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REIGATE AND BANSTEAD LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS DESIGN GUIDE

Foreword

Reigate and Banstead is a distinctive Borough. It contains three main geological areas which historically have provided contrasting building materials together with a range of tree and shrub types, leading to its varied landscape character.

The Borough also fringes London, resulting in grand homes built in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for city businessmen, and stretches right down to the Sussex border.

There has been much concern in recent years about Britain's "one design fits all" approach to development. This Guide, which also contains a Guide to Householder Extensions and Alterations, is the Borough Council's response to that concern, and comes at a time when there are ever more demands nationally for additional housing.

I urge all those involved in the design process, whether their proposals require planning permission or not, to use the Guide so that the Borough's distinctiveness is reflected in their proposals.

Councillor Allen Kay
Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Part 1 Introduction

Foreword

The purpose of this Guide is to promote better standards of urban design for residential and mixed use developments in the Borough of Reigate and Banstead (Figure 1.1). It supplements the principles set out in national guidance and amplifies the Structure and Local Plan design policies. The Government's policy for design in the planning system is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 General Policy and Principles (PPG1) and expounded further in other PPGs. The challenge in PPG1 is clear: "good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be encouraged everywhere".

This Guide has been produced by the Borough of Reigate and Banstead in association with Atkins Consultants. The process has been a collaborative effort involving Councillors, Residents Associations and Amenity Groups.

Status

The Guide has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by the Council after full public consultation. As such it constitutes a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Purpose of the Guide

This Guide provides guidance on how specific types of development

can be carried out in accordance with the Local Plan policies. The Guide identifies:

- Common design failings;
- Analyses character types and general design principles;
- Outlines and illustrates design solutions.

In addition to the above, the document provides:

- A consistent approach to assessing planning applications;
- Illustrations of how new development can be designed to reflect local distinctiveness while responding to national policy.

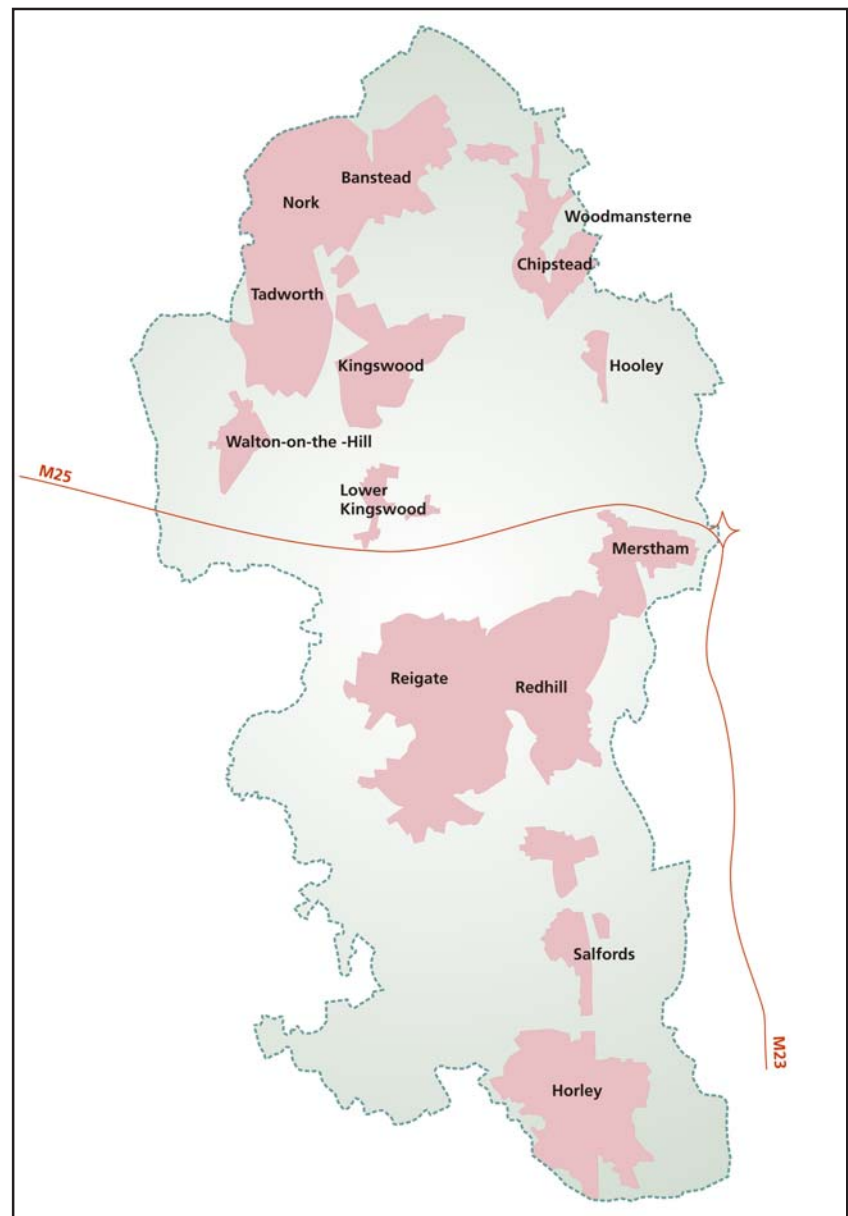


Figure 1.1

Background

The Borough of Reigate and Banstead comprises a number of towns and villages set within attractive countryside, stretching either side of the North Downs escarpment. This pleasant environment, which adjoins Greater London to the north and Gatwick Airport to the south and is crossed by the M25 and M23 motorways, results in considerable development pressures.

The Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance the character of the area and the level of amenity currently enjoyed by residents in the face of these pressures and states that within areas in which development is acceptable, the impact of a proposal on the surrounding area, including its effect on local character, will be of paramount concern.

Policy Context

Local authorities operate the planning system within a framework of policy set by central government. The planning system itself is one of many influences on the design of buildings and spaces. Achieving good design requires an understanding of these influences and an appropriate response.

National Planning Guidance

National planning policy guidance is mostly in the form of Planning Policy Guidance, or Statements (PPGs), issued by the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions and need to be considered.

The issue of design is covered primarily in PPG1, although most PPGs/PPSs provide some guidance.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG)

RPG9 for South East was adopted in March 2001. It addresses design by emphasising regionally important design issues to which local authorities should respond.

Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft December 2002

Policy SE4 - Design and the Quality of Development, states that development will be expected to contribute to improvements to the quality of urban and rural areas, whilst retaining features that contribute to sense of place.

The Surrey Design Guide provides strategic design guidance. It also provides technical information relating to road layouts, parking, highway requirements, home zones, lighting, sustainable drainage systems and energy efficiency in new developments. The guide and general principles are intended to provide an overview and complement Reigate and Banstead Design Guide which more fully reflects local circumstances.

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 1994 and First Alteration Deposit Draft 2000

The Local Plan provides a comprehensive framework for guiding and controlling development. It sets out the overall design policy framework (and other considerations) against which the

local planning authority will assess development proposals and provides the policy foundation for supplementary planning guidance. Advice should be sought from the local authority Policy and Environment Department in relation to whether a site falls within a designated area such as a Conservation Area. In addition advice on Tree Preservation Orders and protected hedgerows can be provided.

All new development should provide a Design Statement which should be prepared in accordance with the 'Householder Extensions and Alterations Guide'.

Horley Design Guide

Horley Design Guide Draft (SPG) provides guidance on the design and layout of some 2,600 dwellings in Horley after 2001. This document should be read in conjunction with the Reigate and Banstead Design Guide.

Contents of this Document

Part 2 explores local distinctiveness and character setting the framework for development within a clear understanding of the Borough's geology, landscape character and their influence upon built form. This section also sets out the key periods of historic development of the Borough's settlements.

Part 3 provides an understanding of the different character areas which relate broadly to the successive trends in the development of the Borough over time and their key features and the issues faced.

Part 4 provides a broad outline of relevant design guidance, with reference to current best practice.

A number of case studies have been incorporated in Part 5 to illustrate good design scenarios which might apply to one or more of the character areas identified. Finally advice on the implementation of the guidance within the context of a planning application is provided in the Appendices.

How to Use This Guidance

This Guide is intended as a useful source of information to all involved in the development process. It seeks to supplement Local Plan Policies and should therefore be used in conjunction with the Local Plan. The Guide is not intended to be prescriptive and cannot substitute for the use of qualified architects, landscape architects, planners and urban designers. It sets out principles within which design creativity can be explored.

