

Planning for the Future : Update

Introduction

Our recent consultation 'Planning for the Future – Issues and Options' has helped us to identify a range of options for the development of the Borough over the next 20 years. These will be published in our next consultation 'Preferred Options' which will be available from 31 May 2006 for 6 weeks (11 July 2006 will be the closing date for comments.)

What you told us

In 'Planning for the Future', local residents and people who work in the Borough or visit it for shopping or leisure activities were all asked for their views on:

- What makes the Borough a good place to live/work/shop
- What most needs improving and;
- Preferred options for the future development of the Borough

We had 402 responses in total, of which 265 were received on-line. We also held 3 workshops in Banstead, Horley and Reigate. As a result of these responses the following issues and options were raised:

What makes the Borough a good place to live/work/shop?

- Sense of community
- Open spaces, parks, heath, Green Belt and AONB
- Education facilities
- Clean and tidy streets and town centres
- Accessibility to, not only London, but also the coast and other beautiful countryside

What most needs improving?

- Public transport and traffic congestion
- Provision of affordable housing
- Design of new housing developments
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Mix of uses in the town centres to ensure vibrancy
- Facilities and activities for teenagers and the elderly
- Sporting facilities

Preferred options for the future development of the Borough

- Build high density housing in appropriate locations
- Protect the Green Belt
- Protect and enhance the character of the Borough
- Provision of more affordable housing, to reflect housing need
- Better infrastructure and community services, ensuring new developments pay for new services
- Development of recycling and renewable energy technologies as well as more environmentally responsible design
- Increase the capacity and quality of road and rail infrastructure as well as minimising car use in new developments
- Continue to focus regeneration initiatives in areas such as Redhill town centre (which will have its own Area Action Plan) and other Borough housing estates.

Moving forward

These comments, together with the South East Plan and other guidance, have helped us to produce our 'Preferred Options' consultation. Our preferred options have been put into topic areas:

- Overall vision and spatial objectives
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure
- Built and Natural Environment
- Transport
- Economy, Regeneration and Skills
- Redhill Town Centre

Each topic will contain the issues identified, responses to the previous consultation and the wider policy context and proposed preferred options. This document is starting to build up more detail about our preferred approach and we will be seeking support for the strategic direction we have proposed.

Following the consultation on our preferred options we will begin preparing our submission Core Strategy and Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan, which will contain draft policies. When the documents are submitted for Independent Examination, expected to be in November 2006, there will be a further consultation period. We aim to adopt in December 2007.

What is the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy will deal with the big, strategic planning issues that face the Borough. It will not be concerned with individual development sites or detailed specialist policy areas – its purpose is to set the overall framework for the future.

The Core Strategy will make clear links with the Community Plan, showing how planning policies and the use of land will help achieve key targets in the Community Plan.

The Core Strategy will ‘join up’ town planning and land use issues with plans and strategies that deal with community issues such as health, safety, housing, employment, community development, education, transport, the environment and regeneration.

What are we doing about Housing Allocations? The Core Strategy will not contain any detailed site specific housing allocations, nor will there be a site specific housing allocations development plan document (DPD). This is because of the current projected oversupply of housing against current Structure Plan requirements. Only the strategic approach that the Borough Council is taking to the location of future housing will be part of the Core Strategy. The Borough Council believes it will be possible to meet future housing targets taking into account existing planning permissions, current regeneration plans (in Horley Town Centre, Redhill Town Centre, Preston and Merstham) and projected windfall sites.

If you do have a potential site (that falls outside of our regeneration areas) our existing strict policies for countryside sites will continue to apply and sites in the urban area will be subject to close scrutiny, having regard to existing character and other factors.

Next Steps

Dates of Consultation: 31 May – 11 July 2006. The preferred options consultation will be available on our website www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk, as well at local libraries, our help shops and at the Town Hall. We will be writing again to our statutory consultees and those of you who have asked to be kept informed when the document is available.

Play Mayor

We have teamed up with EA games to produce an interactive game that helps you understand how difficult it is to build your own town, but will help you to think about the issues facing the Borough. As in real life every decision will have a consequence and you will be able to see how the challenges facing the Borough might be met. Visit www.playmayor.com to play the game and then go through our options and fill in our questionnaire to tell us what you think about them.

Seminars

Similar to last time, we will be holding a series of preferred options seminars to help us to explain these and receive your views. The seminars will be at:

- Banstead Day Centre Friday 16 June
registration 9:45am, for 10am – 12.30pm
- Horley Town Council Monday 19 June
registration 9:45am, for 10am – 12.30pm
- Redhill, Harlequin Wednesday 21 June
registration 6.45pm for 7.00pm – 9.30pm

If you would like to attend a seminar - please contact Debbie Halley on 01737 276206 or e-mail LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk by **2 June 2006**.

If you have a query about the LDF process – please contact Joanne Capper on 01737 276214, Caroline Keogh on 01737 276208, or email LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk.