

8. Training and Guidance for Officers and Members

- 8.1 As part of the Brief for this research, RBBC requested advice on the need for internal guidance and training in relation to design and parking standards in the Borough. Comments made at the officer workshop suggest that there is scope for additional training for the development control team. In addition, a report from the Borough Tours illustrated the issues that Members sometimes experience in conceptualising development proposals, and underlined the need for Member training.
- 8.2 It is our experience, from working with other Local Authorities, that training tailored to the needs of the officers and Members is beneficial in ensuring that all are able to make competent recommendations and decisions on planning applications. Officers and Members should be equipped with a good knowledge base of planning policy and legislation, this should be supplemented and updated as new legislation and policy is published. It is also important to strengthen knowledge through regular topic based training activities to enhance the understanding of planning issues by individuals and groups.
- 8.3 The kinds of training and guidance that are typical within Local Authority Planning Departments are set out below, many of which may already be used at Reigate and Banstead.

Training and Guidance for Development Control Officers

- 8.4 The development control officers may find the following types of training and guidance useful:
- Topic based workshops and training sessions, titles could include:
 - Introduction to Design Principles;
 - Housing – Urban and Rural;
 - Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - Design in the Development Process;
 - Design at Appeal;
 - Density and Design;
 - Parking Standards, Considerations and Design; and
 - Master Planning.
 - Supplementary Planning Document workshops – Short workshops can be arranged to discuss the main points raised in the guidance. This is especially useful when new SPD's are adopted, as it will ensure that all officers are aware of the new document and its content.
 - Internal Guidance Notes – These can be used to ensure that all officers are aware of new legislation and planning policy.
 - Internal Topic Guidance Notes – These notes would guide Officers on the generally accepted ways of dealing with policy issues within the Council, for example, the sub-division of properties into smaller units.
 - Development Control Meetings – It can be useful to have time at the end of Development Control meetings to discuss contentious sites to attempt to reach consensus within the team of the recommendation that should be made. Development Control meetings can also be a valuable time to have guest speakers from other Council sections to give short talks on their work, for example, the Planning Policy Officer could attend to discuss the progress with the Local Development Framework and the Conservation Officer could be present to discuss new Conservation Area Appraisals that they are compiling.

Training for Members

8.5 Members often come from a background outside of planning and therefore need to be provided with a broad knowledge base of the planning system, legislation and policy. In addition regular training to refresh and supplement their knowledge is essential. The following may assist in Member training:

- Basic Training – All new Members should be provided with basic planning and design training courses. Additional courses should be provided periodically to update Councillors on new policy and legislation. The RTPI offers in-house elected member training on a wide variety of topics, for example:
 - Development Control Basics – This workshop includes training on the definition of development and permitted development; changes of use and the Use Classes Order; Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas; enforcement; who decides planning applications; and pre-application discussions;
 - Making a Decision – This workshop investigates issues such as; how applications are decided; the role of the Development Plan; materials and non-material considerations; Officer's recommendations; site visits; conditions and reasons for refusal; and planning obligations; and
 - Design Considerations – This workshop covers design considerations that feed into the design of a development, such as; sustainable development; scale, layout, density, landscape, open space, parking; and sources of design advice..
- Borough Tours – These are already undertaken at Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and are considered to be very useful. They are useful in showing members schemes which are considered successful and those that are less so. It is also important for Members to revisit schemes that have been controversial in order that they can assess whether they feel that the developments are successful; and
- Topic based workshops / training sessions – Members could attend workshops to provide training and discussion of issues such as design, density and parking. In addition, if particular issues arise at Committee Meetings, then these could too be the subject of a workshop.

Policy and Guidance Checklist

8.6 Keeping up to date with new policy and guidance can be a challenge given the volume of new policy that is produced and the time pressure officers and Members find themselves under. It may be useful to have an on-line summary of policy and guidance, with links to the relevant policy documents. This would provide a single reference point for offices and Members, setting out the policy hierarchy. Figure 8.1 illustrates the format the summary could take.

8.7 It would be particularly important to keep this document updated as new policy supersedes existing policy documents. When retained in an up-to-date condition then this checklist would enable officers and Members to quickly and easily visualise the policy framework and would allow them to directly link to policy documents.

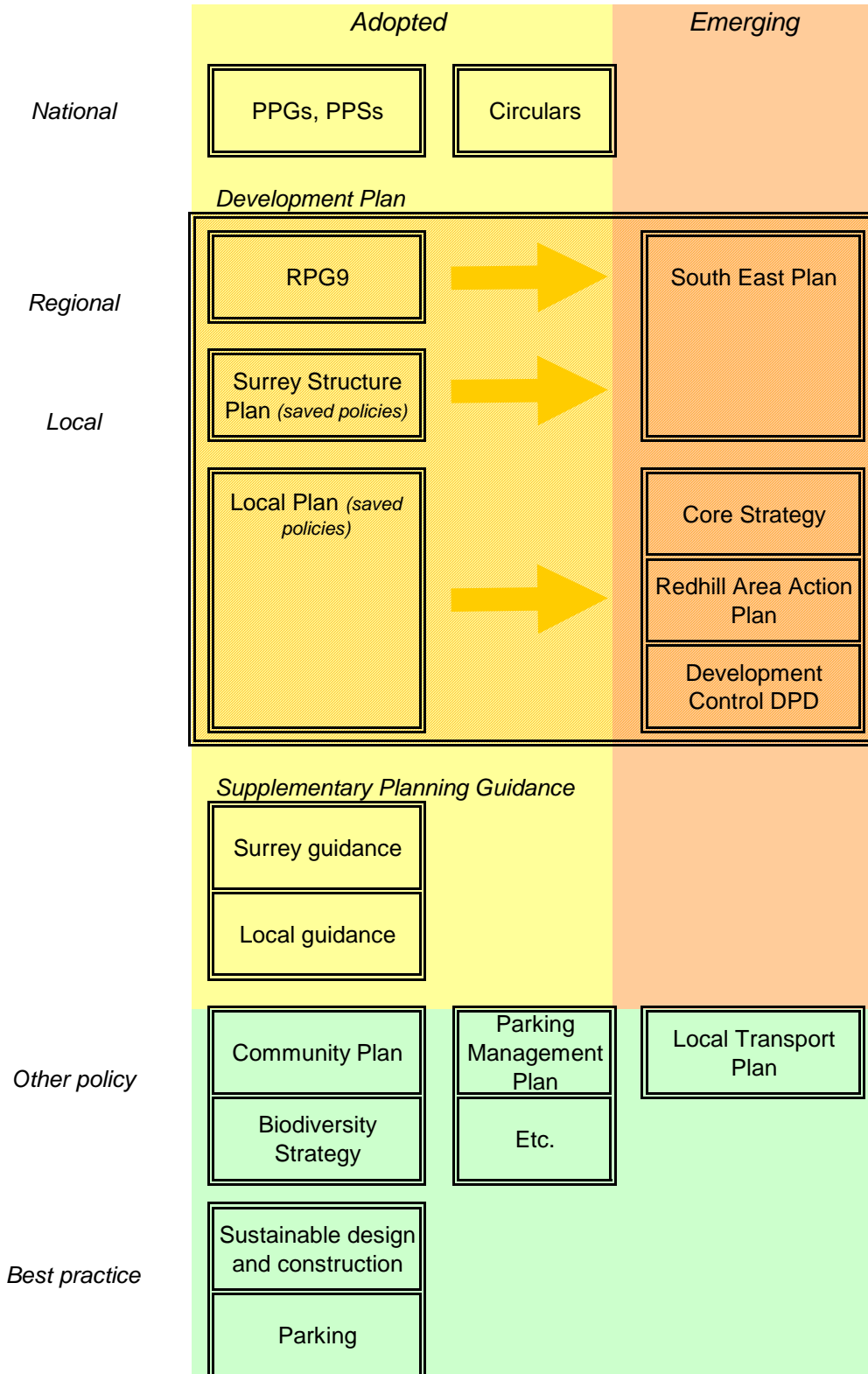
Communication

8.8 Although not strictly a training issue, it is essential that Officers and Members communicate effectively in order that fully considered decisions are made on planning applications. It can be useful to encourage officers and Members to meet to discuss potentially controversial applications before they are called before Planning Committee, this can enable the officers to explain the reasoning behind the recommendation made on an application. This type of activity can be formalised in a procedure note if required.

Pre-application discussions

- 8.9 Pre-application meetings between officers and developers are essential to allow discussion of the design aspects of a development prior to the finalisation of the proposal. These meetings provide the opportunity to ensure that developers are aware of the Council's design aspirations for the site, and allows for planning officer's comments to be integrated into the final design to aid the production of acceptable forms of development. Comments made at the officers workshop indicate that these are already a useful tool in encouraging high quality design, and they may be an area to which additional resources could be fruitful devoted.

Figure 8.1: Indicative Policy Summary



9. Study Findings and Recommendations

Introduction

- 9.1 This section brings together the key findings of the study and sets out recommendations for policy and next steps.

Towards a Design Policy

Background

- 9.2 National policy encourages a design-led approach to creating high quality environments. Following on from this basic principle, national policy seeks to make the most of the opportunities a site offers. The overriding importance of good design is emphasised, rather than just an approach which seeks to avoid harm.
- 9.3 The emphasis on good design in national policy is further explained by the requirement to *respect* rather than *replicate* local character. Good design is seen as being capable of overcoming issues related to increasing the intensity of development. The analysis of appeals has shown that schemes need not mirror existing building sizes, spaces or lines. Instead, inspectors tended to give weight to the appearance of the scheme from the street. Some aspects of adopted local policy appears to be out of step with this emerging national approach, including Ho13 and the Local Distinctiveness Guide, which tend to favour replication of existing conditions in some instances. Policy needs to be updated to take on board national guidance.
- 9.4 National policy encourages local planning authorities to define the key characteristics which contribute to the character of the area to help developers to understand how to respond positively to the opportunities offered by a site. The Local Distinctiveness Guide is useful in this respect, and the first phase of the LTCDDPA provides further assessment of the Borough's character in some locations. The Local Distinctiveness Guide could be updated to improve and elaborate on the descriptions of character areas.
- 9.5 There is increasing emphasis on sustainable building design and construction within national and regional guidance, as well as growing expertise and best practice in this area. Local policy needs to be updated to reflect this.
- 9.6 The Core Strategy provides the framework for the Borough's design policies. A range of preferred policy approaches are most relevant as follows:
- Preferred Policy Approach 2: Sustainable Development Principles – which sets out criteria for all development including making efficient use of land and protecting and enhancing the quality of the natural and built environment and respecting local character;
 - Preferred Policy Approach 6: Sustainable Construction – which sets Code for Sustainable Homes and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards for development;
 - Preferred Policy Approach 7: Development, Protection of Character and Heritage and Urban Design - which highlights the need for high quality design in all developments and the aim of making the best use of sites; and
 - Preferred Policy Approach 12: Strategic Local of Housing – which considers density and character and states that housing density ranges will be formulated for urban areas.

Recommendations for Design Policy

- 9.7 The overall aim is to develop a suite of design policies which provide clear guidance to developers on how to deliver high quality design, including responding positively to the local context. The

design policies should be effective tools for discouraging or refusing applications which do not make most of the opportunities that sites within the Borough offer.

- 9.8 As set out above, the Core Strategy will provide the overarching design policies. The Core Strategy policies will evolve as the Strategy progresses through the plan-making process. As these policies evolve, there will be a need to develop careful policy wording to ensure that policies are clear, consistent and comprehensive. References to SPDs can be clarified and rationalised as the Core Strategy progresses.
- 9.9 Sitting below the Core Strategy, the Development Control Development Plan Document will provide the opportunity to set out more detailed design policies which articulate particular design issues and considerations. These could include:
- Protecting, respecting and enhancing local character;
 - Requirements relating to built form such as dwelling types and mix and space standards for residential accommodation;
 - Requirements for landscaping and open space;
 - Density levels; and
 - Requirements for alterations and extensions.
- 9.10 Supplementary guidance in the form of SPDs can then be used to provide further guidance on detailed design-related issues. The current Local Development Scheme indicates the preparation of a Graduated Density and Character and Design Guide SPD. This preparation of this SPD provides the opportunity to update the Local Distinctiveness Guide to conform with the new national policy context, as well as introducing graduated density standards for the Borough (see below for further detail). Key elements of this work are likely to include:
- Strengthening the analysis of the key characteristics of the Borough's character areas drawing on the work done in the LTCDPA and any supplementary work as required;
 - Replacing references to reflecting local built form with explanation of respecting and enhancing character;
 - Emphasising a positive approach to development and encouraging developers to make the best use of sites, including encouraging urban renewal and suburban renaissance;
 - Incorporating and strengthening guidance on sustainable design and construction and use of renewable energy;
 - Including further guidance on materials and window detailing; and
 - Reviewing and updating guidance on householder applications.

Towards a Graduated Residential Density Policy

Background

- 9.11 PPS3 sets out the factors to consider when drafting density policy which include the spatial vision for the area, the capacity of infrastructure, the need to use land efficiently, accessibility, the character of the area and high quality design.
- 9.12 Analysis of planning data has shown that there is a general relationship between residential density in development permissions and accessibility. Schemes in more accessible areas have tended to have higher densities and vice versa. However, there is also very wide variation in density, including within neighbourhoods and local areas. The density ranges experienced are much broader than those typically reflected in density policy. The planning application analysis indicates that densities of the following order have been achieved in the various PPAs over the last 5 years:

- Redhill town centre (PPA 1): average of around 200 dwellings per hectare, with schemes ranging from around 50 to over 400 dwellings per hectare;
- Horley and Reigate town centres and approx 10 min walk-in catchment Redhill town centre (PPA 2): average of around 50 dwellings per hectare, with schemes ranging from around 10 to over 200 dwellings per hectare;
- Banstead and approx 10 min walk-in catchment of all smaller centres (PPA3): average of around 30 dwellings per hectare, with schemes ranging from around 1 to 60 dwellings per hectare;
- Rest of the urban area (PPA4): average of around 20 dwellings per hectare, with schemes ranging from around 1 to 60 dwellings per hectare; and
- Rural Area: average of around 10 dwellings per hectare, with schemes ranging from around 1 to 40 dwellings per hectare.

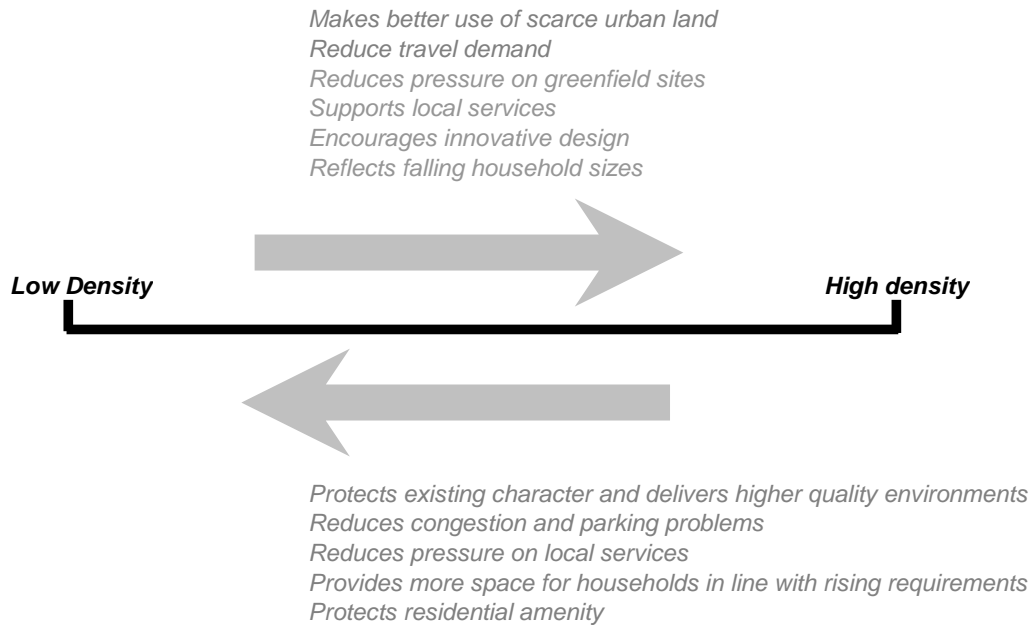
- 9.13 This variation is reduced somewhat for large sites, although the ranges achieved for sites over 0.4ha are still very broad, and legal advice has cautioned against an approach to density which applies to larger sites only.
- 9.14 The case studies have explored areas where the analysis of planning applications showed significant variety in permitted residential densities. The case studies identified that the immediate site context is the most powerful factor in determining the form and density of development. The Borough is composed of a complex patchwork of different forms of development, with spacious lower density areas abutting tightly packed terraced streets. Responding to this variety leads, in part, to the variation in densities observed.
- 9.15 Site-specific characteristics also have a role to play, including site size, other uses on the site, landscaping, access and topography. Conversions, both changes of use and subdivisions, place particular constraints on schemes. These factors combine to influence the design solution for a site.
- 9.16 However, while the form of development is constrained and guided by these factors, there is also an element of choice, particularly for larger schemes, in terms of how they are developed. A large plot may be developed, for example, to deliver a large detached house or a block of flats. Both schemes could be designed to respect the local area's character. We might expect that when a site is located within a more accessible area (e.g. close to one of the Borough's main town centres), that the development solution selected would be the block of flats. Similarly, when the site is located in more a peripheral area (e.g. on the edge of the urban area), we might expect the site to deliver a large, single unit. The case studies show that the solution delivered is not always of a density one might expect for a particular location. Single detached houses have been built on sites close to town centres, while large flatted schemes have been constructed in outer urban areas.
- 9.17 The case studies suggest that while there is a need for density policy to be flexible to reflect the variation in character that is evident in the Borough's urban areas and to allow scope for designers to cope with site-specific constraints, there is also scope for encouraging a more consistent approach to density and accessibility. A graduated density policy which is clearly rooted in consideration of accessibility can help to make the link between the intensity of development and the proximity of local services and availability of sustainable travel modes.
- 9.18 Density can be seen, to a large extent, as an output of the design process rather than a key driver. Density policy needs to be sufficiently flexible to allow designers to develop high quality solutions for sites under a design-led approach.
- 9.19 The research carried out for the (then) DETR explored how density policies operate in the UK.¹⁸ The research explored different ways of controlling density. Dwellings per area is the most commonly used measure, except for in London where habitable rooms are also used. The

¹⁸ The Use of Density in Urban Planning (DETR, 1998)

research showed that density expressed in either of these measures does not provide as a reliable guide to either built form or the amount of development as plot ratio (when combined with other measures such as site coverage and building height).

9.20 The research highlighted the competing theories on the impact of increasing densities, and many of the perceptions highlighted have also been identified by officers in the workshops that have been carried out for this study. Figure 9.1 seeks to summarise the competing issues.

Figure 9.1: Issues Relating to Increasing and Reducing Densities



9.21 The DETR’s research concludes that increasing densities, can, in some types of location, deliver a range of benefits. These are locations where:

- There is spare capacity in local facilities (e.g. in shops, employment, leisure). [The same would logically apply to areas where these facilities are growing and can therefore support additional people]; and
- Where people can walk to at least local facilities and public transport.

9.22 Conversely, the research indicated that increasing densities in areas where these conditions do not exist will increase the number of people who are car dependent. The research also found that the most significant savings in terms of use of land are made by avoiding development of 20dw/ha or less.

9.23 The research also found that density policy is often used to meet a range of objectives, many of which are often better met by other, more focused policies and approaches. These include maintaining character and securing good design. Density policy can, however, be effective, in reducing travel demand and promoting the economic use of land.

9.24 PPS 3 sets a minimum standard of 30 dwellings per hectare, and the South East Plan sets an overall target of 40 dwellings per hectare. Recent permissions within the Borough have produced development with an average density of only 27 dwellings per hectare, a little below the national minimum and considerably below the South East Plan target. This highlights the need to increase densities in the future. Directing development to Redhill town centre will be an important factor in increasing densities of new development within the Borough.

9.25 Conversely, the appeals analysis has demonstrated the principle of developing at lower densities (less than 30 dwellings per hectare) in a range of locations within the Borough. This is based on

the need to respect the character of the area and the low density nature of much of the existing urban area. National policy provides scope for planning for lower densities, provided this can be justified.

Overall Approach

- 9.26 The findings of this study point towards a density policy approach which should:
- Be overtly design-led rather than led by defined density levels. The approach should be to set out a design policy which has density as a component;
 - State the dual aims of making better use of urban land and respecting local character, and recognise the possible conflicts between them;
 - Provide guideline density ranges based on accessibility, but clearly explaining that these are a *starting point* for designers, rather than a rigid standard;
 - Apply the density ranges to sites of all sizes, for new build schemes and conversion (both subdivision and change of use); and
 - Set out the criteria which will be used in assessing the proposed densities of planning applications. These are likely to be:
 - Respecting and enhancing the character of the local area and promoting local distinctiveness;
 - Responding positively to the opportunities offered by the site and achieving high quality design; and
 - Making best use of the site given its accessibility.

Graduated Density Standards based on Accessibility

- 9.27 Figure 9.1 sought to illustrate the concerns that influence density policy. The subsequent paragraphs indicated that different approaches are likely to be appropriate in different locations, depending on the characteristics of the area. Table 9.1 seeks to set out an approach to density policy for Reigate and Banstead, with different approaches for different areas based on their accessibility, but also taking into account character, development opportunities and the broader policy approach.
- 9.28 Most of the indicative density ranges are expressed in dwellings per hectare, as is current practice. However, Table 9.1 suggests a different approach for RASCs and Conservation Areas outside town centres. These areas are typified by large dwellings built in spacious plots with high quality, mature landscaping. They are the locations where the quality of the residential environment is highest, and where there is the greatest need for new development to respect and enhance the townscape character. In these locations, it is therefore suggested that density policy could be expressed in terms of plot ratio, site coverage and building heights. This would provide the Council with stronger control over built form in these sensitive locations, and provide guidance on issues such as the relationship between built form and amenity space, building height and massing. Further study will be required to explore the practicalities of implementing this approach.

Table 9.1: Graduated Density Standards based on Accessibility

Location	Development potential	Broad Policy Objectives	Accessibility	Suggested Approach
Redhill town centre	Key regeneration area with a range of substantial development opportunities	Regeneration of the town centre and enhancement of the quality of the environment	PPA1 Regional town centre providing a wide range of jobs and services. Public transport hub offering the Borough's highest levels of accessibility	Higher density development, tall buildings in appropriate locations. Indicative density range 80dw/ha and above. Could be accompanied by plot ratio guidelines for non-residential development
Reigate town centre	High quality mixed use town centre substantially covered by Conservation Areas. Development opportunities are generally limited	Focus on preservation and enhancement of townscape character	PPA2 Large town centres and the immediate walk-in catchment of Redhill town centre. Good public transport accessibility with access to a network of bus routes and rail services	Medium-higher density development with a guideline densities of over 50 dw/ha
Horley town centre	Regeneration area with a range of development opportunities	Regeneration of the town centre and enhancement of the quality of the environment		
Close walk-in catchment to Redhill town centre	Residential and employment areas which have delivered substantial development in recent years. There may be further potential in the future	Protect and enhance higher quality areas, improve lower quality areas		
RASCs and Conservation Areas outside town centres	High quality, low density residential environments with limited development opportunities	Focus on preservation and enhancement of townscape character	PPAs 3 and 4 Inner and outer residential areas with moderate or low public transport accessibility	Possible use of plot ratio, site coverage and building heights – further work is required, including to establish existing densities
Banstead town centre	High quality mixed use town centre – development opportunities likely to be limited	Focus on preservation and enhancement	PPA3 Smaller town centre in close proximity to suburban bus and rail. Walk in catchments of large town centres	Medium-higher density development. Indicative densities of 30dw/ha in outer areas up to 80dw/ha Banstead town centre and
Close walk-in catchment to	Largely consolidated	Protect and enhance higher		

Location	Development potential	Broad Policy Objectives	Accessibility	Suggested Approach
Banstead, Reigate and Horley town centres, wider walk-in catchment to Redhill	residential areas with variable townscape quality. Development potential generally likely to be limited	quality areas, improve lower quality areas	with moderate public transport accessibility	close to Reigate and Horley town centres and railway station. Lower densities may be appropriate in some locations to protect and enhance townscape
Preston and Merstham	Low quality environment with opportunities for development to deliver development and environmental improvements	Regeneration of the area and enhancement of the quality of the environment	PPA 4 Outer residential areas with low public transport accessibility	Lower density development, indicative minimum of 30 dw/ha up to 50 dw/ha. Lower densities may be appropriate in some locations to protect and enhance townscape
Other urban areas	Largely consolidated residential areas with variable townscape quality. Development potential generally likely to be limited	Protection and enhancement of higher quality areas, improvement of lower quality areas		
Rural areas	Development potential likely to be limited	Protection and enhancement of rural areas	Rural areas	Low density development, indicative minimum 20 dw/ha. Lower densities may be appropriate in some locations to protect and enhance townscape

- 9.29 The implications of the density levels suggested above need to be tested as follows:
- In detail in Redhill through master planning process; and
 - More broadly Borough-wide through application to the new housing allocations from the emerging South East Plan, and transport and infrastructure modelling.

Parking Policy

Parking Management and the Parking Management Plan

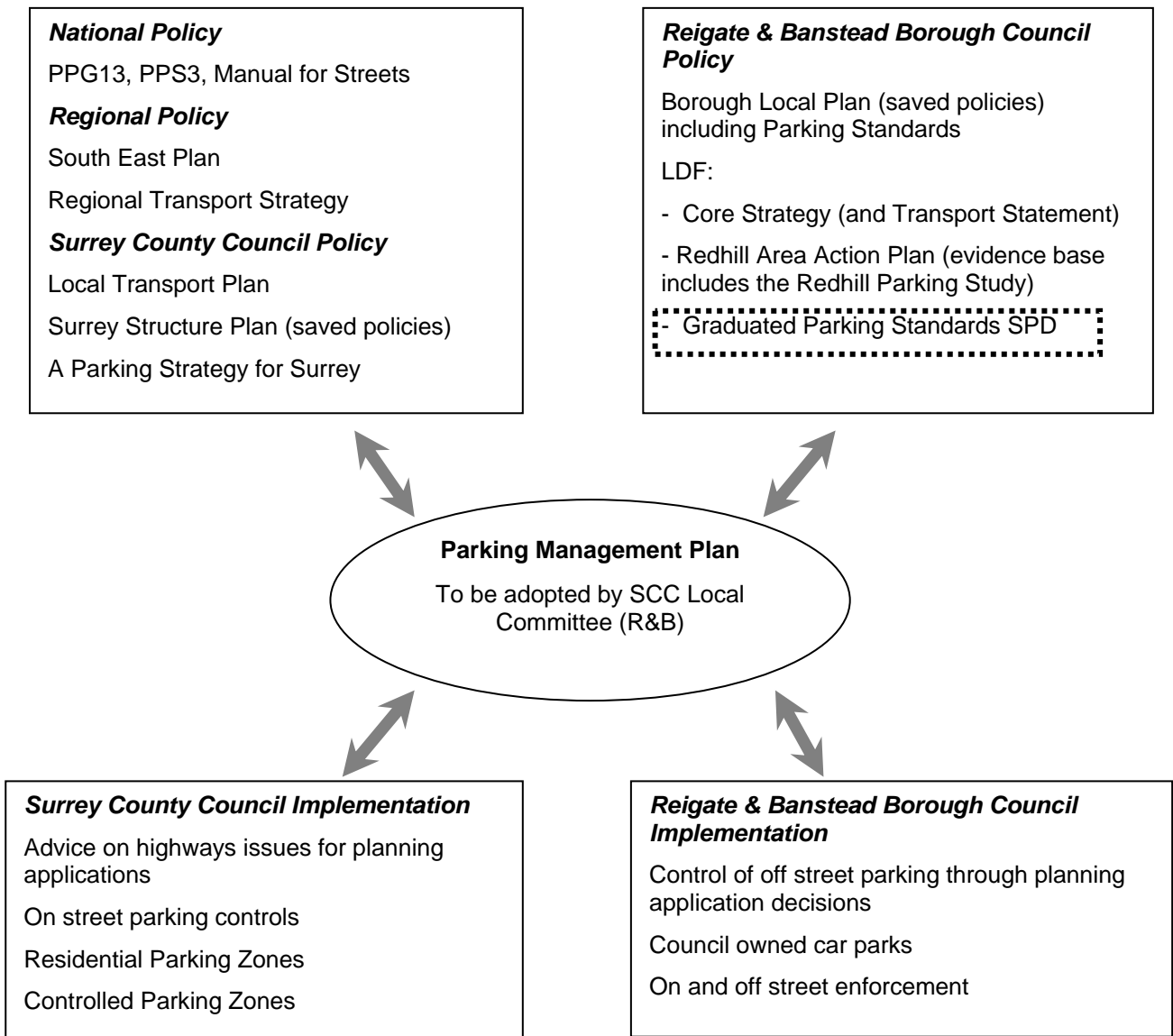
- 9.30 Throughout this study, the need to consider parking management in a holistic way has been highlighted. Officers from both the County and Borough Council's have stressed the need to consider off-street parking provision in the light the availability of parking supply on street and in public car parks, parking enforcement and the availability of other travel modes. Planning policy setting standards for parking provision for residential development is just one part of a suite of

policies, plans and programmes which have an impact on parking within the Borough. The Parking Management Plan potentially provides a key tool for co-ordinating the various strands of policy and activity, as shown in Figure 9.2.

9.31 SCC's Parking Strategy¹⁹ defines the role of Parking Management Plan as setting out a co-ordinated approach to all aspects of on-street and off-street parking management and acknowledging the different roles and responsibilities at Borough and County levels. Parking Management Plans should set out the other elements in the 'package' of parking controls that will be appropriate for different PPAs in the Borough including:

- Information dealing with the supply and demand of all types of parking in the study area;
- The identification of priorities for short stay parking and parking that impacts upon town centres and economic policies;
- Measures for controlling, charging, regulation and management of car parking spaces;
- The identification of transport policies required to implement parking measures; and
- A timetable taking into account public transport improvements.

Figure 9.2: Parking Policy and Implementation and the Role of the Parking Management Plan



¹⁹ A Parking Strategy for Surrey (SCC, 2003)

- 9.32 It is recommended that the Parking Management Plan be progressed as a two part document – the first part setting out the principles of parking management and explaining how the various elements of parking control fit together, and the second part being a regularly updated action plan. The Parking Management Plan provides the opportunity to pull together all the disparate strands of policy and activity related to parking, and to define a clear, co-ordinated approach.
- 9.33 The Parking Management Plan will consider a wide range of measures related to parking. This study has covered a number of these as follows:
- Management of parking supply – this includes consideration of the overall supply of car parking in different locations and how it is used. Key issues include:
 - A review of the charging regime for public car parks which is currently leading to spare capacity in many of the Borough's car parks, while at the same time nearby streets are experiencing parking stress. The review should also consider other factors which may be influencing car park usage such as the location of car parks, maintenance and availability of alternative parking;
 - Review of on-street parking restrictions, with an initial focus on extending comprehensive controls in Redhill town centre and surrounding area;
 - Better information for motorists about parking availability such as a real-time space availability information provided at entry points to the town;
 - Measures to use parking supply more efficiently such as sharing of spaces between different uses which require parking at different times of the day;
 - Measures to reduce demand for parking spaces and encourage travel by other modes including:
 - Promotion by the Council of Travel Planning as part of the planning application process and also through voluntary methods. This push should include workplace, residential and school Travel Plans to tackle a wide range of issues that are contributing to existing parking problems. This could include taking financial bonds through the planning application process to encourage businesses and developers to work towards targets set in Travel Plans. Any bond money that is kept by the council should be spent on encouraging travel by sustainable modes;
 - Encouraging businesses in the Borough to include smarter working techniques such as car sharing, pool cars, home working and flexible hours as part of their standard business practices;
 - Charging work place parking levies on employers in the Borough spending any profit on travel by sustainable modes;
 - Recommending that developers, particularly of flats and apartments, sell parking spaces independently of the flats to make potential purchasers examine whether they really need a parking space or not;
 - Encouraging car clubs in all new developments;
 - Investment in public transport including a focus on initiatives such as demand responsive buses which are often viewed by the public as more practical than standard bus services;
 - Encouraging travel by foot and cycle by promoting cycle/footways that are available in the Borough as well as maintaining them to a high standard; and
 - Targeted marketing campaigns should be produced by the Borough to provide residents and businesses with all the information they need about parking in the Borough and sustainable modes of travel, for example service timetables or ticket prices.

Towards Graduated Residential Parking Standards

Background

- 9.34 The basic approach set out in PPG13 of maximum parking standards and using parking policy, combined with other planning and transport policy, to encourage sustainable transport choices remains current. PPG13 recognises that there are greater opportunities to reduce parking standards in locations with good accessibility by non-car modes.
- 9.35 However, PPS3 has introduced a more flexible approach to residential parking standards. The requirement to achieve an overall maximum level of provision of 1.5 spaces per unit has been removed, as has reference to parking standards related to the accessibility of the location. The new approach requires local planning authorities to consider levels of car ownership, design and the need to use land efficiently in the setting of residential parking standards.
- 9.36 Thus while SCC's approach to graduated parking standards set out in their adopted Strategy is broadly in line with current policy, the application of the suggested percentage reductions in parking standards for different PPAs may be overly prescriptive in the light of PPS3 and the South East Plan. A more locally tailored, flexible approach can be applied.
- 9.37 Overall parking provision has been broadly in line with national policy, with an average of 1.3 spaces per unit provided overall, less than the 1.5 spaces envisaged by PPG3.
- 9.38 The data has shown that there is a general relationship between parking provision in development permissions and accessibility. Schemes in more accessible areas have tended to have lower levels of parking and vice versa. This theme is reflected in the Census data, which shows a broad relationship between accessibility levels, car ownership and travel mode in the Borough. Households living in the most accessible locations tend to have lowest levels of car ownership and are most likely to travel to work by sustainable modes. Average figures for the different PPAs indicate a reduction in car ownership in the PPAs as accessibility increases.
- 9.39 However, there is very wide variation in parking provision in permitted schemes, including within neighbourhoods and local areas. The ranges experienced are much broader than those reflected in SCC's parking strategy, as shown in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2: Summary of Parking and Car Ownership Data for PPAs

	Average % of maximum parking standard developed in recently permitted schemes	Range of parking provision in recently permitted schemes (% of max standard)	Average no of cars owned per household 2001	Relative car ownership compared with PPA4
PPA1	50%	0-100%	0.9	60%
PPA2	70%	0-200%	1.2	80%
PPA3	90%	0-300%	1.4	80%
PPA4	100%	0-400%	1.5	100%
Rural Area	150%	30-400%	1.7	110%

9.40 The variation in parking provision within PPAs is reduced somewhat for large sites, although the ranges achieved for schemes of over 20 units are still very broad, and legal advice has cautioned against an approach to parking provision which applies to just larger schemes. The same legal advice also expressed concern about the exclusion of residential development outside town centres from maximum parking standards.

9.41 The case studies explored the issue of variation in parking provision in detail and concluded that the level of parking provided on a site appears to be most strongly influenced by the form of development, nature of the plot and the design solution for the site, rather than by considerations of likely levels of car use, accessibility and availability of sustainable travel modes. The introduction of a graduated residential parking policy will have an important role in helping developers, architects and designers to make the link between parking provision, accessibility and broader transport issues.

9.42 There is a remarkably strong relationship between dwelling size and car ownership in the Borough, indicating that the size of dwelling should be a consideration in determining parking provision. The relationship between socioeconomic group and car ownership indicates a possible need to provide higher levels of parking in more affluent areas. Conversely, lower car ownership levels in less affluent areas emphasise the need to focus public transport investment to serve these locations, particularly where they are in less accessible areas – notably Preston and east Merstham.

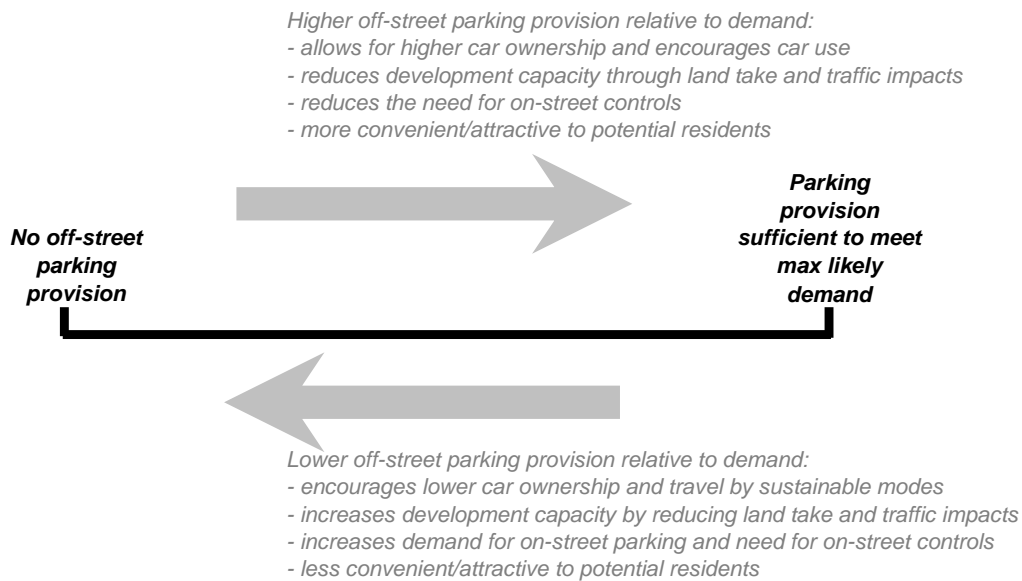
9.43 The study has also highlighted the need to take a design-led approach to provision of car parking space. Key issues include integration with the public realm and creating streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.

Towards Setting the Standards

9.44 Overall, the data clearly points towards graduated parking standards, with lower off-street provision within the more accessible areas such as the main town centres, and higher provision in the less accessible areas like rural areas. Within this overall approach, what might the right level of parking provision be in each location? In setting off-street residential parking standards, we are trying to balance two potentially conflicting considerations:

- Using reduced off-street car parking provision as part of a comprehensive set of measures to encourage sustainable transport choices and making best use of urban land; and
- Providing sufficient off-street parking to meet likely demand and ensuring that people do not park on-street creating problems relating to street character, function and safety.

9.45 Figure 9.3 seeks to illustrate the issues as they are typically perceived.

Figure 9.3: Issues Related to the Level of Off-Street Parking Provision

9.46 In determining parking standards, a balance needs to be struck between the competing concerns. For any given location, this balance will be influenced by two key factors:

- The alternative modes of travel available; and
- The feasibility of controlling on-street parking to ensure that street character, function and safety are not undermined.

9.47 Where both these factors exist, there is a sound basis for reducing off-street car parking provision below levels which demand might suggest, combined with on-street controls. Where they do not, it appears less reasonable to expect a significant reduction in car ownership/use and reduced off-street parking provision.

Suggested Approach

9.48 Drawing on the above discussion, the suggested approach to residential parking standards is as follows. Throughout the Borough, off-street residential maximum parking standards should be set at a level likely to satisfy the average demand for car ownership in the relevant PPA. The idea is to use residential parking policy to match parking provision to accessibility, car ownership and availability of alternative travel modes, while encouraging sustainable transport choices by setting the *maximum* parking level at the *average* level of demand for car ownership for the PPA. Recent research for the Department of Communities and Local Government²⁰ provides a method for assessing demand for car parking which may be useful in calculating local levels of car parking demand for the PPAs. The approach involves taking estimated car ownership levels for 2026 (generated using the Department for Transport's forecasting programme TEMPRO), adding the additional demand for parking created by allocating spaces to particular residential units and adding an allowance for visitor parking. This approach will generate graduated parking standards for the Borough, based on accessibility.

9.49 The suggested exception to this approach is Redhill town centre and its walk-in catchment where the maximum standards could be set at a lower level than average demand would imply, and should be combined with comprehensive on-street controls. This approach is possible due to the relatively high accessibility to jobs, services and public transport which Redhill town centre offers, and the planned regeneration of the centre which provides the opportunity to implement comprehensive on-street parking controls and improve provision for sustainable travel modes.

²⁰ Residential Car Parking Research (DCLG, 2007)

The significant development opportunities in Redhill town centre mean that there will be opportunities to secure funding through planning gain to implement a range of improvements, including on-street parking controls and improvements to sustainable travel. The work carried out to date on the Redhill Town Centre Parking Strategy suggests that such an approach will be required if the centre is to accommodate the level of development currently being planned without unacceptable impacts on the transport network.

9.50 A summary of the approach is set out in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 Approach to Graduated Residential Parking Standards

Location	Relative accessibility and alternative modes of travel available	Feasibility of on-street controls	Average car ownership per household 2001	Suggested maximum parking standard
Redhill town centre	Very good – PPA1	Good – regeneration of the centre and new development forms the introducing further on-street controls	0.9	Lower than demand – level to be determined by master planning process
Walk-in catchment for Redhill town centre	Good – PPA2	Good – regeneration of the centre and new development forms the introducing further on-street controls	1.2	Generally lower than demand – level to be determined by master planning process
Reigate town centre	Good – PPA2	Current issues – attempts to introduce a RPZ in the past have not been supported and have failed	1.2	Set at a level to match likely average car ownership. Potential for reduction in standard in the future combined with the introduction of new on-street controls
Horley town centre	Good – PPA2	Successful recent implementation of CPZ related to Gatwick airport.		
Rest of the urban area	Moderate/poor – PPA 3 and 4	On-street controls only feasible in limited areas to address particular issues	1.4/1.5	Set at a level to match likely average car ownership

9.51 As Table 9.3 shows, the conditions for substantial reductions in parking provision below likely levels of demand currently considered to exist principally in Redhill. However, it is possible that improvements in sustainable travel modes and the local acceptability of comprehensive on-street controls will mean that this type of approach could be applied in other locations in the future. Horley town centre, which has a wide range of redevelopment opportunities and the recent experience of the successful implementation of a CPZ, could be the next location for the implementation of this type of approach. The Council's regeneration team may be able to advise on the timeframe and potential for substantially reduced parking standards and extended on-street controls as part of a broader approach to parking management in Horley.

- 9.52 We recognise that maximum parking standards are unlikely to be appropriately applied to schemes which involve the development of large dwellings in spacious plots. The landscaping schemes in these instances often have the potential for parking a number of vehicles, and we do not suggest attempting to restrict this. The suggested approach is to minimise this form of development, and to guide it to the most appropriate locations, as set out in the discussion of density policy above. The maximum standards are likely, therefore, to principally apply to schemes involve the delivery of residential units with up to three bedrooms.
- 9.53 Outside Redhill in the areas identified as suffering from parking stress, there is a need to ensure that new development does not exacerbate the situation. In these locations, the council should ensure that planning applications with parking provision that is lower than that which is likely to be required should be accompanied by a parking accumulation study. This study should show the current levels of parking stress and suggest measures to help reduce this and ensure that the development will not have a negative impact. Within Redhill and its walk-in catchment, the intention is that comprehensive on-street controls, combined with other elements of a parking strategy, will ensure that areas currently suffering from parking stress are effectively managed, and that new development does not exacerbate on-street issues.
- 9.54 It is suggested that the standards are expressed as maximum standards for each location. Parking provision lower than the maximum standard is likely to be acceptable if:
- The location is relatively accessible – the PPAs, particularly PPAs 3 and 4, cover large parts of the Borough with varying levels of accessibility. For example, PPA 3 includes areas close to Reigate and Horley town centres and railway stations. These locations are relatively accessible, and thus provision below the maximum standard is likely to be acceptable;
 - The area is not currently suffering from parking stress and the development is not likely to have an adverse impact on on-street parking;
 -
- 9.55 The maximum standards should apply to all sites, new build and conversions.

Next Steps

- 9.56 This research study has covered a range of topics with implications for various further activities as follows:
- The study has highlighted the need to progress the Parking Management Plan. The study has underlined the potentially pivotal role of this document in bringing together the various strands of parking management;
 - The research has made the case for the development of graduated density policy. The suggested density levels need to be tested and refined in the light of the Borough's revised housing allocation from the South East Plan, the emerging spatial plan and results of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (when completed). The implications of the proposed densities on the transport network and other infrastructure (including health, education and recreation facilities) will need to be explored. For Redhill, various development options for the town centre are being explored through the master planning process. This detailed process can be used to inform a graduated density policy for the Borough;
 - The research has also made the case for graduated residential parking standards and a suggested approach has been set out. Further work will be required to calculate the appropriate levels of parking provision for each PPA. For most the Borough, this can be done on the basis of information of likely levels of car ownership. However, for Redhill town centre and the surrounding area, the master planning process will be key in informing the level of residential parking provision which can be accommodated;
 - The recommendations can then be developed into draft SPDs for public consultation. This will need to be done in the light of evolving policy for the Core Strategy, and will also need to consider the likely policy framework to be provided in the future by the Development Control

Policies DPD. The current Local Development Scheme envisages these documents are prepared and consulted on in 2009, with adoption programmed to coincide with the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010, although this timetable is currently being revised. It appears possible that the programme for the SPDs could be advanced somewhat if required. Legal advice should be taken to confirm the acceptability of this route if early adoption of the SPDs is pursued. Preparation of the draft SPDs will involve further background work and analysis to pick up issues not covered by this research.