significant effects of the options of a plan on environmental, economic and social factors. It forms a key part of the preparation of a sound evidence base.
- 1.6** There is a legal requirement to carry out the sustainability appraisal of plans. In the United Kingdom this process has been integrated with the requirement of the European Directive 2001/42/ED to undertake strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of certain plans, programmes and policies.
- 1.7** When examining plans the Planning Inspectorate will need to know whether the plan has been subject to appraisal; whether a final (draft) SA report has been prepared and whether it shows how the different options perform; and how sustainability considerations have informed the plan from the outset. Provisions for monitoring will also need to be set out.
- 1.8** The preparation of the Scoping Report is the first stage in the SA process and seeks to establish the background information and issues relevant to the District that sustainability appraisal will concentrate on together with the processes and stages of sustainability appraisal and how these will be carried out.
- 1.9** The Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan. However sustainability appraisal is most useful at the earlier options stage when the sustainability implications of "reasonable alternatives" can be assessed. The appraisal process can tell the story behind a plan's preparation.

Introduction

Plan Preparation in Mole Valley

- 1.10** The Council has an adopted Core Strategy which sets out the key elements of the spatial planning framework for Mole Valley District. The Core Strategy was adopted in October 2009 and includes a vision, strategic objectives and over-arching policies for how the District is expected to evolve over the period to 2026.
- 1.11** Following the adoption of the Core Strategy the Council started to prepare its 'daughter' documents. This included the Land Allocations Plan and the Dorking Town Area Action Plan. The purpose of the Land Allocations document was to allocate specific sites for development, in accordance with the strategy set out in the Core Strategy. In February 2010 the Council published a 'Land Allocations DPD: Discussion Paper' which formed part of the early discussions with communities and other interested parties. A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report accompanied this work.
- 1.12** However, work on the Land Allocations Plan was paused in the light of the changes to plan making introduced by the coalition government after its formation in May 2010. In this interim period the Council focused on completing the Dorking Town Area Action Plan.
- 1.13** Following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 the Council has been considering the way forward in terms of plan preparation. It has become evident that there is a need to expedite the preparation of a Land Allocations Plan in order to retain 'control' over where development in the District is directed in the short term. In the longer term there is a need to prepare a new Local Plan. Such a new Local Plan would set out priorities and policies for development in relation to housing (including establishing a new housing target), business, infrastructure (such as transport, waste, and telecoms), health, community facilities and services, and the environment in accordance with the NPPF and in co-operation with other relevant Authorities. This will take a considerable period of time.
- 1.14** The Council is therefore adopting a 'twin track approach' of progressing rapidly with the preparation of a Land Allocations Plan in order to identify and allocate land for development in accordance with the requirements of the Core Strategy. In addition to this, over a longer period of time, the Council is also commencing the preparation of a new Local Plan for the District in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It should be noted that a number of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) area also being prepared.
- 1.15** Both the Land Allocations Plan and subsequent new Local Plan (and other associated plans, including NDPs) must be founded on a robust and credible evidence base and demonstrate that the decisions taken (for example, which sites to allocate) are the most appropriate, having considered the alternatives. It is in this regard that sustainability appraisal is an important part of plan preparation.
- 1.16** Preparation of the plans will take place in co-operation with other relevant local authorities where necessary and indeed initial work on sustainability appraisal and several elements of the evidence base have already been undertaken jointly with the other east Surrey local authorities.

The Purpose of the Scoping Report

- 1.17** To ensure that the preferred strategic policy approach and the associated allocation of land for development within the final version of local plans is the most appropriate, the Council has to produce a Sustainability Appraisal Report [a Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA / SEA)]. In this first instance this will be for the Land Allocations Plan.

- 1.18** The Scoping Report is the first stage in the production of a Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR). The Scoping Report records the process of deciding on the range and level of detail for the sustainability appraisal, including the methods to be used, the likely sustainability effects and the overall structure and contents of the final SA Report.
- 1.19** The scoping stage of the preparation of a sustainability appraisal report is, as its name suggests, potentially broad in scope. The Council therefore considers it appropriate to prepare a single scoping report which would, in principle, "cover the bases" for both the Land Allocations Plan, subsequent new Local Plan and any other associated plans, including Neighbourhood Development Plans. This accords with advice from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Sustainability Appraisal Advice Note: June 2010 (para 4.10.6).
- 1.20** Such an approach would meet the intention of the NPPF that a sustainability appraisal should be an integral part of the plan preparation process and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors; and that such assessments should be proportionate and not repeat policy assessment which has already been undertaken. In this regard a single scoping report, to cover potentially all new plans under the "Local Plan" banner, also contributes to the preparation of a single evidence base without unnecessary repetition. Chapter 2 'The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents' provides a more detailed explanation of the purpose of the Scoping Report. This approach of producing a single generic scoping report does not preclude producing supplementary scoping information or reports where considered appropriate.
- 1.21** The February 2013 consultation version was sent to the three SEA statutory consultation bodies⁰, which are English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency in accordance with the Regulations. Responses were received from Natural England and the Environment Agency and their comments incorporated into this revised document. English Heritage had previously responded to work being undertaken to revise the sustainability objectives as part of the wider joint working arrangements (see para s1.16 and 2.38).
- 1.22** The Council also consulted more widely with other organisations that have social, environmental, or economic responsibilities and are likely to be concerned by the effects of any new Plan preparation. This included the specific consultation bodies as required in the regulations⁰, and any other relevant organisations with a sustainability focus or interest.

Consultation on the February 2013 Scoping Report

- 1.23** The Council consulted on the February 2013 Scoping Report to ensure that the scope and level of detail of the Sustainability Appraisal Reports for plan documents will be appropriate and will cover the key sustainability issues, so that sustainability appraisal will be comprehensive and robust enough to support plan preparation through the plan consultation stages and examination.
- 1.24** The Council particularly requested comments on the February 2013 Scoping Report with regard to whether :
- the list of Plans, Policies, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (PPPSIs) was up to date or whether there were other documents the Council should have regard to.
 - there were any other, or alternative, indicators the Council could use having regard to the need for robust data which can be monitored.
 - There were any gaps in the evidence base or alternative data sets available which would provide baseline and trend information for the indicators.

Introduction

- there were further significant sustainability issues in the District which had not been considered.
- the current decision aiding questions are appropriate or necessary; or are additional detailed decision aiding questions required?

Chapter 2 The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

What is 'Sustainable Development'

- 2.1 'Sustainable development' is a term that has been commonly used since the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012 summarises this as:

International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy: Securing the Future (2005) set out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

- 2.2 The NPPF states that the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the policies in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.
- 2.3 The NPPF also states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
 - a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 2.4 The NPPF sets out that the heart of the framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** and which is a "golden thread" running through plan making and decision taking. The NPPF sets out 12 core planning principles which cuts across all the themes of sustainable development and which should underpin plan making. In this regard they may be considered to underpin the basis on which sustainability appraisal is undertaken.
- 2.5 The European Directive 2001/42/ED emphasises that the assessment of reasonable alternatives should have regard to environmental impacts. The requirement for sustainability appraisal incorporates the wider economic and social effects of plans but does not imply any specific weight to these. The NPPF places emphasis on sustainable development and economic growth. It does state, however that the economic, social and environmental roles of the planning system are mutually dependent and that gains for all three of these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

2.6 The five guiding principles of "Securing The Future" are based on four central aims originating in the UK strategy: A Better Quality of Life (1999) and which were set out in Planning Policy Statement 1. With regard to plan preparation these four central aims still reflect better the spatial themes for sustainability appraisal than the broader guiding principles. These aims are:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- effective protection of the environment;
- the prudent use of natural resources; and
- the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

2.7 These four aims are integral with the sustainability appraisal process and the suite of sustainability objectives used by this Council.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

2.8 The European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) requires specific types of plans and programmes which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

2.9 **The aim of SEA is to provide a high level of protection to the environment and to ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into the preparation of policies, plans and programmes.**

2.10 An environment report to comply with the SEA must include:

- An outline of the contents, main objective of the plan and it's relationship with other plans.
- The relevant aspects of the state of the environment (the baseline) and how this would evolve without implementation of the plan.
- The environmental characteristics of the area of the plan
- Any existing strategies and problems relevant to the plan.
- The environmental protection objectives at international, European and national level relevant to the plan.

2.11 The SEA also requires the assessment of effects of a plan and options to be addressed over the short, medium and long term.

2.12 The table at Appendix 1 'Compliance with the European Objective' shows how the process of SA complies with the SEA Directive and where the stages of work to comply with the Directive will be carried out (ie whether they form part of this scoping report or part of the appraisal of an individual plan).

2.13 Many of the evidence base documents for plan preparation can also form part of the SEA/SA evidence base such that it is only necessary to summarise the baseline evidence in the scoping report and sustainability appraisal.

SEA and the "Do Nothing" Scenario

- 2.14** Annex 1b of the SEA Directive requires consideration of the impacts on the state of the environment without the implementation of the plan or programme. That is, what will the situation be without the plan? The SA process should set out the implication of "doing nothing" or, as the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) advice note (June 2010) describes it, "business as usual".
- 2.15** The PAS advice note indicates that the value of such work should be to develop an understanding of how the area might change without the plan so that the plan options themselves are "future proofed". The PAS advice note (section 4.7) indicates that establishing such a "business as usual" scenario is part of the scoping stage and is not an alternative to be assessed as part of plan preparation. However the note also states that where authorities already have a plan in place (i.e. a Core Strategy) the "do nothing" position is in effect the position with the implementation (ie the intended outcomes) of the Core Strategy. Progressing the Land Allocations Plan forms part of the overall Core Strategy. The intended outcomes of the implementation of the Core Strategy are stated in "The Vision for Mole Valley" chapter of that Plan and is therefore not repeated here, nor re-evaluated.

Sustainability Appraisal in the UK

- 2.16** In order to comply with European legislation a Strategic Environmental assessment (SEA) must be carried out as part of plan preparation. In order to comply with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 a sustainability appraisal is also required for plan documents. The 2004 Act recognises that land use planning is one of the means through which sustainable development can be achieved. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 sets out that sustainability appraisal reports must accompany the submission and adoption stages of plan preparation. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that a **sustainability appraisal** which meets the requirements of the European Directive should be an integral part of plan preparation and **should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors**.
- 2.17** The government had published guidance on the preparation of sustainability appraisal of local development documents (Nov 2005) and although superseded by the PAS advice note it sets out a useful framework of the SA stages. The PAS advice note suggests that the SA Report should tell the story of how sustainability appraisal has been undertaken and how this has influenced plan preparation rather than the strict adherence to the detail of the stages. The PAS advice has not been updated since the publication of the NPPF. There is therefore no definitive advice on the preparation of sustainability appraisal reports.
- 2.18** This scoping report, and subsequent SA Reports, therefore broadly follows the the stages of the government advice from 2005 but takes on board the suggestions of the PAS advice and will integrate this with the stages of preparation of local plans in the District.

Setting the Scope

- 2.19** Setting the scope for SA begins with an understanding of the legislative framework within which the plan is being prepared. This includes legislation at the international and European level as well as national level. It can include legally binding requirements and advisory strategies including best practise. Baseline data and evidence includes the description of the social, environmental and economic conditions of the District from reports and studies from a range of sources. Some reports and data are produced by the Council, but many are the responsibility of external agencies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council and Government departments. Reports and studies produced by the Council include the evidence base documents for the Core Strategy and the Dorking Town Area Action Plan (for example the updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment).

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

- 2.20** The role of scoping is to summarise this information so that key trends and sensitivities can be identified for further consideration. The scoping review has included international, European and national legislation together with strategies, programmes and guidelines down to the local level. These documents provide information about sustainability, but more importantly they set requirements and parameters for development and the level of constraints. The documents reviewed range from EU Directives that are required to be adhered to by law (e.g. the Water Framework Directive and which is being transposed into national requirements) through to the new National Planning Policy Framework, which aims to promote sustainable growth. Indeed the NPPF explicitly or implicitly has regard to all of these documents and strategies as UK national planning policy has to accord with this wider framework. However part of the purpose of the scoping report is to show a full understanding of the overarching policy and sustainability framework at all levels rather than just regard to the NPPF.
- 2.21** The information collated from these documents is backed up by a large collection of data. This includes trend information where available and forms the basis for future monitoring of the sustainability impacts of the implementation of policies through the Authority Monitoring Report. The subjects covered by the indicators range from evidence of the state of the economy, accessibility and social information, the proportion of affordable housing provided in the District, through to information about the condition and size of important habitats. Information is from a range of sources not all of which is updated on a regular or consistent basis.
- 2.22** This mix of reports and data identifies the sustainability context at the international and national level within which local plans are prepared and provides a detailed picture about the sustainability attributes of the District. Through consideration of the baseline conditions and requirements of other plans, policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives (PPPSIs) the Scoping Report is able to describe the context for sustainability appraisal in the District. It begins the process of identifying the key issues to be addressed throughout the preparation of planning policy documents.
- 2.23** An important part of the Scoping Report is to establish the Sustainability Appraisal framework. This includes the setting of sustainability objectives relevant to the locality and provides a standard methodology for considering the impacts of proposed actions. It is against this framework that proposed options will be judged and predictions made about the likely significant social, environmental and economic impacts. This is further explained in Chapter 4 'Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)'.

The Sustainability Appraisal Process and Plan Preparation

- 2.24** Sustainability Appraisal is the process of looking at and refining the policy options as part of plan preparation and examining how they contribute to sustainable development. By using SA it will be possible to identify where some options do not contribute to sustainable development, so that these issues can be addressed early on and options chosen to ensure that they are the most reasonable alternative and as sustainable as possible in the circumstances, including appropriate mitigation.
- 2.25** The process requires an examination of baseline and trend quality of life information for Mole Valley, identifying key sustainability issues, and how this may change in the future. This information provides the basis for assessing how alternative strategies or options "score" or compare when assessed using the sustainability objectives. This will help to identify the most sustainable options. However such options need to be realistic and deliverable. Such options also need to match the aspirations of the local community (residents and businesses) and comply with the policies of the NPPF.

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

- 2.26** The SA process therefore informs the evaluation of alternatives and options for plan preparation. It can also be used to assess possible development sites and allocations of land in plans. It provides a means of proving to decision makers and the public that a plan sets out the most appropriate policy or allocation of land given the reasonable alternatives.
- 2.27** The Government's 2005 guidance set out the relationship between plans (the then development plan documents - DPD's) preparation stages and sustainability appraisal stages as follows:

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

Stage 1: Pre-production (Evidence Gathering)
<p>SA Stages and tasks</p> <p>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1 - identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives. • A2 - collecting baseline information. • A3 - identifying sustainability issues and problems. • A4 - developing the SA framework. • A5 - consulting on the scope of the SA.
Stage 2: Production
<p>SA Stages and tasks</p> <p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1 - Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework. • B2 - Developing the DPD options. • B3 - Predicting the effects of the DPD. • B4 - Evaluating the effects of the DPD. • B5 - Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects. • B6 - Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPDs. <p>Stage C: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 - Preparing the SA Report. <p>Stage D: Consulting on the preferred options of the DPD and SA Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D1 - Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and the SA Report. • D2(i) - Appraising significant changes.
Stage 3: Examination
<p>SA Stages and tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D2(ii) - Appraising significant changes resulting from representations.
Stage 4: Adoption and Monitoring
<p>SA Stages and tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D3 - Making decisions and providing information. <p>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E1 - Finalising aims and methods for monitoring. • E2 - Responding to adverse effects.

Table 2.1 Incorporating Sustainability Appraisal into the plan making process.

2.28 In relation to the SA Report the Council is therefore at **Stage A**; that is setting the context and objectives by establishing the baseline, identifying sustainability issues and problems, developing the SA framework and consulting on the scope of the SA (i.e. the scoping stage).

2.29 The scoping stage (i.e. this Scoping Report) sets out the process of deciding the range and level of detail for SA, including the methods to be used, the likely sustainability effects and the likely overall structure and contents of a final SA Report.

2.30 Outlined below is more detail on each of the tasks within Stage A.

Task A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives (PPPSIs) and sustainability objectives and implications

2.31 When developing a plan consideration must be given to the relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. The SEA Directive specifically requires environmental protection objectives established at International, European Community or National levels to be taken into consideration. Reviewing these documents is an important step in the SA process as it can help to shape the objectives against which emerging policies should be appraised as well as pointing to particular issues and problems that need to be addressed. A detailed review of these documents was undertaken as part of the initial joint working on sustainability appraisal by the east Surrey local planning authorities (Mole Valley DC, Elmbridge BC, Epsom and Ewell BC, Tandridge DC, Reigate and Banstead BC) and was integral to the preparation of the Core Strategy. A full listing of the PPPSI's, including more local documents and the Council's evidence base documents is at Appendix 2 'Schedule of Policies, Plans, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (Separate Document)'. Appendix 3 'Short Summary of the PPPSI's (Separate Document)' (Appendix 3) includes summaries, key targets and indicators from the PPPSI's together with their implications for plan preparation and sustainability appraisal.

2.32 Many of the plans and programmes work in hierarchy with policy and objectives being disseminated down from an international to national, regional and local level. Consequently many of these higher level objectives had been incorporated into the former Planning Policy Statements and now, by implication, into the NPPF.

Task A2: Collecting Baseline information

2.33 The aim of collecting the baseline information is to assemble data on the current state of the area and the likely future state. The information then provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects. The collection of baseline information is also a way of identifying sustainability problems and issues.

2.34 Annex 1 of the European Directive sets out a specific list of environmental topics or themes for which baseline information should be sought and which an assessment of the significant effects should be evidenced. The PAS advice sets out a range of additional economic and social topics which fall within the wider scope of sustainability appraisal (see PAS advice note: Table 2-Topics). The baseline therefore quantifies local information and conditions on a wide range of themes including biodiversity, cultural heritage, population and health, transport, economic development for example.

Task A3: Identifying Sustainability Issues and Problems

2.35 The baseline data collected under task A2 will be used to assist in the identification of the general sustainability issues and relevant objectives and indicators.

2.36 Tasks A1 - A3 are undertaken in Chapter 3 'Topic Based Assessment of PPPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues'.

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

Task A4: Developing the SA Framework

- 2.37** The identification of sustainability issues in task A3 allows for the development of the SA framework, which provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared. It will consist of sustainability objectives and decision making criteria against which the objectives, options and subsequent policies of plans can be appraised in order to make the plan as sustainable as possible. A number of these indicators will be used to monitor the effects of the plan and incorporated into the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 2.38** The Scoping Report establishes a set of 19 sustainability objectives. These have already been "signed off" by the three statutory environmental bodies. They form the base for the development of the SA framework for any plan the Council may prepare. A more limited set of these objectives can be used for the assessment of possible development sites or allocations.

Task A5: Consulting on the Scope of the SA

- 2.39** The scoping process is an opportunity to summarise the evidence base, policy context and sustainability issues affecting the area for which a plan is being prepared and request consultee and stakeholder views on the evidence and emerging messages. To meet the requirements of the SEA Directive, the Council has sought the views of the three statutory environmental consultees, and other specific consultation bodies, as to whether the scope is appropriate and whether all relevant issues have been identified.

The Scoping Process and Proportionate Assessment

- 2.40** The scoping report, and subsequent sustainability appraisal, is potentially a complex process underpinned by detailed evidence. However the NPPF (paras 165-167) emphasises that the evidence base and assessments should be proportionate and should not repeat policy assessment which has already been undertaken. This reflects the European Directive itself (Article 5 para 2) which indicates that work should not be duplicated.
- 2.41** The process of sustainability appraisal and the scoping evidence should therefore be proportionate to the requirements of the plans being prepared. The appraisal of any planning document should therefore focus on the strategic intention of the plan or strategy and not whether, for example, individual detailed policies require specific appraisal. Indeed where detailed policies are the mechanism to implement higher level strategies which have already been subject to appraisal then such lower level appraisal could be unnecessary.
- 2.42** In this regard the Mole Valley Core Strategy (including the SA Report) already underpins much of the current plan making work. Additionally it is not necessary to set out a detailed understanding of the legislative and policy framework. This is briefly summarised in the PPSIs (and which itself is an update of work for the Core Strategy SA) but much of it may be taken as being intuitively understood. With regard to the understanding of the social, economic and environmental characteristics much of the information is available from the Council's evidence base for the preparation of the Core Strategy and subsequent monitoring.
- 2.43** The Council's proportionate approach to SA is evidenced by the preparation of the Dorking Town Area Action Plan (AAP). The Council considered the AAP to be a "daughter" document to the Core Strategy which did not introduce new strategic matters or policies which had not been previously considered in the Core Strategy. Instead the Council limited detailed appraisal to the sites which were considered for allocation and the cumulative impact of those sites. The preparation of the current Land Allocations

The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents

Plan, as a "daughter" document to the Core Strategy, is significantly covered in many respects by the appraisal of the strategic alternatives of the Core Strategy. However it is acknowledged there may be a requirement to carry out specific SA of aspects of this plan.

Chapter 3 Topic Based Assessment of PPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Introduction

- 3.1** In the preparation of previous plans the Council has undertaken tasks A1 - A3 as discrete steps. The PAS advice note suggests an alternative method is to carry out these tasks sequentially within the range of topics covered by sustainability appraisal. This can assist with the "telling of the story" of the evidence and issues and their incorporation into subsequent stages of appraisal.
- 3.2** The Council has adopted this approach. To be clear that the Council is complying with the European Directive to incorporate strategic environmental assessment into the SA process those topics specifically referred to in Annex 1 of the European Directive are assessed first (in Part A below).
- 3.3** There is no definitive set of topics for wider sustainability appraisal although the PAS advice note does make suggestions. The Council has taken the topics from the advice note and those topics it has used in previous SA work and considers them as wider sustainability appraisal topics. These are assessed in Part B below. Some topics and the sustainability aims and issues within them may overlap. For example the issue of flooding is mainly considered within the SEA topic as a water quality and quantity issue although it also a climate change consideration. There are also separate topics covering geology and soil; landscape and countryside; and land (greenfield and brownfield) which could be considered to overlap.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.4** The NPPF (March 2012) has replaced most of the previous Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes. Consequently the policies, plans & programmes, and sustainability objectives (PPPSI schedule) Appendix 2 'Schedule of Policies, Plans, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (Separate Document)' has been updated to have regard to this. The Key PPPSI Review section of each topic therefore refers to the appropriate paragraph of the NPPF wherever possible.
- 3.5** The NPPF sets out explicitly the government's objective for the planning system to deliver sustainable development and which has its origin in the 2011 Budget Statement "Planning for Growth". This has resulted in a more positively phrased set of national core planning principles and objectives. The Relevant Aims and/or Objectives sections address these new principles.

The South East Plan

- 3.6** At the time of preparing the February 2013 Scoping Report the South East Plan was the statutory regional plan. On 25th March 2013 the government revoked the South East Plan. However the Plan remains relevant in that it forms the contextual framework on which the Core Strategy was prepared and it forms a "signpost" why a policy approach has previously been chosen. It may still have a role for indicating the direction of future policies whilst acknowledging the primacy of the NPPF. Consequently references to the South East Plan in the key PPPSI's are retained.
- 3.7** The Regional Economic Strategy was also revoked with the South East Plan.
- 3.8** The South East Plan set the housing requirement for the District of 3,760 dwellings between 2006 and 2026. This is the figure in the Core Strategy DPD and which the Land Allocations Plan will deliver.

The PPPSIs Assessment

- 3.9** The assessment is set out in the following order to tell the story of each topic and to arrive at identifying the broad sustainability issues for each topic:

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

- **Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:** A list of all relevant plans, policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives, in order, from international, European, national, regional through to the local level. (ie SA Task A1)
 - **Relevant Aims and / or Objectives from the PPPSs:** Summarises the overarching / main objectives and sustainability implications of the PPPSs (ie SA Task A1).
 - **Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:** Summarises the main matters arising to be considered at the local level (ie SA Task A1).
 - **Baseline:** Provides contextual quantitative and qualitative information for the District (ie SA Task A2).
 - **Identifying Sustainability Issues and Problems:** The main issues arising from an assessment of the Aims / Objectives and Main Implications in the light of the Baseline position (ie SA Task A3).
- 3.10** The significant sustainability aims and objectives of the PPPSs are set out. Many of these are stated in terms of the objectives of the NPPF which explicitly and implicitly incorporates the wider framework of plans and strategies on which the UK planning system is based.
- 3.11** Baseline information includes all of the evidence base documents the Council has produced as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy and Dorking Town Area Action Plan and wider monitoring information. The baseline information at Appendix 4 'Baseline Information (Separate Document)' provides a set of information linked to the set of 19 sustainability objectives and also identifies where the District is stronger or weaker than the national position and the direction of the trends. Information from the 2011 Census Key Statistics is used where available otherwise 2001 Census data is used.

Part A: Topics covered by Strategic Environmental Assessment

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

(including flora and fauna, and ecosystems)

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- EU Habitats Directive (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)) (Directive 92/43/EC)
- European Birds Directive (79/409/EC)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 99, 109 - 120 inclusive; 165 - 167 inclusive.
- UK Post 2010 Biodiversity Framework (Defra)
- Biodiversity 2020 (Defra)
- Environmental Quality in Spatial Planning Incorporating the natural, built and historic environment and rural issues in plans and strategies (2005) (Env Agency) Environmental Assessment and Biodiversity: Guidance for practitioners(2004)
- South East Plan Policies:
 - CC8 - Green Infrastructure
 - NRM2 - Water Quality
 - NRM5 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
 - NRM7 - Woodland
- South East Biodiversity Strategy 2009 (SE Biodiversity Forum)
- Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan
- Mole Valley Core Strategy:
 - Policy CS15 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Mole Valley Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC Guidance Note (Policy CS15)
- Mole Valley Appropriate Assessment (2008)

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Conserve, contribute to and enhance biodiversity in accordance with European and National legislation and to meet the objectives of regional and county strategies, guidance and plans.
- Plan, provide and manage connected and substantial networks of green infrastructure; promote priority habitats and ecological networks (NPPF para 117).
- Take account of the impacts of climate change on changes to biodiversity (NPPF para 99).
- To minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where a possible (NPPF para 109)
- Make distinctions between the hierarchy of sites so that protection is commensurate with their status and give appropriate weight to their importance (NPPF para 114)

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Need to take account of how the location of development could compromise or provide benefits to areas of biodiversity importance and green infrastructure.
- The contribution of developments to supporting biodiversity should be ensured and the unacceptable impacts of development on biodiversity minimised.

Baseline:

Mole Valley has a wide range of habitats and range from chalk downs and sandstone hills to large areas of woodland associated with the Weald, together with many streams and brooks. Together these provide for a range of biodiversity:

There are some 12 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) wholly or partly within the District, covering 1,902 hectares (7.6% of the District's area). 99% of the area of the SSSIs is in a favourable or recovering condition (Natural England 2009 data). The Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is of European importance. Part of Ashtead Common SSSI is also designated as a National Nature Reserve.

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) cover a further 1,482 hectares. There are 55 sites designated as SNCI's, a further 11 sites which are part SNCI's and part potential SNCI's plus 28 sites that are identified as potential SNCI's. In total there are 867 hectares of land designated as SNCI's and a further 627.5ha being potential SNCI. In 2011-12 43% of sites met the appropriate conservation management criteria; an increase from 39% in 2008-09.

There are currently 5 Local Nature Reserves covering 99 hectares (managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust) and some 3,237 hectares are ancient woodland with much of this being covered by the above environmental designations.

Many of the areas and habitats within the District are covered by Biodiversity Action Plans.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation: Sustainability Issues and Problems

The quality and diversity of habitats in the District should continue to be protected and the quality of habitats should be improved, where possible, to increase biodiversity. This needs to be balanced with the needs of leisure / recreation and wider development requirements and with the vulnerability of important areas of biodiversity.

Population

Key PPPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraph related to the topic: 159
- South East Plan Policy CC5 - Supporting an Ageing Population (2009)
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A (2009)
- East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Survey (2007/2008)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy
 - Policy CS3 - Balancing Housing provision (2009)
- Mole Valley Community Plan 2006 - 2016
- Mole Valley District Housing Needs Survey Final Report (2007)
- Mole Valley Older Persons Housing Needs Study (2009)
- 2001 and 2011 Census
- ONS Population Projections and Mid-Year Estimates

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- Planning has a social role to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- The South East Plan recognised that there will be a significant increase in the proportion of older people in the region sought to support their needs.
- The Core Strategy seeks to provide new housing for the elderly, and supported and specialist accommodation on suitably located sites. The policy also seeks the provision of two and three-bedroom properties for all sectors of the community, including newly forming households, young couples and expanding families.
- Identify the scale and mix of housing that the local population is likely to need and which meets household and population projections taking account of migration and demographic change (NPPF para 159).
- Have regard to the changing level of population and their characteristics as evidenced by the 2011 Census.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Need to plan for the social needs of older people, including suitable housing provision, services, leisure and community facilities.
- Need to plan to meet housing needs and requirements in full unless adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The 2011 Census indicates that the District's population is now 85,400 an increase of 5,100 (6.5%) over the 2001 figure. Mole Valley's age profile is relatively older than the other Surrey districts and the national average. Whilst the proportion of the population under 15, at 17.2%, is only slightly lower than nationally the proportion of the District's population over 65, at 20.7% is significantly higher than the national average of 16.3%. The proportion of households with dependent children is marginally lower than nationally (28.1% against 29.0%) and pensioner only households are higher at 26.1% compared with 20.8%.

The Mole Valley Housing Needs Survey 2007 (using ONS 2004 projections) indicates that the District's population is projected to increase from 80,900 in 2004 to 87,400 in 2026 an increase of 8% or 6,500 people. The over 65 age group is projected to increase by 5,000 and the 85+ population by 2,400 by 2026. The 30-44 age group are expected to decline by 1,300.

Office for National Statistics projections (2010 based) indicate an increase in population of approximately 9,000 (10.5%) between 2015 and 2030. By 2030 the proportion of the population aged 60 and over is forecast to be almost 29%. One person households will be 32% of households (from 29% in 2011 Census). It is projected there could be 43,500 households by 2030.

Population: Sustainability Issues and Problems

An increasing population and changing demographic structure will impact future household characteristics and will have implications for the provision of housing, employment opportunities and services. There will be issues of dependency and the specific needs of the older age groups in the future.

The potential impacts of the increasing populations of adjoining local authority areas and their ability to meet their needs, or otherwise, will be need to be considered, at the appropriate time, with regard to sustainability issues and through the duty to cooperate.

Health

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 69 - 77 inclusive, 123 and 171.
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - S1 - Supporting Health Communities
 - S2 - Promoting Sustainable Health Services
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A & B (2009)
- Surrey Primary Care Trust Community Strategy 2008-13
- Surrey Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2011-15
- East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007/08).
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016): Health and Social Care
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 / amended 2009)
- Mole Valley Housing Needs Survey (2007)
- Mole Valley Older Persons Housing Needs Survey (2009)
- 2001 and 2011 Census
- NHS Health Profiles

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Planning has a social role to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- The NPPF seeks to ensure that everyone has adequate access to good quality sports, recreation and open space provision. It also indicates that policies should avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health.
- Take account of the health status and needs of the local population including expected future changes and barriers to improving health (NPPF para 171)
- NHS Surrey (formerly the Surrey Primary Care Trust) aims to promote better health and improved GP access across the county.
- The Mole Valley Community Plan aims to improve health with a focus on areas of relative deprivation.
- Part B of the Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project audits current provision of health facilities / current levels of provision and, the conditions and/or capacity of services. It also assesses future needs and how to plan for future provision (including anticipated changes to forms of service delivery, programming and funding sources).

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Provision should be made for an adequate mix and pattern of healthcare facilities in order to meet new capacity needs.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

- Account should be taken of the accessibility of housing and employment sites to sports, physical activity facilities, play space and green infrastructure.
- Provide for the health needs of the local population (insofar as is possible through the plan making process).

Baseline:

The 2011 Census indicates that Mole Valley's population is relatively healthy with the 85% saying that their health is "very good" or "good" (this is higher than the England average of 81%).

Life expectancy is slightly higher than the South East region and national average. Death rates from circulatory diseases and cancer are below national averages (2008-10 data). The death rate from circulatory disease is decreasing in the District.

NHS Surrey currently provides health care through 15 general practices, various clinics and community hospitals in Leatherhead and Dorking.

The Core Strategy states that provision of open space, sport and recreation for health purposes is reasonable or good. However there are some local deficiencies in local open space in the more urban areas. Deficits are considered to be more than offset by large areas of natural / semi-natural greenspace (ANGSt). The Council's PPG17 assessment indicates 34 hectares of such space per 1,000 population and that overall access to open space is good.

Health: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Mole Valley's population is relatively healthy. However there is a national trend towards a more elderly population and also towards more sedentary lifestyles. These have implications for making provision for the health and well-being of the District's population for now and in the future.

The PCT (ie NHS Surrey) had identified that the Leatherhead area would likely suffer an under-provision of health care if the level of development (as estimated in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in 2008) goes ahead. Whilst plans can allocate sites actual delivery of services and facilities is not a responsibility of the Council.

It is uncertain how new new commissioning and management structures will impact on the future delivery of services.

Geology and Soil (including land contamination)

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 111, 112, 117- 122 inclusive.
- Agricultural Land Classifications
- Mole Valley Contaminated Land Strategy 2010 and land contamination records

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Maximise the benefits soils can bring to economic and environmental well-being for today's generation and future generations.
- Take account of the need to protect soil resources and ensure that soils in the built environment are able to fulfil as many of their functions as possible, especially in the storage, transfer and filtering of water.
- Identify and take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Soil resources should be protected.
- Opportunities should be considered to remediate contaminated land.
- Allocations should have regard to the Agricultural Land Classifications and the best and most versatile agricultural land should not be developed.

Baseline:

There is little high grade agricultural land in the District with no Grade 1 agricultural land and only one parcel of Grade 2 land, south of Bookham. The Council has a Contaminated Land Strategy in place and is investigating sites with the greatest potential risk of contamination. Planning permissions on sites where contamination could be an issue are subject to planning conditions requiring investigation, and remediation where necessary.

Geology and Soil (including land contamination): Sustainability Issues and Problems

Improvement to land and soil quality is an issue. Land contamination and remediation is a general concern. There may be conflicts between the priority to make the best use of brownfield land and the sustainability aim to ensure that soils in the built environment are able to fulfil various functions (e.g. with regard to sustainable drainage).

See also: Land (including brownfield and greenfield land); Landscape and Countryside

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Water: Quality and Quantity and Flooding

Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- European Nitrates Directive (2002)
- European Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) (2000)
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 94, 99 - 104 inclusive, 120, 121, 162, 165 - 167 inclusive.
- PPS25 - Practise Guide: Development and Flood Risk (2009)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC1 - Sustainable Development
 - CC4 - Sustainable Design and Construction
 - NRM1 - Sustainable Water Resources and Groundwater Quality
- River Mole Flood Risk Management Strategy Plan (Environment Agency 2008)
- Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2012
- Surrey Climate Change Strategy 2009
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure: Position Statement (2008)
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project (Part B) (2009)
- Sutton and East Surrey Water Company: Water Resource Management Plan
- Mole Valley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (updated 2012)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy:
 - CS20 - Flood Risk Management

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSs:

- Reduce water use and improve water efficiency of buildings.
- Minimise pollution to water bodies and watercourses.
- Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by applying the sequential and exceptions tests to the location of development (NPPF para 100).
- Assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for water supply and waste water and its treatment (NPPF para 162)
- To minimise the risk to life and property from flooding events and;
- ensuring that developments are resilient to the effects of flooding events.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- The application of a sequential approach to ensure that new developments are not at risk of flooding, minimise and mitigate against any risk and do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- The potential of sites to incorporate measures for mitigation of flood risk, such as green infrastructure, should be considered.
- The potential of sites to incorporate designs that will ensure that new developments are resilient to the effects of flooding events should be considered.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The River Mole and its tributaries are mostly of fair or good water quality. The main influences on quality are discharges from the major sewage treatment works. Run-off from Gatwick Airport, urban and industrial areas also have a significant impact on water quality in the upper reaches. In the upper catchment the aquatic flora and fauna of the main river and some tributaries are restricted, but improving. This is because of poor water quality associated with effluent discharges, urban run-off and agricultural drainage. Below the Mole Gap the main river fauna increases in diversity and includes pollution sensitive species.

The majority of development within the District will be on brownfield sites through infilling and redevelopment. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), can ameliorate the effects of water flows into existing drainage and river systems and reduce the use of water through recycling. An increasing proportion of new housing development incorporates some form of SuDS in order to manage water on site and reduce the amount released straight into the drainage system.

The main water supplier in the District is the Sutton and East Surrey Water Company. Some 85% of their water supply comes from groundwater sources, including large abstractions for public water supply at Leatherhead, and smaller ones near Dorking and Fetcham. There are no major abstractions from the River Mole in the District. There are 3 inner source protection zones for groundwater abstraction within the District.

Information from Sutton and East Surrey Water Company indicates that the average domestic property in their area consumes 475 litres per day. Per capita water consumption in the District has decreased but remains higher than the South East and national averages. There may also be water loss through leakage in the water supply system. The Sutton and East Surrey Water Company Resource Management Plan indicates it currently has water resources to 2035 for the dry year annual average.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared to assess all types of flood risk within Mole Valley in order to inform allocations and land use planning decisions. This identifies that only a small area of the District as a whole (including a limited urban area) lies within flood zones 2 and 3. The number of properties at risk from fluvial flooding is relatively small and is unlikely to increase significantly due to climate change. There are some 1,570 properties in Flood Zones 2 and 3 at 2011. It is understood there are no specific Environment Agency flood defences in the District. Some features (eg railway embankments) may serve as flood defences and either restrict or channel flood water. Conversely such features may impede the flow of flood water. There are very few private bunds or other raised defences.

The SFRA states that flooding is not a major issue as only a small proportion of the District is in the Flood Zones and most of these extents are outside the built up areas. However parts of Leatherhead, Fetcham and Dorking are in the Flood Zones and when flooding occurs it can result in local difficulties. Moreover Leatherhead was ranked relatively highly (at 125th nationally out of 4,200 "settlements") in the DEFRA assessment (in 2009) about areas susceptible to surface water flooding.

It is considered that fluvial and surface water flooding are the most likely sources of risk for the District over the next 20 years. Climate change is likely to have the greatest impact in terms of increased intensity of rainfall. This will impact the drainage and sewers network capacity to cope with storm events.

Water Quality and Quantity and Flooding: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Need to deliver satisfactory infrastructure to support new development through the Plan period.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Water Quality and Quantity and Flooding: Sustainability Issues and Problems

There is a need to address issues such as the reduction of water consumption and wastage (through lifestyle changes), and increasing or encouraging the efficient use and recycling of water (for example through Building Regulations).

Need to minimise harm from flooding - there should be no increase in the number of properties at risk of flooding

See also: Climate Change Factors

Air Quality

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- European Air Quality Directive (2008)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraph related to the topic: 124
- National Air Quality Strategy (2008)
- South East Plan - Appropriate Assessment
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC1 - Sustainable Development
 - NRM9 - Air Quality
- Mole Valley Core Strategy - Appropriate Assessment
- Mole Valley Air Quality Records (nb: the Council is preparing an air quality report.)

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Take account of cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites (NPPF para 124)
- Maintain air quality where good and improve it in other cases.
- Reduce impact of transport / congestion and mitigate impact of development on air quality.
- Reduce exposure to poor air quality through design and encouraging best practise in construction activities.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Take account of existing air quality and any potential impact of development on air quality.
- The Appropriate Assessment of the South East Plan could not conclude that there was no adverse effect of the Plan on the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC due to the adverse effects of reduced air quality. The Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment also indicated that atmospheric pollution from development and additional traffic may threaten chalk downland flora.

Baseline:

There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) in the District. Local monitoring has indicated that air quality in Mole Valley is within national limits. There is one location near the M25 (at Green Lane, Leatherhead) which is near the air quality limit.

Air Quality: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Whilst at the present time air quality limits are not being breached there is the potential for this to happen as a result of congestion, new development and other factors.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Air Quality: Sustainability Issues and Problems

There will need to be a consideration of the location of development in relation to areas which may have emerging air quality issue; and with regard to areas which may be susceptible to atmospheric pollution (the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC).

Many air quality considerations can be managed through environmental health regulatory powers on a site by site basis. This is likely to remain the case.

Climate Change Factors

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change (2002)
- The Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community (2002 - 2012)
- UK Climate Change Programme (2006)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 30, 93 - 104 inclusive, 162
- South East Plan Policies (2009)
 - CC2 - Climate Change
 - CC3 - Resource Use
 - CC4 - Sustainable Design and Construction
 - NRM11 - Development Design for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
 - NRM15 - Location of Renewable Energy Development
 - NRM16 - Renewable Energy Development Criteria
- Surrey Climate Change Strategy 2009
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies
 - CS19 - Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation
 - CS20 - Flood Risk Management
- Mole Valley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (updated 2012)
- Mole Valley Climate Change Background Evidence Paper (2008) and Policy Background Paper (2008)

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Encourage solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (NPPF paras 30 and 93).
- UK has an agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012 and a national goal of a 20% reduction below 1990 levels by 2010.
- More efficient power generation, cut emissions from transport, improve energy efficiency of buildings.
- Mitigate and adapt to current and forecast effects of climate change.
- Avoid inappropriate development in areas liable to flooding.
- Take account of infrastructure requirements.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- LPAs should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and support the move to a low carbon future (NPPF paras 94 and 95)
- Take account of climate change impacts such as flooding, erosion, storms, water shortages and subsidence.
- Consider infrastructure requirements including the potential for the allocation of a site(s) for renewable energy generation i.e. wind-turbine, CHP plant.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

Climate change is a global concern and with impacts which are also global in scope. Nationally, Government predictions indicate an increase in temperature, and an increase in the incidence of flooding and subsidence. Hotter, drier, summers are and wetter winters are predicted with the greatest relative change likely to be in the south and east of the UK. See Mole Valley Climate Change Background Evidence Paper (2008) - Chapter 4 for an overview of the predicted effects of climate change.

Climate Change Factors: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Long term implications of climate change at a local level remain uncertain, but hotter drier summers, wetter winters and increased incidences of flooding and extreme weather events, are expected. Plans and strategies will need to have regard to this and especially the need to mitigate any impacts locally.

Cultural Heritage

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 56 - 68 (design), 126 - 141 (historic environment), 169 and 170.
- Making the Past Part of our Future - English Heritage's Strategy 2005 - 2010
- Statement on the Historic Environment of England 2010
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - BE6 - Management of the Historic Environment
 - S5 - Cultural and Sporting Activities
- Surrey Heritage Strategy (2001)
- Surrey's Culture Strategy - Taking Part in Surrey (2008 -2011)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies:
 - CS14 - Townscape, Urban Design and the Historic Environment
- Mole Valley Built-Up Area Character Appraisals SPD
- Mole Valley Larger Rural Villages Character Appraisals SPD (ongoing)
- Conservation Area Descriptions - Mole Valley Local Plan 2000
- Dorking and Leatherhead Conservation Areas Appraisal and Management Plans
- Listing Statements

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource (NPPF para 126)
- Recognise that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development (NPPF para 56) and ensure high quality design is applied that allows multiple functions and benefits to be achieved and to enable access for all.
- Recognising the importance of heritage and historical features, buildings and environment and seeking to protect them from insensitive development.
- Develop Surrey's identity, image and sense of place, support stewardship of cultural assets and promote participation.
- Identify and recognise those areas designated as conservation areas, their special features and qualities, and their contribution to the character of the area

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Provision should be made for an adequate mix and pattern of cultural and arts provision.
- Take account of how policies, and especially the location of sites, could compromise or provide benefits to heritage, historical and archaeological features, buildings and environments.
- Consider how policies, and especially the location of sites, could detract from or provide benefit to conservation areas and other sensitive areas of the built environment.
- Consider the potential of sites to incorporate development of high quality, sustainable design.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The District's local heritage is much valued. There are some 28 Conservation Areas wholly or partly within the District, totalling some 415 hectares (within the District).

At March 2012 there were 1,010 Listed Buildings (including 6 which are Grade 1) and 27 Ancient Monuments in the District. There are 5 Historic Parks and Gardens. Areas of archaeological potential cover almost 420 hectares.

The National Trust is a major land and property owner and manages/owns about 13% of the extent of the District. There are local museums at Leatherhead and Dorking.

Heritage Open Days are a measure of access to cultural heritage and amenity. In September 2004 some 3,740 visits were recorded to 78 sites. By 2009 this had increased significantly to some 8,500 visits to 90 sites and such higher levels are being maintained.

Cultural sustainability is not just about bricks and mortar but also the wider heritage and cultural vibrancy of the District. This is maintained and enhanced through programmes of events and festivals (eg music and arts related).

Cultural Heritage: Identifying Sustainability Issues and Problems

Conservation designations and priorities may constrain development that would otherwise have sustainability benefits. Need to strike a balance between intensification of previously developed land and the need to safeguard the historic environment.

Conservation of the historic environment is important for the quality of life.

Landscape and Countryside

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention 2000)
- Natural Environment White Paper - The Natural Choice (2011)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 28 (rural economy), 54 and 55 (rural housing), 79 - 92 incl (Green Belts), 109 - 122 (natural environment)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - SP5 - Green Belts
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - CC8 - Green Infrastructure
 - C3 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - C4 - Landscape and Countryside Management
 - C5 - Managing the Rural-Urban Fringe
 - C6 - Countryside Access and Rights of Way Management
 - TSR2 - Rural Tourism
 - LF9 - Green Belt Management
- Surrey Rural Strategy 2010-15 and Action Plan (Surrey Rural Partnership)
- Surrey Hills Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) Review (2007)
- Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan (2009)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies:
 - CS 1 - Where Development will be Directed (A Spatial Strategy)
 - CS13 - Landscape Character
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)
- Mole Valley Landscape Character Assessment (ongoing)

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB and the AGLV (landscape, heritage, biodiversity and habitat, agricultural land and tranquillity.) (NPPF para 115)
- Support economic growth in rural areas that benefits businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors and which respect the character of the countryside (NPPF para 28)
- In rural areas be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs (NPPF para 54)
- The role of the Green Belt to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (NPPF (paras 80 and 81))
- Protect and enhance the variety of landscape character that exist within the District.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- The impact of the location of development could detract from the local landscape setting and the special qualities of the AONB and the AGLV.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

- Brownfield sites should be prioritised over greenfield sites for development in order to protect existing countryside.
- Have regard to the role of the Green Belt and the requirement to plan positively to enhance its beneficial use including retaining and enhancing landscapes and visual amenity (NPPF para 81)

Baseline:

About 93% of the District is countryside or villages within the countryside.

Approximately 4,074 hectares of the District is Countryside Beyond the Green Belt (15.8% of the total area). Just over 9,400 hectares is within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is 36.4% of the total area of the District. The Area of Great Landscape Value designation covers 11,685 hectares or 45.2% of the District's area.

The Metropolitan Green Belt (shown on the LDF Proposals Map) covers 19,640 hectares being 76% of the total area of the District (and 80% of the countryside).

Landscape and Countryside: Sustainability Issues and Problems

The Core Strategy seeks to direct new development towards previously developed land in the built-up areas rather than the development of countryside but acknowledges that to meet requirements some such land is likely to be required.

There will be a need to avoid development on, and otherwise minimise the impacts on, areas of nationally and locally important landscape and countryside designations.

In reviewing Green Belt boundaries will need to consider the wider objectives of the Green Belt and the opportunities to positively enhance its' use.

See also: Soil and Geology (and land contamination); Land (including brownfield and greenfield land)

Material Assets - Waste and Recycling, and Minerals

3.12 Minerals and waste planning is dealt with at the County level. In preparing the District's local plans there is a need to ensure that the Surrey County Council's waste and minerals plans are not compromised. Waste disposal is primarily a Surrey County Council matter. Mole Valley District Council is the waste collection authority.

Waste and Recycling: Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources

- European Waste Framework Directive (2005)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 162
- PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (2011)
- Regional Waste Strategy (2004)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC3 - Resource Use
 - CC4 - Sustainable Design and Construction
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - W1 - Waste Reduction
 - W2 - Sustainable Design, Construction and Demolition
 - W14 - Restoration
 - W16 - Waste Transport Infrastructure
 - W17 - Location of Waste Management Facilities
- Surrey Waste Plan (2008)
- Surrey Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework
- Mole Valley Core Strategy:
 - CS19 - Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy Construction
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 / amended 2009)
- Mole Valley District Council Local Waste Management Strategy (2002 - 2009)

Minerals: Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 154)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 142 - 149 inclusive, 163
- South East Plan:
 - CC1 - Sustainable Development
 - M1 - Sustainable Construction
 - M5 - Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves, Wharves and Rail Depots
- Surrey Minerals Local Plan (1993)
- Surrey Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework: Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy and Primary Aggregates DPD

Topic Based Assessment of PPSIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Waste and Recycling: Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Minimise waste produced and encourage reuse and recycling of materials. Ensure that existing recycling facilities on industrial sites are not prejudiced by other proposals for development.

Minerals: Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Take full account of the opportunities to use materials from secondary and other sources as alternatives to primary materials (NPPF para 163)
- To meet regional minerals apportionment and demand for other minerals balanced against the environmental impact.

Waste and Recycling: Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Consider the potential of sites to make use of existing buildings and / or recycled building materials.
- Consider how the location of sites will affect access of residents / businesses to recycling facilities and also ease of integrating new waste and recycling collection services into existing rounds.
- Consideration should be given to the ability of existing commercial and industrial estates to accommodate waste related development.

Minerals: Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- The location of new development needs to reflect mineral working zones and safeguarding consultation areas and the requirement to avoid the sterilisation of such areas from future mineral resource use.

Baseline:

Waste and Recycling:

The amount of waste collected is decreasing and in 2011/12, in Mole Valle, some 365kg of waste was collected per head (compared with 413kg for England). The proportion of waste recycled is increasing and in 2011/12 some 58% waste was recycled compared to 43% for England. These rates are better than nationally. The Council's recycling rate has exceeded the 50% target for 2015 set by the Surrey Strategic Partnership.

There is a Materials Recovery Facility at Leatherhead, civic amenity sites at Leatherhead and Dorking plus a further 19 recycling sites across the District. The waste collection scheme uses two wheeled bins and is an alternate weekly collection for rubbish and recycling. Garden waste can also be collected.

Minerals:

Surrey County Council is the minerals planning authority, and minerals issues are addressed through the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

Waste and Recycling: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Need to reduce waste and manage remaining waste in a sustainable manner.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Waste and Recycling: Sustainability Issues and Problems

New development needs to include provision for waste recycling facilities.

Minerals: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Need to avoid the sterilisation of mineral resources when planning for the wider development needs of the District.

Part B: Sustainability Appraisal Topics

Amenity and Community Facilities

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- Sustainable Communities Plan - Building for the Future
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 23, 28, 42, 55, 58, 69 - 78 (healthy communities), 123, 125, 175 - 177 (community infrastructure levy), 183 - 185 (neighbourhood plans).
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC5 - Supporting an Ageing Population
 - CC6 - Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - CC8 - Green Infrastructure
 - S5 - Cultural and Sporting Activity
- East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007/08).
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A & B (2009)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies (2009):
 - CS11 - Rural Village Centres
 - CS16 - Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities
 - CS17 - Infrastructure, Services and Community Facilities
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)
- Mole Valley Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study (PPG17) (2007)
- Mole Valley Settlement Hierarchy (2008)
- Mole Valley Housing Needs Survey (2007)
- Mole Valley Allotments Strategy (2006)
- Mole Valley Older Persons Housing Needs Survey (2009)
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 amended 2009)
- Census (2001 and 2011) and Mid-Year Population Estimates

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- Planning has a social role to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- Support economic growth in rural areas that benefit communities (NPPF para 28)
- Recognise the role of high quality communications infrastructure and networks in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services (NPPF para 42).
- Role of housing in rural areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (NPPF para 55).
- The important role of the planning system in facilitating and creating healthy inclusive communities and planning positively for the provision of community facilities and the delivery of social, recreational and cultural facilities a community needs; guarding against the loss of valued facilities where this would reduce the communities need to meet its day-to-day needs (NPPF paras 69-78)
- Town centres should be recognised as the heart of their communities (NPPF para 23)
- The PPG17 Assessment raised issues including a shortage in facilities for children and young people and shortages in amenity greenspace in some areas. Since this assessment was prepared the limited vacancies at some allotment sites have been filled and there are now waiting lists at most Council sites.
- Based on the PPG17 Study, the Council's Children & Young People's Play & Activities Strategy 2007 - 12, aims to provide / improve facilities for young people and increase opportunities for young people to have a healthy lifestyle. The need for a play facility in South Dorking still remains.
- The Council's Allotment Strategy (and updates) identifies the need for more allotments in Ashted, Beare Green, Bookham and Fetcham, Dorking and Leatherhead.
- The South East Plan required substantial networks of connected and accessible multi-functional green space to be planned for and provided. It stated that the successful designation and management of green infrastructure would be particularly important in areas where growth may impact on sites of international nature conservation importance, or where there is a need to enhance the existing environmental capacity of an area.
- Loss of community facilities to be resisted unless there is evidence that they are no longer required.
- Mixed use community facilities should be encouraged where appropriate
- Appropriate facilities should be accessible to all sections of the community, in built-up and rural areas.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Allocate new open space, sports and recreation facilities and allotment sites where necessary and safeguard existing facilities from alternative development.
- Account should be taken of the accessibility of housing and employment sites to sports, physical activity facilities, play space and green infrastructure.
- Ensure that housing / employment allocations help to deliver integrated networks of green space.
- Make provision for an adequate mix and pattern of community facilities.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The built-up areas comprise only 7.4% of the District. The main built-up areas are Ashtead, which has a population of 14,200. It is, however, predominantly residential in character, as are Fetcham (population 8,000) and Bookham (population 11,400). The main towns are Leatherhead (population 11,300) and Dorking (population 11,200; or about 16,000 including North Holmwood).

Dorking and Leatherhead town centres and small local centres provide facilities for the population.

The settlement hierarchy assessed the amenities available in each settlement for the preparation of the Core Strategy DPD.

An audit to assess the total amount and use of open space within the terms of PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) has been undertaken. Amongst others it identified over 2700ha of natural and semi-natural greenspace, an extensive network of footpaths, just under 60ha of amenity greenspace, children’s play areas, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and a small number of parks and gardens. The audit indicates there is reasonable or good provision of most types of open space, sports and recreational facilities but with some localised deficiencies. There is a shortage in facilities for children and young people, shortages in amenity greenspace in some areas and limited vacancies at some allotment sites.

The Council has 10 active allotment sites covering about 20 hectares, with 750 full plots. All sites are currently fully tenanted. The waiting list indicates a need for more allotments in Beare Green, Ashtead and Leatherhead. There are a number of other sites controlled by Parish Councils.

The Mole Valley 2008 Place Survey found that residents had a lower degree of satisfaction (63%) with sports and leisure facilities than in 2003-2004 (83%) and 2006 (71%).

There are modern sports and swimming facilities at Leatherhead and Dorking.

The Dorking Halls accommodate a wide range of entertainment functions. The Leatherhead Theatre provides a range of programmes.

There are local libraries at Dorking, Leatherhead, Bookham and Ashtead, and a mobile library service serving the villages. The libraries at Ashtead and Bookham are considered to be too small for the community they serve.

There are existing youth clubs in Ashtead, Beare Green, Bookham, Capel, Dorking and Leatherhead. Village and community halls also lay on a range of activities and event for all ages across the District. Many communities also have access to recreation grounds and sports pitches.

Amenity and Community Facilities: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Localised shortages of play space for children, amenity greenspace and allotment plots need to be addressed.

Access to community services should be retained, and improved where appropriate or possible.

Changing population characteristics and new developments are likely to give rise to the need for additional community facilities of various types.

See also: Social Inclusiveness, Equal Opportunities and Access to Services

Social Inclusiveness, Equal Opportunities and Access to Services

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- Sustainable Communities Plan - Building for the Future
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 28 (rural economy), 29 - 41 (sustainable transport), 42 and 43 (broadband), 50 - 55 (housing), 58 (design), 69 - 78 incl (healthy communities), 159, 162, 171, 174 - 177 incl (community infrastructure and affordable housing)
- Social Inclusion Statement (SEERA and Partners, 2002)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - SP4 - Regeneration and Social Inclusion
 - CC5 - Supporting and Ageing Population
 - CC6 - Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment
 - S1 - Supporting Healthy Communities
 - S2 - Promoting Sustainable Health Services
 - S3 - Education and Skills
 - S4 - Higher and Further Education
 - S5 - Cultural and Sporting Activity
 - S6 - Community Infrastructure
- Surrey County Council School Opportunities Plan 2012 -2021: Mole Valley (Sept 2012)
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A & B (2009)
- Surrey's Supporting People Strategy 2008 -11
- Surrey Primary Care Trust Community Strategy 2008 -13
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 / amended 2009)
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)
- Mole Valley Settlement Hierarchy (2008)
- Mole Valley Strategy for North Leatherhead
- A Strategy for Access in Mole Valley
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Census and other ONS statistics

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- Planning has a social role to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities including in rural areas (NPPF paras 28 and 69)
- LPAs should have a clear understanding of housing needs in the area including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (NPPF para 159)
- LPAs should assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure including health, social care and education and the ability to meet forecast demands (NPPF para 162) together with understanding the health status and needs of the population (para 171).
- Regional aim to reduce the numbers of deprived people, in both urban and rural areas, and reduce the gap between the most deprived wards and the rest of the region.
- Mole Valley Community Plan aims to develop stronger communities with an emphasis on improving the well-being of communities with specific needs thereby enhancing 'sense of community' and social cohesion. The aim is to move North Leatherhead and the area covered by Chart Downs / Goodwyns / North Holmwood out of the top 10% most deprived areas in Surrey as measured by the Indices of Deprivation.
- Mole Valley Community Plan aims to provide / improve facilities and support for young people and increase opportunities for young people to have a healthy lifestyle.
- An equalities scheme for Mole Valley seeks to ensure that access to the Council's services and facilities is improved /made equal to all groups throughout the District.
- Investment in technology should be matched to investment in people to ensure that technological capabilities are not wasted. Training and development of employees should be encouraged.
- The Surrey Education Organisation Plan 2011-2021 (September 2012) aims to ensure that sufficient primary, secondary, special educational and post-16 sector places are provided, that places are sensibly located and organised to maximise opportunities for pupils. The Plan for Mole Valley indicates there will be sufficient primary school places for the foreseeable future, albeit pressure on places in the Ashted and Leatherhead areas. In secondary schools the district as a whole is projected to maintain a small surplus of secondary places over the next 10 years. Secondary places are tight in the Dorking area and after a dip in numbers a shortage is projected. Pressure on secondary places in the Leatherhead area is lower than it might be, as a number of residents of this area, particularly in the Fetcham & Bookham area, apply for secondary school places in the adjacent Effingham area of Guildford Borough.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Ensure that the provision of additional assets that improve community well-being / social inclusiveness can be directed to those areas where such provision is most needed.
- Ensure that the provision of additional facilities for young people can be directed to those areas where such provision is most accessible by young people and most needed.
- The dispersed settlement pattern of the rural parts of the District means that accessibility to services are challenging spatial issues that service providers, and the Council, need to address.
- The loss of valued facilities and services should be resisted or controlled through appropriate designations / allocations.

Topic Based Assessment of PPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation rank Mole Valley as 310th out of 354 districts in England (354th being the least deprived). None of the District's wards are within the 20 most deprived wards in Surrey. However there are areas of relative deprivation within parts of North Leatherhead and Holmwoods wards.

Hard to reach groups may include young people, homeless, lone parents and gypsies and travellers. The 2011 Census indicates that lone parent households form 4.2% (from 3.4% in 2001) of all households in the District compared with 7.1% of households in England.

The Census indicates some 95% of the District's population is white (compared to 97.4% in 2001). There are 4,207 persons of other ethnic groups in the District, double the 2001 figure. However none of the ethnic groups forms more than 1% of the total population.

The 2011 Census indicates that only 16% of the population of the District has no qualifications compared with 22% nationally. The proportion of adults (16-60 years) with poor literacy skills at the L2 level (being the GCSE equivalent) is the same as the national average; and for numeracy skills half the national average. However at the lower EL3 level numeracy skills (being that expected of an 11 year old) are poorer than the national average.

The proportion of the working age population claiming key benefits (eg incapacity, carers, job seekers and other income related benefits), at November 2012, was 6.8% compared with 14.1% for Great Britain (source: Nomis).

The Mole Valley Housing Needs Study 2007 indicates that 14.5% of households include a member with a disability and 8.5% of all dwellings have been adapted to meet the needs of a disabled person.

There are NHS hospitals at Leatherhead and Dorking (neither of which has Accident and Emergency facilities), about 15 doctors surgeries and 11 dental surgeries.

There are 28 County Council or grant maintained schools (including 4 secondary schools), as well as 3 special schools and 8 private schools.

Social Inclusiveness, Equal Opportunities and Access to Services: Sustainability Issues and Problems

The issue of the quality of life of all sectors of the population and of specific geographical areas needs to be addressed to improve social inclusiveness, equal opportunities and access to services within the District.

Relative affluence can disguise smaller pockets of relative deprivation.

Challenge in ensuring accessibility to services given the dispersed settlement pattern of rural parts of the District.

See also: Amenity and Community Facilities

Housing Provision

Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- Sustainable Communities Plan - Building for the Future
- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)
- Code for Sustainable Homes / Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 23, 47 - 55 incl(delivering a wide choice of high quality homes), 111, 159.
- Planning for Traveller Sites - March 2012 (replaces Circular 01/06)
- Circular 04/07 - Planning for Travelling Showpeople (2007)
- Regional Housing Strategy (2006, and 2008-11)
- South East Plan Policies:
 - CC5 - Supporting an Ageing Population
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - H1 - Regional Housing Provision 2006 - 2026
 - H2 - Managing the Delivery of the Regional Housing Provision
 - H3 - Affordable Housing
 - H4 - Type and Size of New Housing
 - H5 - Housing Design and Density
 - H6 - Making Better Use of the Housing Stock
 - LF1 - Core Strategy
 - LF3 - Broad Amount and Distribution of Future Housing Development
 - LF4 - Affordable Housing
- South East Plan Partial Review - Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople: Recommendation for New Policy H7 (June 2009)
- East Surrey Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (May 2007)
- East Surrey Housing Strategy 2009 - 13 (2009)
- East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007/2008)
- Extra Care Housing Strategy for Mid Surrey (2005)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies (2009):
 - CS1 - Where Will Development Be Directed
 - CS2 - Housing Provision and Location
 - CS3 - Balancing Housing Markets
 - CS4 - The Provision of Affordable Housing
 - CS5 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
 - CS19 - Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation
- Mole Valley Housing Needs Survey Final Report (2007)
- Mole Valley Older Persons Housing Needs Study (2009)
- Mole Valley Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2008)
- Mole Valley Affordable Housing Financial Viability Assessment (2008)
- Mole Valley Affordable Housing SPD (2010)
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPs:

- The NPPF requires local authorities to plan to meet housing needs for market and affordable housing in full and to identify a rolling supply of at least 5 years deliverable land for housing (para 47)
- The NPPF states that LPAs should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area and prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to identify the scale of housing which meets household and population projections (para 159)
- Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends, and the needs of different groups; and the type, size, tenure and range of housing reflecting local demand (para 50).
- Provide housing for local needs in rural areas (NPPF para 54).
- The Mole Valley Core Strategy Policy CS2 sets out the provision of at least 3,760 dwellings between 2006 and 2026 in accordance with the South East Plan and contribute towards a sub-regional target of 40% of all new homes being affordable. This figure will need to be reviewed to meet the provisions of the NPPF.
- The Regional Housing Strategy aims to enable the provision of more affordable homes, bring decent housing within the reach of people on lower incomes and improve on the quality of new housing.
- Mole Valley Community Plan aims to improve the supply of affordable housing to rent or buy in the District.
- East Surrey's Housing Strategy seeks to ensure that local people, including future generations, and people needed by the Mole Valley Community, can access housing that is affordable and of the highest reasonable standard.
- Core Strategy Policies CS 2, 3, 4 & 5 set out housing provision and location, balance of housing provision, affordable housing provision and provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- The Partial Review of the South East Plan - Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (now revoked) would identify the number of pitches that need to be provided within the District by 2016 (7 for Gypsies / Travellers and 1 pitch for Travelling Showpeople).
- The Housing Needs Study provides information about the current and future housing needs of the District and provides a robust evidence base to support the development of housing an planning strategies.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- A need to review the level of housing provision to meet the requirements of the NPPF.
- Ensure housing allocations are deliverable in order to ensure a rolling supply of housing land over the plan period.
- Housing allocations should seek to ensure a balance in terms of tenure, size and type of dwellings to meet local need and contribute towards the sub-regional target for affordable homes.
- Promote growth of new housing stock in the built up areas so as to reduce possible impacts on the surrounding environment.
- The East Surrey Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identifies a need for additional pitches within Mole Valley for which land will need to be allocated through the Local Plan process.
- The requirements for older persons / specialist accommodation should be considered.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The South East Plan set a requirement of 188 dwellings per annum between 2006 and 2026; a minimum of some 3,760 dwellings. Net additions to stock between 2006-2012 were 1,480 dwellings, therefore the remaining requirement for 2012-2026 is 2,280 dwellings or 163 dwellings per annum.

The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identified how the housing requirement set by the South East Plan could be met. However given the current recession sites have not come forward. At April 2013 the Council can only identify some 3.9 years of deliverable housing supply against the requirement to maintain a 5 year supply. The District's housing requirement will need to be re-assessed in the light of the advice in the NPPF.

The Mole Valley Housing Needs Study 2007 indicates that the largest demand for market housing is for 2 and 3 bedroom homes followed by 1 and 4 bedroom homes. The largest need for dwellings by type is for flats and semi-detached homes. This is closely followed by the need for detached homes. The need for flats is largely from concealed households (i.e. someone living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household) whilst the need for semi-detached and detached properties is from existing households and those migrating into the District. The Study also identified that the elderly population is set to significantly increase between 2004 and 2026 and this is confirmed by the ONS population projections (2008 based).

The East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007/08 looked at the level of supply of homes by size within the District and made a comparison with the level of need. The Assessment identified that the largest level of supply of homes within the District was two, three and four bedroom homes. However, when compared to the level of demand for these homes, the Assessment revealed that there was a 47.2% shortfall in three bedroom homes within the District. Further shortfalls were also seen for the number of one, two and four bedroom homes by 10.5%; 21.3%; and 21.0% respectively.

Delivery of housing in these ranges is improving. Between 2001-06 an average of 71% of new dwellings were 3 or less bedrooms and for 2006 - 12 this had increased to 84%. Indeed the proportion of small dwellings of 2 or fewer bedrooms increased from 54% to 70% of completions over the same periods.

The District's higher than national average house prices exacerbates the problems of housing need and is exacerbated by the "affordability gap". For example although the ratio of lower quartile house prices against lower quartile earnings has fallen from 11.6 to 1 (in 2006) to 10.2 to 1 (in 2011) this still indicates a very significant affordability gap. Indeed the national rate, at 2011, was significantly lower at 6.5 to 1.

In the period 2006 -12 379 net new affordable dwellings have been built (ie 26% of all completions) an annual average of 63dwpa and exceeding the target of 47dwpa in the Core Strategy. At June 2012 there were some 1,670 households on the housing register.

There are currently 30 Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the District (Nov 2012). Of these 20 pitches are on 4 public sites, 6 pitches are on privately owned sites and a further 4 private pitches do not have permission. There is also 1 privately owned Travelling Showpeople pitch.

Housing Provision: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Establishing a new housing requirement and planning for the location of this housing is the critical issue to be addressed through the Local Plan process. It will be a challenging task to reduce possible impacts on the environment and character of Mole Valley whilst allocating sufficient land to provide for housing requirements. The Council will need to review the Green Belt boundary to ensure that sufficient sites can be allocated to meet established housing requirements.

Much of the new housing within the District comes forward on relatively small sites and predominantly within built-up areas. However, such incremental small-scale development increases the pressure on local infrastructure and increases in density may alter the character of built-up areas.

There is a need for more affordable housing in both built-up and rural areas. Average open market house prices are high, meaning that buying is out of the reach of those on lower incomes and open market rentals are also high.

There is a need to provide the right type of market housing (2 to 3 bedroom followed by 1 and 4 bedroom houses). There will be a need to have regard to the housing requirements of a more elderly population.

Need to establish requirements for sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Economic Development and Town Centres

Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- The Plan for Growth - 2011 Budget Statement
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 18 - 22 (a strong, competitive economy), 23 - 27 (vitality of town centres), 28 (rural economy), 51, 160 - 161 (plan making and business)
- Regional Economic Strategy (2006 - 2016)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - RE1 - Contributing to the UK's Long Term Competitiveness
 - RE2 - Supporting Nationally and Regionally Important Sectors and Clusters
 - RE3 - Employment and Land Provision
 - RE4 - Human Resource Development
 - RE5 - Smart Growth
 - RE6 - Competitiveness and Addressing Structural Economic Weakness
 - LF2 - Economic Development
 - GAT2 - Economic Development
 - TSR4 - Tourism Attractions
 - TRS5 - Tourist Accommodation
 - LF7 - Town Centres
- Surrey Local Economic Assessment (Dec 2010)
- Coast to CAPITAL LEP - Strategy for Growth July 2012)
- Gatwick Diamond Initiative (GDI) - Future Plan (2008)
- Gatwick Diamond Local Strategic Statement (2012)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy Policies
 - CS7 - Leatherhead Town Centre
 - CS8 - Ashted Village Centre
 - CS9 - Bookham Village Centre
 - CS10 - Fetcham Village Centre
 - CS12 - Sustainable Economic Development
- Dorking Town Area Action Plan (adopted December 2012)
- Mole Valley Local Economy and Employment Land Review (March 2008)
- Dorking Industrial and Commercial Land Review (Jan 2012)
- Mole Valley Town, District, Local and Village Centres Study (2007 - updated 2010)
- Dorking - Retail Impact Assessment 2011
- Mole Valley Settlement Hierarchy (2008)

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- Government's commitment to the delivery of economic growth and that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth is a fundamental principle of the NPPF (paras 18-20)
- Local Plans should have a clear economic vision and strategy which encourages sustainable economic growth (NPPF para 21)
- Avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use (NPPF para 22)
- Support the viability and vitality of town centres (NPPF para 23)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (NPPF para 28)
- Locally, supporting the continued sustainable growth, prosperity and evolution of the local economy through measures including a flexible approach to the supply and use of land.
- The South East Plan encouraged "smart" economic growth to increase prosperity whilst reducing ecological footprint.
- Ensure economic development is directed to the most sustainable locations and that the need for employment land is assessed.
- The Gatwick Diamond Initiative seeks to attract to the area high quality knowledge based industries (some of which are already present in the Leatherhead area) and to develop smart business infrastructure, through improving the ability of existing business areas to accommodate high value-added activities.
- The hierarchy of retail centres should be maintained and the principal focus of new retail development will be directed to the town centres.
- Additional convenience shopping floorspace is recommended to maintain the District's market share and counter existing over-trading. Permissions have been granted for a Lidl store in Dorking and the redevelopment of the existing Waitrose store in Dorking. There is still a residual amount of floorspace to be allocated. There is permission for a Tesco's store in Ashted.
- Additional comparison shopping floorspace is recommended by 2017 to maintain the District's market share and to cater for increased expenditure per head.
- Market potential for new hotels in Dorking and Leatherhead.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- The need to make provision for a flexible supply of land to meet the varying needs of different economic sectors.
- Well located industrial and commercial sites should be safeguarded.
- Ensure employment allocations are accessible by all sections of the community, by a variety of modes of transport, so as to minimise the need to travel, in particular the need to travel by private motor vehicle.
- Allocate land to provide accommodation for visitors to the District.
- Ensure retail development is appropriate to the scale and character of the centre concerned and its role in the retail hierarchy.
- Provision should be made for an adequate mix and pattern of retail floorspace in order to support the District's retention of market share.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

Mole Valley is economically prosperous with a generally strong local economy. There are about 5,300 active enterprises employing approximately 44,000 persons. The level of Growth Value Added (being the value of goods and services produced in an area) in Surrey was almost 25% higher than the national rate in 2009. Whilst unemployment rates have risen during the recession from 0.6% at July 2008 to 1.2% at April 2013 they are one of the lowest nationally (Great Britain rate being 3.7%)

The service sector is the main employer, with headquarter premises of a number of national or international companies being present in the District.

Dorking, in the centre of the District, is a traditional market town and retail centre. The main employers include Friends Life, UNUM, Kuoni Travel and Biwaters. Johnston Sweepers is a major manufacturing company in the town and is currently expanding its premises.

Leatherhead, in the north of the District is the larger commercial centre with a number of modern business and research parks and good accessibility to the motorway network. Major employers in the Leatherhead area include Unilever, Exxonmobile (ie Esso), Cobham Technical Services, KBR and Logica CMG.

Total commercial floorspace stock (offices, factories and warehouses) is 494,000sqm (April 2008). There are currently higher levels of vacant business use and office floorspace than is normally the case. The availability of vacant industrial and storage premises is much tighter. Outstanding planning permissions for commercial development is mainly through the recycling of existing employment land and the conversion of rural buildings. However the expansion of Johnstons Engineering, Dorking is a greenfield development.

The Local Economy and Employment Land Review (March 2008) included employment forecasts indicating an increase in jobs (in office, industrial and warehousing uses) between 2006 and 2026 that is lower than can be accommodated in outstanding permissions and vacant premises at the base date. The approach therefore is that there is a need for flexibility that outweighs allowing losses of floorspace by trying to match forecast employment with available floorspace. A new Employment Land Review is being prepared and which will update this information.

Dorking is the larger of the two town centres with about 320 retail units and about 23,000m² of retail floorspace. There is planning permission for a Lidl store in Dorking and the redevelopment of the current Waitrose store to provide a larger unit is due to commence. The Area Action Plan identifies land to the rear of St. Martins Walk for additional retail development.

Leatherhead is the smaller centre with about 140 units and about 14,900m² of floorspace. Both town centres have similar amounts of office floorspace (about 22,500m² each) however Leatherhead does have a greater amount of commercial floorspace on business parks outside the town centre. Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham have district or local level shopping centres. There is permission for a small Tesco store in Ashted.

Economic Development and Town Centres: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Prior to the recession there were concerns that further commercial development and employment growth could lead to adverse consequences including additional traffic congestion and increases in in-commuting, housing and labour shortages and skills considerations. These concerns are still relevant in the current economic circumstances and for the longer term.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Economic Development and Town Centres: Sustainability Issues and Problems

There is a potential concern with regard to the District's reliance on only certain main employment sectors. There is also an issue of whether the loss of certain types of employment land and buildings will result in the loss of jobs and especially in the manufacturing sector.

The new Employment Land Review will update this.

The additional convenience and comparison shopping floorspace provision has yet to be delivered.

Land (including brownfield and greenfield land)

Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 22, 23, 37, 48, 51, 53, 76, 79 - 92 (Green Belt), 111, 159 -161 (land for housing and business)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - SP3 - Urban Focus and Urban Regeneration
 - SP5 - Green Belts
 - BE1 - Management for an Urban Renaissance
 - BE2 - Suburban Intensification
 - BE3 - Suburban Renewable
 - BE4 - The Role of Small Rural Towns ('Market Towns')
 - BE5 - Village Management
 - LF3 - Broad Amount and Distribution of Future Housing Development
 - LF5 - Urban Areas and Regional Hubs
- Mole Valley Built-Up Area Character Appraisals SPD
- Mole Valley Core Strategy
 - Policy CS1 - Where Should Development be Directed (A Spatial Strategy)
- Mole Valley Larger Rural Character Appraisals SPD (ongoing)
- Mole Valley Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2008

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPSIs:

- Adhere to the principles of including land in the Green Belt and protection of Green Belt land (NPPF paras 79 -92)
- Encourage the effective use of land by re-using land which has previously been developed (ie brownfield land) (NPPF para 111)
- Avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use and review land allocations (NPPF para 22)
- Alternative use of (employment) land and buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals (NPPF para 22).
- Ensure needs for town centre uses are met in full and not compromised by limited site availability (NPPF para 23)
- Aim for a balance of land uses to encourage journey lengths for employment, shopping and other activities is minimised (NPPF para 37)
- Consider the identification for protection of green areas of particular importance to localities and neighbourhoods (NPPF para 76)
- New development will be directed towards previously developed land in Leatherhead, Dorking and the built-up areas in the north of the District.
- Extensions into the Green Belt will take place if sufficient land within the built-up areas cannot be identified to meet development needs.
- Limited development / infilling will take place on previously developed land within the larger rural villages and infilling only on previously developed land within the smaller rural villages.
- All new development must respect and enhance the character of the area in which it is proposed whilst making the best possible use of the land available.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Prioritise the re-development of brownfield (ie previously developed) land over greenfield sites and make the best possible use of such brownfield land.
- The loss of employment land.
- Make sure sufficient land is available to meet development needs and other requirements.
- Garden land is no longer defined as previously developed land.
- Use of land in the Green Belt will be necessary if sufficient land within the built-up areas cannot be identified to meet development requirements.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

The South East Plan set the focus for development on urban areas and sought to achieve 60% of all new development on brownfield land.

In Mole Valley most new housing development has taken place on brownfield land. In 2011-12 82% of housing in Mole Valley came forward on brownfield sites. This rate reflects the removal of garden land from the definition of brownfield land. Between 2006 - 2010 (and based on the old definition) this was in the range 90% - 99%, significantly above the South East region rate of between 66% and 82% and the then national target of 60%.

A significant proportion of new housing comes forward on relatively small sites within existing built-up areas.

In the three years 2009 - 12 the average density of completed housing development ranged between 22 - 24 dwellings per hectare. This was lower than the range for 2006 - 09 (between 36 - 41 dwellings per hectare).

The level of commercial development built on brownfield land in Mole Valley is normally 100% reflecting the re-use of existing employment land. The re-use of rural buildings (being greenfield sites) affects this rate.

Land (including brownfield and greenfield land): Sustainability Issues and Problems

The principle is to direct development to the built up areas as the most sustainable locations. It is acknowledged in the Core Strategy that the need to identify sufficient deliverable and developable sites to meet current (and any new housing) requirements will result in the need to identify greenfield sites.

The cumulative impact of the loss of employment land on the supply of available premises to meet local employment needs.

High rates of development on previously developed land in future years may incrementally alter the character and quality of life in built-up areas as well as increasing concerns about congestion and pressure on existing infrastructure.

See also; Housing Provision; Geology and Soil (and land contamination); Landscape and Countryside

Traffic and Commuting, and Access to Public Transport

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 29 - 41 incl (sustainable transport), 84, 162
- Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) (2004)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC7 - Infrastructure and Implementation
 - T1 - Manage and Invest
 - T2 - Mobility Management
 - T4 - Parking
 - T5 - Travel Plans and Advice
 - T6 - Communications Technology
 - T7 - Rural Transport
 - T9 - Airports
 - T14 - Transport Investment and Management Priorities
- East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership Action Plan
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A & B (2009)
- Surrey Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP)
- Surrey Transport Strategy including Parking Strategy 2011 and Guidance 2012
- Mole Valley Core Strategy
 - CS18 - Transport Options and Accessibility (2009)
- Mole Valley Transport Evaluation (2008)
- Dorking Transport Assessment 2011
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)
- Mole Valley Settlement Hierarchy (2008)
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 / amended 2009)

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

Traffic and Commuting:

- The NPPF emphasises the role of transport policies to facilitate sustainable development and contribute to wider objectives; supports patterns of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport and the need for sustainable infrastructure.
- Aim for a balance of land uses to encourage journey lengths for employment, shopping and other activities is minimised (NPPF para 37)
- The RTS indicates that proposals to increase parking at railway stations should be considered favourably alongside measures to improve access to railway stations by bus, cycle and walking.
- The objectives of the LTP include tackling congestion, increasing accessibility to key services and facilities, improving road safety / security, enhancing the environment and quality of life and improving maintenance of the transport network.
- Mole Valley Community Plan aims to provide locally responsive community transport and support alternatives to single occupancy car use.
- The Mole Valley Transport Evaluation assesses the impact of planned development on the strategic road network, focusing on the use of the M25 Junction 9, the transport infrastructure in general and travel behaviour. A number of transport 'hot-spots' are identified where the roads are at capacity or could experience a significant increase in traffic congestion if planned proposals are not mitigated.
- Travel choice in rural areas should be encouraged through initiatives such as demand responsive bus services.
- The extent and quality of pedestrian and cycle routes should be improved to help contribute to providing sustainable access to services, facilities and jobs.

Public Transport:

- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
- The RTS indicates that proposals to increase parking at railway stations should be considered favourably alongside measures to improve access to railway stations by bus, cycle and walking.
- The objectives of the LTP include increasing accessibility to key services and facilities.
- Mole Valley Community Plan aims to provide locally responsive community transport and support alternatives to single occupancy car use.
- Travel choice in rural areas should be encouraged through initiatives such as the demand responsive Buses 4U service.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

Traffic and Commuting:

- Make provision for an adequate mix and pattern of transport provision.
- Ensure that housing and employment allocations are in sustainable locations to minimise the need to travel and are accessible by all sections of the community by a variety of modes of transport, so as to minimise in particular the need to travel by private motor vehicle.
- Consider allocation of land to increase car parking capacity at the main railway stations in the District in conjunction with improvements to other modes of access.
- Allocate land to provide improve pedestrian and cycle routes where necessary.
- There is a need to critically assess the highway implications of any planned development.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Public Transport:

- Ensure that housing and employment allocations are accessible by all sections of the community, by a variety of modes of transport, including public transport.
- Consider allocation of land to increase car parking capacity at the main railway stations in the District in conjunction with improvements to other modes of access.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

Traffic and Commuting:

The 2001 Census indicated that some 18,804 residents work outside the District whilst some 19,636 workers commute into the District. The District has changed from being one of net out-commuting in 1991 to one of net in-commuting in 2001 (of 832 persons). 2011 Census information is awaited to see if this trend is continuing. The 2001 Census information indicates 63.7% of journeys to work by Mole Valley residents are by car. It is understood that Surrey has the most congested roads in the country outside London.

The 2011 Census shows that Surrey has the highest levels of car ownership (ie cars per household) nationally and Mole Valley is the third highest in the county. 49% of Mole Valley households (47% in 2001) has 2 or more cars (compared with 32% for England), and only 12% households are without a car (compared to 26% for England).

The Core Strategy Transport Evaluation (2008) examined two alternative development scenarios by varying the distribution of new housing (as identified in the components of the 2008 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) north/south between the main built-up areas. It concluded that the impact on traffic generation is not significantly affected by changing the distribution of housing units between the built-up areas. The Core Strategy's spatial strategy and current overall level of housing provision to 2026 can be concluded not to have a material impact on traffic congestion either on the Strategic Road Network (M25) or the local roads.

However, the Transport Evaluation identifies an overall 12% increase in traffic in the District as a result of the level of proposed housing development, as well as the amount of commercial development which was in the pipeline in 2008.

Public Transport:

2001 Census information indicates that a higher proportion of Mole Valley residents than nationally travel to work by train (10.8% against 7.4%). Conversely a lower proportion travel to work by bus, only 1.1% against 7.5% nationally. This reflects the generally good accessibility to London by rail on services on the Guildford to London (via Leatherhead) and Horsham to London (serving Dorking and Leatherhead) lines and cross-country on the Reading to Gatwick Airport line (serving Dorking). It is understood there are capacity problems on the routes from stations in Mole Valley to Waterloo, in peak hours. Medium to longer term measures have been identified that hopefully will alleviate the problem, but this is not a "quick-fix" solution involving the acquisition and use of longer trains and with infrastructure upgrades to accommodate them.

There are bus services in and from the District's main built up areas and serving destinations outside the District such as Redhill, Guildford and Kingston. However services are considered to be limited with especially Bookham and Fetcham having only one regular bus service. This is primarily a financial issue as services are subsidised by Surrey County Council.

Otherwise bus services are not well provided especially in the more rural areas and generally in the evenings and weekends. Demand responsive services are being developed.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Traffic and Commuting: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Significant peak hours road congestion in Dorking and Leatherhead caused by journeys to school and work.

It will be a challenge to manage down traffic, particularly during the morning peak and at identified 'hot spots'.

Public Transport: Sustainability Issues and Problems

The use of public transport, especially bus services, should be increased. Accessibility to public transport, especially in the rural areas of the District, should be improved; However these are not matters which are the direct responsibility of the Council, nor can be implemented through local plans.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Noise Sources

Key PPPSs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- European Noise Directive (2001/14/EC) (2001)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 123
- South East Plan Policy NRM10 'Noise' (2009)
- Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2012 (GAMP)
- Gatwick Airport Noise Contours (predicted levels from the GAMP) and actual levels from Department of Transport.

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSs:

- The NPPF indicates that noise impacts and mitigation should to be taken into account in determining planning applications for noise sensitive developments and for activities that will generate noise.
- Policy NRM10 of the South East Plan requires measures to be developed to address and reduce noise pollution.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- New residential and other sensitive development should be located away from existing and potential significant noise generators.
- Potentially noisy development should be located away from residential and other sensitive development.

Baseline:

The M25 motorway passes through the northern part of the District and between Leatherhead and Ashted. High levels of vehicular movements also take place on the A24, which passes north-south through the District, and the A25 which passes through east-west. Railway lines also pass through the northern part of the District and traverse it. All of these are potential noise generators.

The south east part of the District is in close proximity to Gatwick Airport. The 57 LEQ and higher noise contours covers about 9.5% of the District and some 1,100 properties. Some 260ha (with some 87 addresses) is within the higher 66 LEQ and above in which permissions for new dwellings will not normally be granted. Any further expansion of Gatwick Airport could increase the areas subject to aircraft noise. Additionally further development at Heathrow Airport could also then have environmental impacts on the northern part of Mole Valley.

Noise Sources: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Need to consider impact from noise generators on sensitive new development as this is a concern to many residents of the District. Need to consider impact from potentially noisy new development on existing development. These are mainly site specific issues with regard to the allocation of sites for development.

Crime

Key PPPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- Safer Places - The Planning System and Crime Prevention (CLG 2004)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic:58, 69
- South East Plan
 - Policy CC6 - Use of Public Land (2009)
- Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project - Part A & B (2009)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy
 - CS14 - Townscape, Urban Design
- Mole Valley Local Plan
 - ENV29 - Planning and Crime Prevention
- Mole Valley Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements Position Statement (2008 / amended 2009)
- Mole Valley Community Plan (2006 - 2016)
- Mole Valley Community Safety Strategy (2005 - 2008)
- Mole Valley Designing Out Crime SPD (Dec 2011)
- ONS Neighbourhood Statistics

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion (NPPF para 58).
- Role of planning system in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.
- Mole Valley Designing Out Crime SPD (Dec 2011) incorporates advice from the Government's Safer Places guidance and which encourages developments to take account of the seven attributes of sustainable communities of particular relevance to crime prevention.
- Mole Valley Community Safety Strategy aims to reduce crime, reassure communities and improve road safety to enhance feelings of safety in the District. It seeks to design out crime in all new developments and target harden other areas by environmental design.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Have regard to existing neighbourhood characteristics and local perceptions of crime.
- When allocating sites consider the potential for designing out crime and creating safe routes to key services and facilities and safe places for recreation.
- Emergency services are changing the way they operate and this could see the release of some sites for alternative forms of development.

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

In Mole Valley the main forms of crime are violence against a person and burglary. However levels of all types of crime per 1,000 households in the District are below the national averages (2010-11). Home Office total recorded offences indicate 47 offences per 1,000 population in Mole Valley compared with 60 per 1,000 population in Surrey. Overall crime rates in Surrey are lower than nationally.

Crime: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Crime and the fear of crime should be reduced, including through the design of new development.

Sustainable Development and Construction; Energy Consumption and Efficiency

Key PPSIs Reviewed and Evidence Sources:

- European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2002/91/EC)
- NPPF: Presumption in favour of sustainable development and Core Planning Principles; plan making and sustainable development (paras 150 - 157)
- NPPF paragraphs related to the topic: 65, 93 - 97 (climate change), 111, 162
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- Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006
- Code for Sustainable Homes - Setting the standard (February 2008)
- Code for Sustainable Homes - Technical guide (May 2009)
- BREEAM Standards
- PPS 22 Companion Guide - Renewable Energy (2004)
- Regional Strategy for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (2004)
- South East Plan Policies (2009):
 - CC1 - Sustainable Development
 - CC4 - Sustainable Design and Construction
 - NRM11 - Development Design for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
 - W2 - Sustainable Design, Construction and Demolition
- Surrey Design: A Strategic Guide for a Quality Built Environment (2001)
- Mole Valley Core Strategy
 - Policy CS19 - Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation
- Mole Valley Climate Change Policy and Evidence Background Papers (2008)

Topic Based Assessment of PPPs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Relevant Aims and Objectives from the PPPSIs:

- The NPPF indicates LPA's should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and support the move to a low carbon future.
- Promote sustainable development and construction techniques, including energy efficiency, renewable energy and recycling of waste.
- Ensure high quality design is applied that allows multiple functions and benefits to be achieved and to enable access for all.
- The Code for Sustainable Homes (December 2006) sets out standard ratings for sustainable homes. The intention for developments to meet Code Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2016 is set out in the Council's Core Strategy.
- New homes to be carbon neutral by 2016.
- New developments to be designed to be energy and water efficient.
- The 2006 Act requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to improve efficiency in the use of energy, increase the amount of energy derived from renewable sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.
- Government objective is to cut the UK's carbon emissions by 60% by 2050 with real interim progress towards this by 2020.
- The regional objective is to cut carbon dioxide emissions by at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2010, by at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2015 and by 80% by 2050.
- Minimising the need to travel and making provision for sustainable means of transport.

Main Implications for Sustainability Appraisal and Plan Making:

- Consider the potential of sites to incorporate development of high quality, sustainable design.
- Consider the potential for the allocation of sites for renewable energy generation (eg wind-turbine, CHP plant).

Topic Based Assessment of PPIs, Baseline and Sustainability Issues

Baseline:

Sustainable Development and Construction:

Core Strategy Policy CS19 requires that new homes meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or higher, and commercial building meet the BREEAM 'very good' standard. All relevant new planning permissions include conditions requiring the relevant standards to be met. In 2011-12 45% of gross dwelling completions had planning conditions requiring they meet Code Level 3, an increase on the 29% of gross dwelling completions in 2010-11.

The BREEAM condition was applied to 67% of conversions to dwellings in 2011-12. Instances where this was not applied would include proposals which would otherwise have affected the fabric of a listed building..

Energy Consumption and Efficiency:

Information on domestic energy consumption indicates that gas consumption per household in Mole Valley has decreased by 16% between 2005 and 2010 and electricity consumption declined by 6% in the same period. These decreases are less than the national falls in consumption. However total gas and electricity energy consumption in Mole Valley at 24,590KWH per household in 2010 is still 28% higher than the national average.

Sustainable Development and Construction; Energy Consumption and Efficiency: Sustainability Issues and Problems

Need to reduce energy use and increase energy efficiency measures. The former can be addressed through lifestyle changes whereas the latter falls within the remit of Building regulations. Energy efficiency can be considered at the site specific level through the layout and orientation of buildings.

The potential for the production and use of renewable energy in the District needs to be considered.

See also 'Climate Factors'; Housing; and Land

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Chapter 4 Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Revising the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 4.1** The Council is required to outline the sustainability objectives and criteria against which the alternative strategies / options and subsequent policies of plans will be appraised in order to make the appropriate plan as sustainable as possible. The Council is also required to set out the indicators that will be used to monitor the effects of the plans. This forms Task A4 of the table in Chapter 2 'The SA / SEA of Local Plan Documents'.
- 4.2** In preparing the Core Strategy the Council used a suite of 23 objectives to assess the sustainability impact of the Mole Valley Core Strategy and its alternative approaches (and goals and policies). The suite of objectives has since been subject to revision and this process is explained further below.
- 4.3** The SA framework used in the preparation of the Mole Valley Core Strategy developed through a series of workshops and working groups held jointly with other Surrey⁽¹⁾ local planning authorities, Surrey County Council and with the statutory environmental consultation bodies. Through this joint working an original suite of 23 sustainability objectives was established to enable the east Surrey authorities to assess their development plans. These objectives themselves had their basis in the objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal of the South East Plan and the 25 key objectives in the Integrated Regional Framework.
- 4.4** Through the preparation of the various plans of the east Surrey authorities it became apparent that the 23 objectives could be further refined. In summer 2012 the east Surrey authorities undertook further joint working to re-consider the objectives. A revised suite of 19 objectives has been developed. The three statutory environmental bodies have been consulted on these revised objectives and have signed them off. This has been carried out as a separate exercise to the requirement to consult the statutory bodies on the publication of Scoping Reports.
- 4.5** The process of revising the objectives has been an iterative one of development and amendment rather than fundamental change. There is, and continues to be, an underlying consistency to the sustainability appraisal of the Council's plans notwithstanding the revisions to the objectives.

Reviewing the Sustainability Objectives

- 4.6** In reviewing the 23 objectives the east Surrey authorities had regard to:
- Whether some objectives could be merged to address a sustainability theme or aim more comprehensively.
 - Whether other objectives should be dis-aggregated to ensure no ambiguity in their intent.
 - The role of the decision aiding questions in explaining the intent of the objective.
 - Whether the objectives are now necessary or fit for purpose.
- 4.7** The resulting suite of 19 objectives are shown below. For some themes the number of objectives has been reduced. This should not be taken as an indication of the importance or otherwise of these objectives, but more the conciseness of the themes compared to others.

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

4.8 To help consider the assessment of the options being subject to SA a set of decision aiding questions have been developed. These have been further revised by the individual east Surrey authorities and in response to suggestions by the statutory consultation bodies.

Objective Number	Objective	Decision Aiding Questions
Sustainability Theme: Social progress that recognises the needs of everyone		
1	To provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote improvements in the availability and quality of the housing stock? • help provide a supply of affordable homes to meet identified needs? • increase the rate of provision of affordable housing? • help to reduce the number of homeless in the District? • increase the amount of extra-care or enhanced sheltered accommodation? • reduce the number of unfit homes? • have a significant detrimental effect on the financial viability of delivering future housing?
2	To facilitate the improved health and wellbeing of the whole population.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help to improve the health of the community and encourage healthy lifestyles? • reduce health inequalities? • improve access to health provision? • improve access to open space and sports facilities? • help people to remain independent?
3	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address issues of deprivation? • help to overcome social exclusion? • address issues of poverty in identified areas? • improve the provision of affordable transport? • provide additional assistance to single parents, the elderly, those with ill health or disability? • improve participation in further education?
4	To minimise the harm from flooding.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the risk of flooding to the development? • reduce the risk of flooding to adjacent development?

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Objective Number	Objective	Decision Aiding Questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help to reduce the rate of run-off? • encourage Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes? • reduce the amount of hard-surfacing? • ensure that climate change extremes can be withstood?
5	To improve accessibility to all services facilities, and natural greenspace.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve access to key services (education, employment, recreation, health, community services, cultural assets)? • enhance access to natural urban greenspace? • provide safe pedestrian and cycle routes? • improve public transport - including choice and interchange? • increase access to the countryside, archaeological, historic environments and cultural assets?
Sustainability Theme: Effective protection of the environment		
6	To make the best use of previously developed land which is not of high environmental value and existing buildings.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage the re-use of existing buildings? • make the best use of PDL, so as to deliver sustainable development?
7	To reduce land contamination and safeguard soil quality (and quantity).	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the risk of creating further contamination? • help to reduce the risk of contamination from designated sites? • help to remediate contaminated sites? • encourage on-site remediation? • prevent soil erosion? • minimise the loss of good quality agricultural land?
8	To ensure air quality continues to improve.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help improve air quality? • support specific actions in designated AQMAs?reduce pollution from traffic?
9	To reduce noise pollution.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage the creation of tranquil areas? • ensure that people are not exposed to greater levels of noise?
10	To reduce light pollution.	Will the alternative / option help reduce light pollution?
11	To improve the water quality of rivers and groundwater,	Will the alternative / option:

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Objective Number	Objective	Decision Aiding Questions
	and maintain an adequate supply of water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increase pollution of groundwater, watercourses and rivers from run-off/point-sources? ● provide adequate utilities infrastructure to service development to avoid unacceptable impacts on the environment? <p>Will the amount of nitrates/phosphates entering the water environment be reduced?</p>
12	To conserve and enhance biodiversity and networks of natural habitat.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provide, where possible,enhancements to biodiversity in new developments? ● continue to protect formally designated areas of nature conservation (including SSSIs)? ● protect and enhance ancient woodland, woodland and inter-connecting hedgerows? ● create more habitats? ● prevent fragmentation, and increase connectivity, of habitats? ● enhance urban biodiversity and enhance natural urban space? ● identify and deliver green infrastructure? ● take account of the effects of climate change on biodiversity? ● adequately defend and enhance protected species? ● enhance understanding of the importance of biodiversity? ● protect and enhance locally designated wildlife sites (SNCI, pSNCI and LNRs)?
13	To conserve and enhance landscape character and feature, the historic environment and cultural assets and their setting.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the Surrey Hills AONB and AGLV? ● continue to protect and/or enhance the District's cultural assets? ● improve equitable access to the District's cultural assets? ● protect Registered Parks and Gardens? ● preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas and their setting? ● conserve locally important buildings and townscapes? ● improve the quality of the historic environment? ● respect, maintain and strengthen local distinctiveness and sense of place? ● promote sensitive re-use of culturally important buildings, where appropriate? ● increase equitable access to the urban fringe?

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Objective Number	Objective	Decision Aiding Questions
14	To reduce the need to travel, encourage sustainable transport options and make the best use of existing transport infrastructure.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce congestion? • reduce the need to travel, especially by car/lorry? reduce the need for car ownership? • increase walking/cycling levels? • help provide walking/cycling/public transport infrastructure? • be accommodated within the existing public transport constraints? • reduce the need for road freight? • reduce the quantity of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere?
15	To ensure that the District adapts to the impacts of the changing climate.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help in protecting the community from the extremes of climate change? • increase the ability of the community to become more self sufficient, so as to withstand major weather events? • reduce the opportunity to adapt in the future? • help to prepare for the changing climate; and extreme weather events that are now occurring (storm and flooding events, heat and drought, and strong winds).
Sustainability Theme: Achieving a sustainable economy		
16	Provide for employment opportunities to meet the needs of the local economy.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide for the needs of economy, especially local business? • encourage diversity and quality of employment? • encourage rural diversification? • enhance the viability, vitality and attractiveness of urban centres and encourage their commercial renewal? • provide for the needs of business in urban and rural areas (such as range of premises, land, infrastructure and services)? • have a significant detrimental effect on the financial viability of delivering future employment development?
17	Support economic growth which is inclusive, innovative and sustainable.	<p>Will the option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage provision of jobs accessible to residents? • meet the needs for labour without increasing the need for travel? • provide for the needs of indigenous businesses and skills? • increase the likelihood of local jobs being filled by local people? • facilitate and encourage the building of a skilled local workforce?

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

Objective Number	Objective	Decision Aiding Questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promote lifelong learning and training, accessible to all? ● encourage mixed-use development?
Sustainability Theme: Prudent use of natural resources		
18	To achieve sustainable production and use of resources.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● help reduce the environmental impacts of products and services? ● help stabilise and / or reduce the District's ecological footprint? ● encourage self-sufficiency? ● encourage the use/supply of sustainable and/or local products/services? ● reduce the use of primary resources, or create markets for recycled materials? ● increase residents' awareness of the environmental impacts of their lifestyle choices? ● promote reuse and recycling of materials? ● help ensure that minimal non-renewable resources are used in construction? ● help minimise the "whole life cycle" use of natural resources? ● allow the efficient storage and collection of waste? ● facilitate the provision of additional sustainable waste management capacity, avoiding the need to landfill? ● allow waste to be managed close to where it arises? ● minimise the production of waste? ● safeguard water resources to maintain an adequate level of river and ground water?increase the demand for water? ● encourage water to be stored for re-use?
19	To increase energy efficiency and the production of energy from low carbon technologies, renewable sources and decentralised generation systems.	<p>Will the alternative / option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reduce the need for energy use? ● help to reduce fuel poverty? ● improve the energy efficiency of the building stock? ● support de-centralised energy generation?support the development of CHP? ● facilitate the generation/use of renewable energy? ● support the production/use of biomass? ● support the use of wind as energy? ● support the use of sun as energy? ● support the collection and use of organic waste as a fuel?

Table 4.1 The Revised Sustainability Objectives and Decision Aiding Questions

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

In earlier consultation with the east Surrey authorities English Heritage suggested the original decision aiding questions on cultural assets (in Objective 13) could be more specific. In particular the English Heritage guidance on SEA/SA suggests more refined questions which are likely to be more meaningful when assessing a policy or proposal against the sustainability objective than considering all cultural assets together. These suggestions have now been included. Amendments to the objectives and decision aiding questions suggested by Natural England and the Environment Agency in response to the consultation on the Scoping Report in February 2013 have also been added.

Potential Conflicts Within the Sustainability Objectives

- 4.9** The SA process is not a perfect mechanism. Within the process of considering alternatives and options there may be potential conflicts between the different objectives which will need to be given consideration when carrying out assessments.
- 4.10** The SA objectives have therefore been tested against each other to identify any potential conflicts and problems with the internal compatibility that may arise between objectives. The matrix, at Appendix 5, shows the internal conflicts of the 19 sustainability objectives used by the east Surrey local authorities. The possible conflicts between objectives have been identified as follows:
- 4.11** There are potential conflicts or problems with the compatibility of Objective 1 against Objectives 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 19. This is due to the potential impact the provision of new housing could have on the environment. Although these conflicts have been identified it may be possible they can be addressed, or partially addressed, through appropriate mitigation (for example: innovative design, sustainable construction, making efficient use of urban land).
- 4.12** Objective 4 to minimise the harm from flooding could potentially conflict with Objectives 1, 16 and 17 relating to housing development and economic growth. The introduction of appropriate mitigation measures could possibly offset any conflict.
- 4.13** In some instances the conflicts may be so strong that, in considering alternatives and developing policy options, choices would have to be made of the level of environmental damage that could be acceptable and which could not be mitigated. Indeed the SA may indicate that proposed levels of development would be unacceptable. The NPPF (para 14) states that development needs should not be met in full if the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In this regard sustainability appraisal can test whether development needs can be delivered and to inform decision making about such choices.

Reviewing the Indicators

- 4.14** The indicators used for each objective have also been re-assessed. The changes have resulted from the availability (or otherwise) of data and changing government policy in particular:
1. The lack of data for some indicators at the local, county and regional level such that retention of the indicator is not of value. This includes some indicators suggested by the statutory environmental consultees. The issue is not just whether data is available per se but also whether trend information, which helps assess whether sustainability objectives and development is being delivered, is available.
 2. The cancellation of the National Indicator (NI's) data set. Information from this source is now of limited value unless the Council has retained the indicator, and data collection for it's own monitoring purpose and / or whether the indicator has been retained in the Single List dataset.
 3. Similarly the Audit Commissions Quality of Life indicators is now no longer current.
 4. The cancellation of the Government Core Output Indicators required for Annual / Authority Monitoring Reports.

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

5. Indicators in the Core Strategy monitoring framework and Authority Monitoring Report which are now more appropriate.
6. There is now no single source of regional and local spatial monitoring data following the winding up of the South East England Planning Board.
7. Lack of monitoring information on a consistent basis from a range of other organisations and bodies means that trend information is not readily available.
8. Potential additional sources of baseline information including for example the Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Study and State of the Environment Reports (eg. Environment Agency) and through new "data observatories" (eg Surrey).

4.15 The full set of indicators are set out in the baseline table at Appendix 4. Monitoring of the indicators will include updating and reviewing the trend data in this appendix and incorporating specific indicators and data in the Authority Monitoring Report where this assists reporting the implementation of the planning policies.

The Sustainability Appraisal Matrix and Carrying Out Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.16** The suite of 19 sustainability objectives are to be used to assess the reasonable alternatives, options and goals or policy objectives for each plan. The use of a suite of objectives lends itself to a matrix based assessment where each alternative or option is "pitched" against each sustainability objective.
- 4.17** This approach was used for the Core Strategy SAR to assess each of the policy options. It is proposed that this matrix approach is retained.
- 4.18** The intention is to assess the "big picture" and significant effects of the sustainability issues related to each option rather than be bogged down in the detail. To assess the 'nature of the effect' of the individual SA objective on the proposed alternative or option a scoring system was devised through joint working with other local planning authorities in East Surrey to assess the likely effects of the policy options:

Symbol	Likely impact
++	Major Positive
+	Minor Positive
0	Neutral / negligible
-	Minor Negative
--	Major Negative
?	Unsure
N/A	Not Applicable
nc	No correlation

Table 4.2

- 4.19** The SEA Directive (Annex 2.2) indicates that the characteristics and effects on an area should be assessed with regard to the frequency, duration and cumulative nature of the effects. This has been addressed through the SA matrix as being short, medium and long term impacts. The assessment of

Developing the Sustainability Assessment Framework (Sustainability Objectives and Indicators)

cumulative (secondary and synergistic) effects could be identified in the 'commentary' column of the matrix. The outputs from each matrix table can then be compared to help decide the preferred options. Colour coding can be added to aid comparison and more easily identify positive and negative effects.

- 4.20** Depending on the reasonable alternatives available and strategic /policy options being considered this process could involve a significant number of matrices. It may therefore be appropriate to group similar themes within an option especially where the intention is to deliver a specific policy goal or objective. In this way the number of matrices and complexity of assessments can be reduced. Additionally matrices already completed for adopted plans, where they cover the same or similar issue as being considered for the new plan, may still be appropriate to use. This can assist with the avoidance of repetition of previous SA work; or may form the basis for a review of the option being assessed.
- 4.21** This approach was used for the Core Strategy where revised preferred options could be compared against previous assessments. The approach was also used for the Dorking Town Area Action Plan as the Council could point to the relevant appraisal matrix from the Core Strategy SAR where the broad policy approach had been addressed and to indicate that further assessment was not required.

Re-Assessing Sustainability Objectives

- 4.22** Should it be appropriate, in the future, to consider significantly revising the suite of sustainability objectives key consultees will be given the opportunity to comment again and asked to agree any such changes. This may be carried out as part of the joint working of the east Surrey authorities.

Using Sustainability Objectives to Assess Individual Sites

- 4.23** The Council has undertaken a number of "call for sites" exercises requesting information from landowners, developers and agents about sites which they consider may be appropriate for development at some point in the future. At the individual site level the sustainability assessment needs to be more specific so that it can be used to aid the Council's selection of specific sites. To ensure that this work is consistent with the overall sustainability framework the Council will use those sustainability objectives which lend themselves to use at the site specific level (Please see the Mole Valley Site Appraisal Toolkit for further information).

Using the Scoping Report for Future Plans

- 4.24** This Scoping Report has addressed the full range of SEA requirements and sets out the baseline, policy framework and context for the sustainability assessments of the local plan documents. This has also been undertaken within the wider scope of topics of sustainability appraisal. The document addresses the sustainability issues relevant to the District and can, in principle, be used as the Scoping Report for future local plan documents including Neighbourhood Development Plans. Where appropriate the Scoping Report will be updated to reflect the latest policy, baseline and trend information. Alternatively it may be appropriate, in conjunction with the preparation of individual plans, to prepare supplementary scoping report information relevant to that plan over and above that already contained in this document.

Next Steps

Chapter 5 Next Steps

- 5.1** This Scoping Report is a generic document for the preparation of all of the Council's "Local Plan" documents including Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 5.2** In addition to the information in this Scoping Report individual plan SA Reports will include:
- a detailed methodology of the SA process and how this has been used to compare and appraise issues and options against the sustainability objectives;
 - the testing of the specific plan alternatives and options against the sustainability objectives, and any refinements made to the plan as a result;
 - justification for the inclusion or rejection of options and any proposed mitigation measures: and
 - a non-technical summary.
- 5.3** The intention is for the SA Report to "tell the story" of how the relevant plan has evolved over time and to show that the final plan is the most reasonable alternative.

How is Sustainability Appraisal to be Carried Out?

- 5.4** The 5 east Surrey LPA's have worked together to develop and update the suite of sustainability objectives and to research the documents and compile the list of PPPSIs and their summaries. There is also sharing of information sources for the compilation of baseline data.
- 5.5** The most important part of this joint working is a peer review process. At key stages of plan preparation when it is necessary to carry out sustainability appraisal to assess a plan's alternative strategies, options, or policies this work is undertaken by two of the other authorities on behalf of the authority whose plan is being assessed. This provides a degree of independent assessment whilst using officers with a degree of local knowledge of the wider spatial context and an understanding of the policy framework. This peer review may be overseen by an independent consultant. Officers from the authority whose plan is being assessed are present to provide background and contextual information but cannot influence the results or outcomes of the scoring of the assessments; though they may suggest mitigation measures. In some instances, when operating in a tight time frame an authority may use an external consultant only. In rare instances they will carry out the assessment themselves but then ask for the results to be verified by the other authorities.
- 5.6** This process has worked well for several years and, early in its implementation, had been commended as good practise by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE).
- 5.7** Where SA of a very local document (for example an action area or town centre plan) is being carried out then it may not be practicable to use the peer review process as the local knowledge of individual sites would not be known to the other east Surrey authorities. In such cases, for example an assessment of the sites submitted in response to a "call for sites" exercise, this would be undertaken by the officers responsible for the plan preparation. However the expertise gained in carrying out other appraisals will be used to ensure the assessment is rigorous and robust and the outcomes are consulted upon.

The Scoping Report, Sustainability Appraisal and the Land Allocations Plan / Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs)

- 5.8** In this first instance the Scoping Report forms the initial stage in the assessment and appraisal of the Land Allocations Plan and any NDPs.

- 5.9** The Core Strategy identified a main built up areas first approach (ie previously developed land first) as the most appropriate reasonable strategic alternative but acknowledged that elements of the other alternatives may be required to deliver sufficient housing.
- 5.10** The approaches for the overarching spatial strategy for the District were identified as:
- Alternative 1 - Concentration - make provision for new development only on previously developed land within the built-up areas.
 - Alternative 2 - Expansion - make provision for new development on greenfield sites on the edge of the main built-up areas.
 - Alternative 3 - Dispersal of Expansion - make provision for new development on greenfield sites on the edge of larger rural settlements as well as on the edge of the main built-up areas.
- 5.11** Alternative 1 - Concentration, was identified as the most sustainable option through the SA / SEA process. This has led to a spatial strategy based primarily on the option of 'concentration' (ie development within the main built-up areas) in the Core Strategy. However, to ensure the strategy was robust and flexible in meeting the District's development requirements, the spatial strategy also includes elements of the 'expansion' and 'dispersal of expansion' options.
- 5.12** Core Strategy Policy CS1 'Where development will be directed' (Spatial Strategy) seeks to deliver this strategy based on Alternative 1 as the most reasonable alternative. The policy directs development and growth principally to the most sustainable locations in the District's built-up areas and that if there is insufficient land, provision will be made by extensions to the built-up areas and the larger rural villages. As the Land Allocations Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plans are intended to help deliver the Core Strategy the strategic spatial approach does not need to be subject to new appraisal.
- 5.13** In allocating sites for future development the Council will ensure that the principle of the spatial strategy of the Core Strategy is followed. On this basis sites allocated for development will firstly be those within the existing built-up areas. However it is clear that there are insufficient sites available in the built-up areas to meet the Council's housing requirement and therefore the Council will follow the 'expansion' and 'dispersal of expansion' approach where sites are allocated outside the built-up area boundaries. As it is considered that the amount of land required to be allocated in the Land Allocations Plan and through NPDs will result in a need to remove land from the Green Belt it will be appropriate to carry out SA of broad locations around the main built-up areas and larger rural villages as well as individual sites. It may also be appropriate to assess the cumulative impacts of developing such broad locations and sites.

Sustainability Appraisal and new Local Plans

- 5.14** The Council will have to address the principle of meeting development requirements in full (as set out in the NPPF) through a new or revised Core Strategy (ie a Local Plan) in due course. This may result in higher housing requirements and could require the re-consideration of the three strategic alternatives and a full sustainability appraisal assessment. Indeed the amount of additional new development necessary to meet revised requirements may itself be an influencing factor on the preferred strategy of a new plan. It will be the role of the sustainability appraisal process to assist the identification of the most appropriate spatial strategy given all the requirements which the new plan will have to meet and the degree which mitigation can off-set potential harm.

Next Steps

Appendices

5.15 The following appendices contain information on how the SA process complies with the European SEA Objective, more details on the policies, plans and programmes influencing the preparation of the plan, the baseline data, and the internal compatibility of the sustainability objectives. Appendices 2 to 5 are published separately.

Appendix 1 Compliance with the European Objective

Requirement of the SEA Directive	Where this has or will be met
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	This will form part of the relevant sustainability appraisal report
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Scoping report (and possibly to be summarised as part of the sustainability appraisal report)
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Scoping report
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	Scoping report
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Scoping report
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	Scoping report – and possibly to be summarised as part of the sustainability appraisal report
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme	This will form part of the relevant sustainability appraisal report
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken	This will form part of the relevant sustainability appraisal report

Compliance with the European Objective

Requirement of the SEA Directive	Where this has or will be met
including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	
i) A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10	This will form part of the relevant sustainability appraisal report
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	This will form part of the relevant sustainability appraisal report

Schedule of Policies, Plans, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (Separate Document)

Appendix 2 Schedule of Policies, Plans, Programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (Separate Document)

2.1 Please see separate document.

Short Summary of the PPPSI's (Separate Document)

Appendix 3 Short Summary of the PPPSI's (Separate Document)

3.1 Please see separate document.

Appendix 4 Baseline Information (Separate Document)

4.1 Please see separate document.

Sustainability Objectives Compatibility Matrix (Separate Document)

Appendix 5 Sustainability Objectives Compatibility Matrix (Separate Document)

5.1 Please see separate document.