

2 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the policy context in which the Preston Area Regeneration Masterplan has been prepared, drawing in particular on the following documents:

- Surrey County Council's Structure Plan;
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's Local Plan;
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's Corporate Plan; and
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Community Plan.

2.2 SURREY STRUCTURE PLAN

Surrey Council Council's Structure Plan was adopted in 1994 and was then reviewed to reflect changing lifestyles and government policy. The deposit draft was published in December 2002, the examination in public took place towards the end of 2003 and proposed modifications were published in 2004. The plan was then officially adopted on 4 December 2004. The Plan replaces the 1994 Surrey Structure Plan, covering housing provision for the period up to 2016, in line with the requirements of RPG9, but is intended to set out the broad land use strategy (the Spatial Strategy) for Surrey for the longer term.

The County Council views co-ordination of different policy areas as key to achieving the objectives set out in the plan and as such encourages partnership work between all agencies and organisations responsible for planning and investing in areas. The focus of Surrey's Structure Plan is new development and provision of major services and functions in urban areas. Through this, the Council hopes to build up a network of town centres that are well integrated through vehicular and public transport connections.

Additionally, the Council aims to ensure that new housing development provides a mix of size and type and addresses local needs, including the need for affordable and key worker housing. This translates as an affordable housing target of 40% under Policy DN11 of the Plan that incorporates the proposed modifications following the examination in public.

All new developments should manage change to ensure that development enhances the economic, social and environmental well being of the area. This means that the rate and scale of development should deliver the necessary infrastructure, service and environmental improvements. Development should also be integrated and community focused, reflecting the priorities of Community Strategies as well as good planning principles. In order to achieve these, the key spatial and land use priorities affecting the Preston area, which are defined in the Structure Plan, are to:

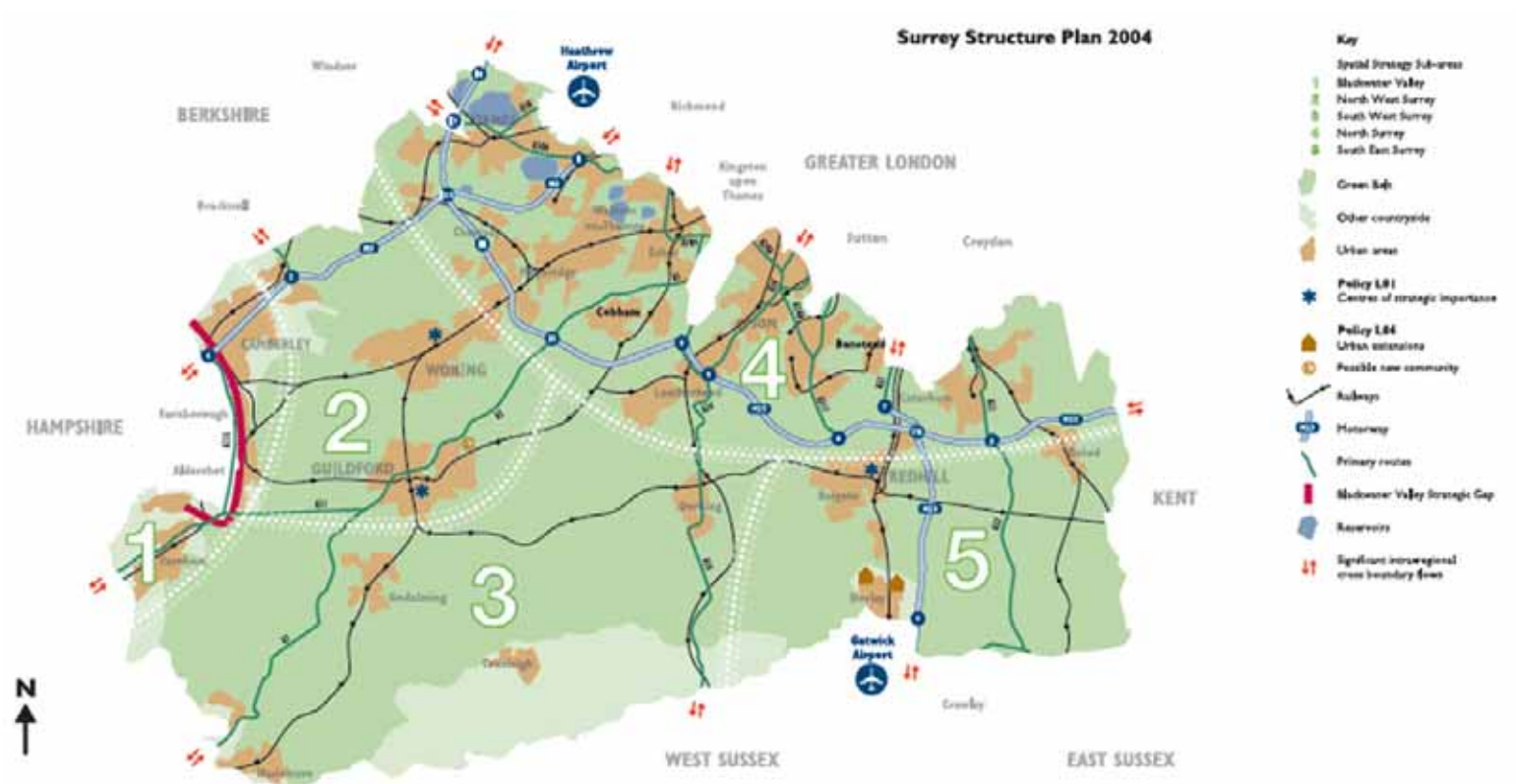
- protect and enhance open land and green corridors;
- improve the quality of urban design and public spaces for aesthetic and environmental reasons, and to deter crime and increase safety;
- support higher density developments in accessible locations where it can make a positive contribution to enhancing local character;
- ensure that new housing development provides a mix of size and type and addresses local needs, including the need for affordable and key worker housing;
- ensure that development is supported by adequate infrastructure, community facilities and services;
- adopt a more flexible approach to mixing different land uses; and
- promote development and investment in existing built up areas.

The plan also outlines a specific spatial strategy for the north Surrey region, which includes the Preston area. Within the area, Epsom is considered to be the major centre, although Leatherhead will receive investment for revitalisation. The primary aims for this area are to resist the outward spread of London and further urbanisation and to improve the quality of life and environment within existing urban areas

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and the urban fringe. The key priorities affecting Preston are to:

- restrict development to the re-use of previously developed land and buildings;
- retain and improve the quality of all urban open land and urban fringe countryside;
- consolidate the existing role of Epsom as a major centre, recognising the limited opportunities for it to expand; and
- support investment in public transport infrastructure to improve orbital movement, access to London and Heathrow Airport.



Key Diagram, Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft 2002

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2.3 REIGATE AND BANSTEAD LOCAL PLAN

Together with the Structure Plan, the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan forms the statutory development plan for the area. Adopted in 1994, the Local Plan has now been partially amended by the Adoption of the First Alteration in April 2005.

The Local Plan seeks to restrain development in the area by preventing the outward spread of London and limiting development to existing built areas. Key objectives that impact upon the Preston area are to ensure that developers make adequate provision for the impact upon the infrastructure and amenities in the local area and to ensure, where appropriate, a significant degree of planning benefit from major developments.

The Local Plan gives priority to the provision of affordable housing and small dwellings. The De Burgh site was identified as a potential housing site which was safeguarded in order to meet longer term Structure Plan housing requirements. This approach has been rolled forward in the alteration to the Plan. Affordable housing policy is set out under Policy HO 2 whereby on sites of one hectare or more, or twenty-five units or more it is the Council's intention to secure a proportion of 25% of the total number of units proposed with the majority consisting of social housing for rent.

There are several land allocations relevant to development in the Preston area. Burgh Heath and Epsom Downs located either side of the area form part of the Metropolitan Green Belt. The larger areas of open space within the built-up area, the recreation ground, the allotments, Pit Wood, the school playing fields and the consecrated burial ground are all allocated Urban Open Land under Policy PC 6. The cluster of business uses located on Waterfield form an allocated employment site under Policies EM 8 and EM 9 as such in the Plan. Enhancements to Banstead Sports Centre are supported under Policy RE 10.

2.4 CORPORATE PLAN

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's latest Corporate Plan runs from 2006 until 2009 and outlines the Council's vision for the future. The Council is dedicated to achieving sustainable, thriving and self-reliant communities within an attractive, accessible and well-maintained Borough. The Council will do this by:

- Caring for our local environment,
- Creating a small number of new communities and regenerating those which need improving,
- Tackling social issues that matter to local people, and
- Ensuring that the Council is well managed and provides value for money.

The themes for the Plan are set out below.

Caring for our Local Environment

The Council aims to protect and enhance the local environment and to play a part in the sustainable use of resources, reducing waste, using energy efficiently and improving air quality. Protecting the Green Belt, preserving and enhancing local character and making sure that the streets and public places are kept clean will maintain an attractive area.

Regeneration and New Neighbourhoods

Although a thriving area with high levels of employment, some areas of the Borough suffer from deprivation. The Council is committed to transforming these and other areas which need investment. This means making the town centres more successful and attractive in the face of increasing competition elsewhere and transforming some of the run-down housing areas. The pressure for new housing and a strong economy set the context for the Council's regeneration programmes. The Council is determined to ensure that these pressures benefit the Borough, using new housing to help deliver self-reliant and thriving communities and new development to attract businesses and shoppers to the town centres.

The Council's aim is to ensure that residents and businesses benefit from economic prosperity, whilst ensuring areas retain their character and attractiveness.

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Self Reliant and Thriving Communities

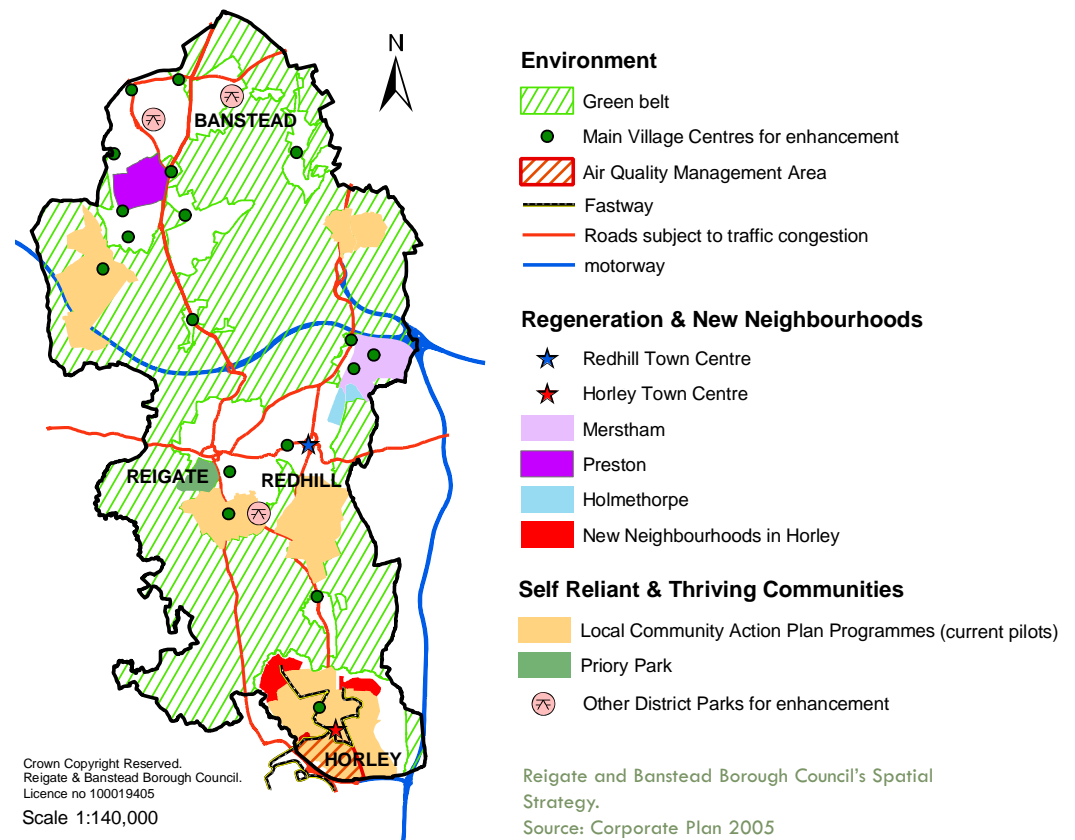
Self-reliant and thriving communities are those which are prosperous, and have local people who are willing and able to work together to help themselves and their area. They are characterised by low crime levels, services focused on community needs and have access to a range of leisure, cultural and sporting facilities. In developing plans to foster self-reliant and thriving communities the Council will have regard to the needs of all groups, including older people, youth, ethnic and the disabled. Whilst the Council wants to see a wide range of facilities for local people, it recognises that it is not necessarily the best provider in all circumstances. The private and voluntary sectors may be better able to deliver some services. The Council will support the delivery of these quality of life themes through the creation of a more effective Council organisation aimed at providing value for money.

Preston

The Corporate Plan recognises Preston as a key area for regeneration and the need to focus on working in partnership to secure the implementation of plans. Under the themes of Regeneration and New Neighbourhoods and Self-reliant and Thriving Communities, the Corporate Plan sets out commitments to ensure that new housing is used to address inequalities in Preston and facilitate new community and sports facilities, including as priorities improving the physical environment of the housing estate to assist in tackling social problems.

Spatial Strategy

The Spatial Strategy of the Corporate Plan outlines the regeneration objectives of the Council and its partners for the coming years. The majority of the strategic transport initiatives are to take place further south in the Borough but Preston is highlighted specifically on the map for an Area Action Plan. This is outlined in the Reigate and Banstead Spatial Strategy map.



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2.4 COMMUNITY PLAN

The Community Plan for Reigate and Banstead establishes a community vision for the Council and its partners to improve the quality of life in the borough over the next 15 years. The Plan summarises the needs and priorities for the future and establishes clear targets to monitor progress towards these. The vision has been informed by consultation with residents of the Borough and will be implemented in partnership with public sector agencies, voluntary and community groups and the business sector.

The vision of the report is contained within nine key objectives:

Caring for the Environment

Providing a clean, safe and well designed environment for all to enjoy both now and in the future

Raising levels of learning and skills for work

Providing lifelong opportunities to continue learning and gain new skills

Making it easier to find out about services and how to get help

Ensuring everyone can easily access information and help when they need it

Tackling traffic problems

Providing an efficient, affordable and practical transport network

Providing facilities/opportunities for young people

Improving life-chances for young people in the Borough

Providing low-cost housing

Enabling people to live in affordable, good quality local accommodation

Creating a safe place to live, work and visit

Making Reigate and Banstead a safer and more pleasant place to be

Helping older people to stay independent

Allowing older people to stay independent and healthy through community based services

Helping families with young children

Co-ordinating and improving the provision for families

Within the objectives outlined, the partners have committed to a number of actions that are targeted specifically at Preston:

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Support the development and implementation of an action plan following the "Communities that Care" study in Preston (a programme for building safe communities where children and young people are valued and encouraged to achieve their

potential involving both communities and professionals working in the area).

HOUSING

- The rationalisation of public landlords in Preston ward.
- Discuss the possibility of a small-scale voluntary transfer with social landlords in Preston (currently over 8 operating in the ward) and consult relevant tenants on options to transfer to an alternative landlord.

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

- Support all eligible families living in the Sure Start area in Preston by providing a 24-place integrated care and early education facility (with toy library and outdoor play area) for children aged 2-4 years and ensure that children's social and emotional development is fostered appropriately.
- Promote the well-being of parents and children through extending the HomeStart visiting programme for an additional 10-12 families, a young parents support group and a drop-in coffee shop for advice.