

Development Management Plan Regulation 19 Consultation Fact Sheet

Sustainable Urban Extensions

This note covers:

- Sustainable urban extensions sites

DMP objective	Sustainable urban extension sites	Document Ref
Objective PS3: Allocate sites for development across the borough consistent with the Core Strategy and sustainability principles	ERM1 – Land at Hillsbrow, Redhill	Theme 3, Section 3 Pages 107-116
	ERM2/3 – Land west of Copyhold Works and Former Copyhold Works, Redhill	
	ERM4a – 164 Bletchingley Road, Merstham	
	ERM4b – Land south of Bletchingley Road, Merstham	
	ERM5 – Oakley Farm, off Bletchingley Road, Merstham	Theme 3, Section 3, Pages 122-129
	SSW2 – Land at Sandcross Lane, South Park, Reigate	
	SSW6 – Land West of Castle Drive	
	SSW7 – Hartwood Nursery	
	SSW9 – Land at Dovers Farm, Woodhatch, Reigate	Theme 3, Section 3, Pages 139-144
	NWH1 – Land at Meath Green Lane, Horley	
	NWH2 – Land at Bonehurst Road, Horley	
	SEH4 – Land off The Close and Haroldslea Drive, Horley	

Context

National policy requires local authorities to plan to meet housing needs within their area. The Council's Core Strategy includes a housing target for Reigate & Banstead of 460 homes per year. This is lower than Government projections of housing need in the borough, but recognises local challenges and planning constraints.

The Council's priority is that new housing development should take place in existing towns and villages. However suitable sites for new housing within the borough's urban areas are becoming more scarce.

The Core Strategy therefore identifies some areas around the edges of our towns and villages where new 'urban extensions' should be provided when suitable urban sites start to run out. The Development Management Plan must be more specific about where these urban extensions will be and what they will include.

In preparing the DMP, the Council will need to make difficult decisions about where new homes should go. However, if the Council does not identify development sites in the plan, it is more likely that planning inspectors will take control out of our hands and decide for us where future development will be located.

DMP policy starting point

The starting point for the approach to sustainable urban extensions is:

- [National planning policy](#) which seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing and sets out that development should be focused in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable.
- The Council's adopted [Core Strategy](#) which plans to deliver at least 6,900 new homes between 2012 and 2027 and identifies four areas around the edges of the borough's towns where the Council will look for potential development sites to help meet this requirement if insufficient sites are found in existing urban areas. These areas are:
 - Around Horley
 - East of Redhill
 - East of Merstham
 - South West of Reigate
- The Core Strategy also provides a series of criteria against which to assess the suitability of potential development sites. It recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, land may need to be removed from the Green Belt for new homes.
- The development sites identified are based on the findings of the [Sustainable Urban Extensions Technical Report](#) which assesses the sustainability of different parcels of land within the broad areas of search for development, taking account of a wide range of constraints. Planning issues that were considered include:
 - Heritage
 - Landscape and views
 - Topography
 - Nature and biodiversity
 - Trees and hedgerows
 - Public rights of way
 - Land use e.g. recreation
 - Flood risk
 - Water quality issues
 - Air quality
 - Agriculture
 - Noise pollution
 - Land contamination
 - Distance to shops, jobs and services
 - Road access
 - Public transport options
- To inform this report, a [Green Belt Review](#) has also been prepared which considers the importance of different areas of land in preventing settlements sprawling or merging, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and preserving the setting and character of historic towns.

Urban extension sites

Further details about individual sites can be found in the Redhill, Merstham, Horley, and South Park & Woodhatch fact sheets, available [here](#).

South Park & Woodhatch:

- Four sites providing approx. 395 new homes (on land currently in the Green Belt) in an extension to the existing community
- Could include retirement housing and / or self-build opportunities
- Accompanied by high quality public open space, and new community / health facilities
- Improvements to Woodhatch junction likely to be required

Merstham:

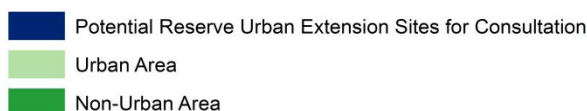
- Three sites providing approx. 145 new homes (on land currently in the Green Belt) in an extension to the existing community
- Could include smaller family homes and / or self-build opportunities
- Accompanied by new community / small business space and high quality public open space
- Junction improvements at A23/School Hill likely to be required

Redhill:

- Two sites providing approx. 310 new homes (on land currently in the Green Belt) in an extension to the existing community
- Could include smaller family homes and /or retirement housing
- Accompanied by a new primary school, new walking and cycling routes into town, and high quality public open space

Horley

- Three sites providing approx. 155 new homes (on land currently in the countryside) to the north, north west and south east of Horley
- Accompanied by new public open space, including linking up the Riverside Green Chain



The Sustainable Urban Extensions sites will only be released for development as and when the Council can no longer demonstrate a five year supply of urban sites for housing development. At that point, the sustainable urban extension sites will be released in the following order:

- SEH4 and NWH2
- NWH1
- ERM1
- SSW6
- SSW7
- ERM5
- ERM4a and ERM4b
- SSW2
- SSW9
- ERM2/3

Sites will only be released to the extent needed to provide a five year housing supply – for example, if the shortfall in the housing supply can be overcome by the release of SEH4 and NWH2, no further sites will be released at that time.

Frequently asked questions

Why is housing development in the Green Belt being allocated? The government requires local authorities to plan for new housing to meet future needs. More homes are needed to meet the needs of local people and workers – without these new homes, the local economy will suffer, and the children of local residents will be forced to move away. The Council's [Core Strategy](#), which was also publically consulted on, plans to provide most new homes in existing towns, but it also identifies that some 'urban extensions' will be needed to meet housing targets. If the Council does not identify development sites itself, it is more likely that planning inspectors will decide for us where future development will be located. Identifying the sites in a Local Plan means greater local control over where development goes and helps to ensure that appropriate facilities and services are put in place

Why do more homes need to be built? New homes are needed in Reigate & Banstead for local people and local workers. More people are living on their own or in smaller households, and Reigate and Banstead is also a desirable place to live, which adds to the demand for houses. A shortage of housing means that house prices are beyond the reach of many, making it increasingly difficult for those who work locally to find homes, and for younger residents buying for the first time to stay in the borough.

Isn't the Green Belt protected? No. Government policy allows for Green Belt boundaries to be altered by local authorities through the plan-making process, but only in exceptional circumstances, which may include the need for new housing. The urban extension sites identified here represent a loss of less than 1% of the Green Belt in Reigate & Banstead, with the proposed safeguarded land site representing a loss of 3.2% of the Green Belt. This has to be balanced

against the benefits in terms of new housing, community facilities and services that could be delivered.

How will the Council ensure that new development benefits the local community and local infrastructure and services are sufficient to support new development?

The urban extension sites provide the opportunity for new community facilities or services. For example, the DMP identifies the opportunity to provide a new school as part of any future urban extension to the east of Redhill, and new health facilities in south west Reigate. Urban extensions could also provide a range of different types of housing including smaller family housing, starter homes, retirement housing and / or opportunities for self or custom build.

The Council will work closely with service providers to identify what new infrastructure is needed. New infrastructure can be funded by developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy, and legal agreements and conditions can be used to make sure that all necessary infrastructure is in place before new development is occupied.

When will development on these sites begin? The sustainable urban extension sites which are allocated will only be released if the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of other housing sites. Our current evidence suggests that these sites might be required from 2022 onwards; however, this could change if unanticipated opportunities come forward in our urban areas, or if urban sites fail to come forward as expected.

Have your say

If you would like to find out more, or comment on the Development Management Plan Regulation 19 consultation document, please visit www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/DMP where the full set of consultation documents is available, and where you can complete or download a comments form. Alternatively contact the Planning Policy Team at LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk or 01737 276178.