



Sustainability Appraisal Report

Sustainable Urban Extensions Non-Technical Summary

November 2012

Non technical summary

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1. The submitted Core Strategy (CS) sets out a long term strategy for growth and development in the borough. In the short to medium term, over the first 10 years, priority is given to regeneration and making the best use of the development opportunities that exists in the urban area. In the longer term, the submitted Core Strategy identifies that some greenfield development will be required to accommodate sustainable urban extensions.
- 1.1.2. Following submission, the Core Strategy Inspector identified some key concerns about the approach taken to sustainable urban extensions (SUE) in the submitted document. It was decided at an Exploratory Meeting that further technical work would be carried out to identify the **broad geographic location of SUEs and their likely scale and timing.** This Sustainability Appraisal Report documents the sustainability testing that was undertaken to inform the identification of preferred 'broad locations' for urban extensions.

1.2 Role of sustainability appraisal

- 1.2.1 Sustainability Appraisal is a process designed to ensure that social, environmental and economic impacts are considered when formulating planning policies and proposals. Policy/proposal options are assessed against a set of 19 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives (SA Objectives) in order to make recommendations regarding the sustainability of each of the BAS. The objectives include protection of important habitats, protection of heritage interests, provision of affordable housing and the maintenance of a robust and flexible economy.
- 1.2.2 The set of SA Objectives provides the basis for an appraisal framework known as the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. These objectives were recently revised through the East Surrey working group and have been consulted on accordingly. Further details of the objectives are set out in the Core Strategy SA report (Submission 2012).

1.3 Sustainability appraisal methodology

- 1.3.1 Appraisal of the Core Strategy including the spatial location for development has been conducted by a group of Planning Officers from Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and neighbouring Planning Authorities. The group

convened a series of meetings where potential impacts of different options were predicted by comparing the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

- 1.3.2 At this stage, two main sets of alternatives were assessed: firstly alternatives relating to how growth could be accommodated (the scale/type of development), and secondly, where growth could be accommodated (testing of a number of 'broad areas of search' (BAS). For the appraisal of the BAS a group of officers from Reigate & Banstead Borough Council compared the alternative options against the sustainability objectives and in so doing made recommendations in respect of scale and location of development. The results have been verified by an independent expert.
- 1.3.3 These SA recommendations were then fed into the wider 'plan-making' process, which considered other constraints and opportunities across the BAS. This included consideration of the purposes of the Green Belt and overall fit with the spatial strategy, and was carried out separately from, but informed by the SA. The findings of the SA and this additional testing were then brought together to identify preferred broad locations for urban extensions for inclusion within the Core Strategy.
- 1.3.4 In making predictions about the likely impacts of the BAS, a revised Scoping Report has been used which highlights the significant sustainability issues across the borough. The scoping report was consulted on for 6 weeks through August and September 2012.
- 1.3.5 The Scoping Report is the document that aims to set out a detailed description of the three elements of sustainability: the social, environmental and economic conditions within and affecting the Borough. By considering reports, studies and data on various aspects of these topics a broad picture can be established with respect to sustainability issues. The Scoping Report has been reproduced as Appendix C.

1.4 Findings of the sustainability appraisal

- 1.4.1 The appraisal was carried out at a strategic level and looked at the potential for each area to accommodate a 'strategic-scale' urban extension, which by their very nature are large scale (at least 250 dwellings). The conclusions of this appraisal indicate whether or not a **broad area** of search is a sustainable option for a strategic scale urban extension, and does not preclude the possibility of limited small scale development within any of the search areas identified. Within each of the search areas there will be a range of factors which would affect the score of a sustainability appraisal at a site specific scale. When preferred areas are selected further SA/SEA work will be

required in order to give more detailed and design specific recommendations for each area.

- 1.4.2** The Sustainability Appraisal recommended that the following areas should be short-listed for further investigation to accommodate potential urban extensions: **A, G, J, L, M and N**. The areas of search can be seen on the map below (Figure 1). A summary of the appraisal for each area can be seen in Figure 2.
- 1.4.3** The findings from the SA were fed into the wider plan making process, and combined with other factors such as the impact on Green Belt function and fit with the overall spatial strategy; through this exercise, the following areas were selected as possible areas to accommodate strategic-scale Urban Extensions:
- East of Redhill and East of Merstham
 - South and South West of Reigate (Woodhatch)
- 1.4.4** Despite SA finding that areas A, M and N have relatively strong sustainability credentials, these areas have been rejected as part of the wider selection process. They have been rejected for reasons outside of the SA remit including their importance to either strategic or local Green Belt function, or their lack of fit with the overall spatial strategy for the borough. Area L was identified as being an area with long term development potential (beyond this plan period). For information on the wider plan making process for urban extensions please see *Sustainable Urban Extensions: Broad Geographic Locations Technical Report (November 2012)*.
- 1.4.5** The next stage of the planning process will involve consideration of more detail about the size, location and nature of the urban extensions. This will be undertaken through the preparation of the Development Management Policies Document.
- 1.4.6** Sustainability Appraisal will be carried out to inform the Development Management Policies Document process, and will assess the areas at a more refined scale, within defined boundaries and at a site specific level. This will allow the SA to put forward recommendations that will enrich the sustainability of future urban extensions by maximising benefits and mitigating adverse impacts.

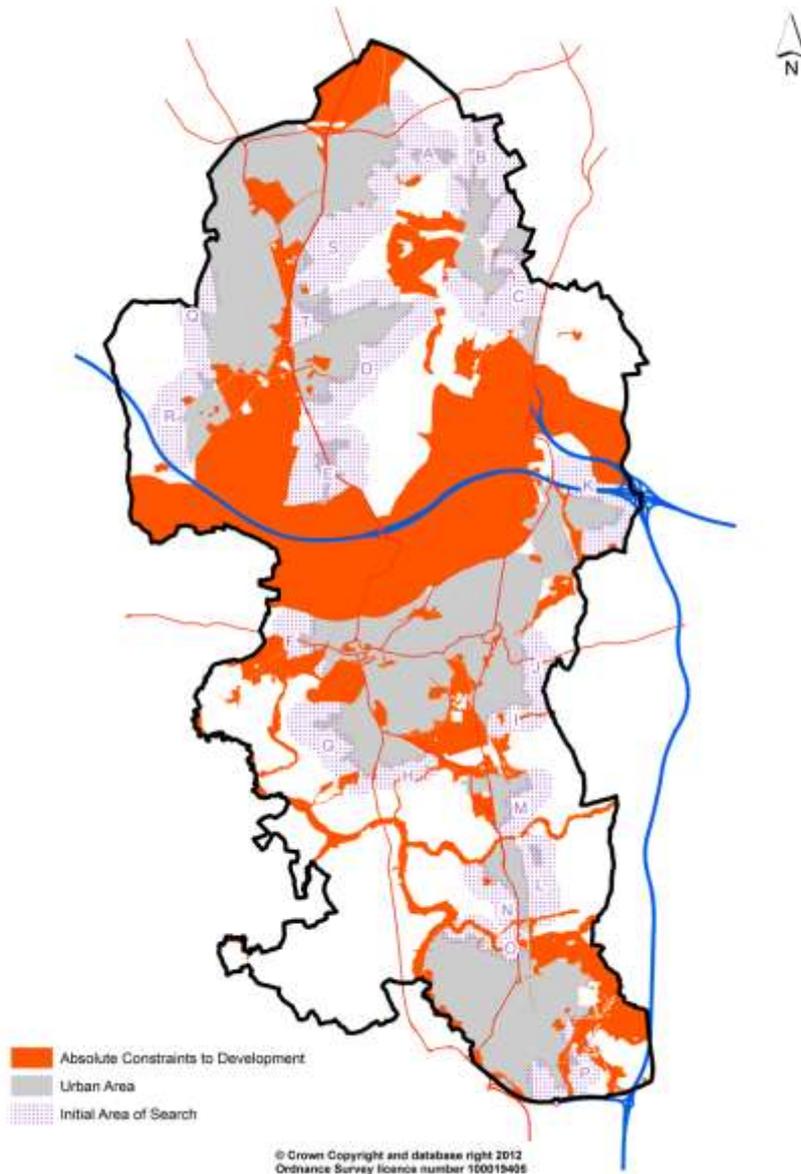


Figure 1. Map showing Broad Areas of Search

1.5 Monitoring

1.5.1 Sustainability Appraisal indicates that the proposed Core Strategy has sound sustainability credentials, but there are some areas where adverse impacts might occur and it is recommended that these be monitored. In addition, monitoring can help identify areas where benefits are not being maximised. Progress with respect to the implementation of the Core Strategy DPD will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report for the LDF.

1.5.2 The following list identifies issues that can be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report to ensure that the Borough Council is aware of the impact of the Local Development Framework, including Sustainable Urban Extensions, on economic, social and environmental interests.

- Environment and flooding
- Avoiding harm to AONB, SAC, SSSI
- Congestion and accessibility
- Air quality

Figure 2: Results of Area of Search Sustainability Appraisal (summary)

Area of search	SA comment	Recommended for shortlisting (potential to accommodate urban extensions)
BAS A	This search area is fairly accessible, with positive scoring for reducing the need to travel and travel options. Land contamination, noise, light, air quality, climate change and flooding all score positively. There are negative impacts concerning landscape and heritage although these have not been scored as significant. On balance this broad area of search should be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.	Yes
BAS B	The scoring for this area of search is mainly neutral and positive, with a significant positive for flooding by virtue of the lack of flood risk. There is significant negative scoring for landscape because of the views associated with the area; this would be a long term impact. This negative scoring removes this area as a possibility as an urban extension due to the scale of development and it's potential impacts, however certain parts of the areas may be suitable for small scale development. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.	No
BAS C	There are a number of significantly negative scores for this option; these are for health and well being, accessibility, landscape, heritage, the need to travel and travel options. There are positive scores, the most significant being for land contamination and flooding; however the quantity of significant negatives for this area of search by far outweighs the positives. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.	No
BAS D	This BAS has scored negatively with regards to landscape, accessibility, health and wellbeing, travel options and economic growth. To a lesser extent, but still a negative scoring, are impacts on previously developed land. Positive scoring for this search area has come from the	No

	<p>lack of flood risk in the area. Overall the significant impacts that have led to the negative scoring for this search area by far outweigh the positive impacts (there are other alternative areas also free from flood risk). This broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	
BAS E	<p>There are negative scores for a number of sustainability objectives such as health and wellbeing, accessibility, land contamination, and economic growth. Landscape character scored a partly negative score as the area is split into distinct character types with the east being more sensitive to change. The search area scores a significant negative score for reducing the need to travel and travel options. The area scored positively against a number of environmental issues such as noise, light, air quality, climate change and biodiversity. The area scores significantly positive in terms of flood risk. In conclusion, parts of the search area may lend themselves to small scale development, but the inaccessibility and lack of transport options in this search area make this location unsustainable for accommodating an urban extension. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	No
BAS F	<p>This broad area of search has been scored negatively over several SA objectives. Landscape and heritage are significant concerns picked up through the SA, in addition to some concerns regarding biodiversity and flooding. The area has good amenity and recreation value and would impact negatively on the health and well being of the population should this be lost. In comparison to other search areas accessibility is good, although there are areas where accessibility is better (proximity to train station, better bus services). Due to the high level of negative scoring, the SA/SEA is recommending that this broad area of search is not short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	No
BAS G	<p>There are few significant negative issues associated with this area of search. One negative point is the accessibility to places of employment – this is slightly less of concern for the northern part of the search area. Positives for this area are for environmental concerns such as land contamination, air quality, light and noise. Positive</p>	Yes

scoring is also given for accessibility to services and facilities. Recommendations coming from the SA are in relation to travel and health and wellbeing. The accessibility into the countryside is currently poor, and there are limited areas for sport in the area, development could be used to bring positive impacts to the area in this regard.

The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.

<p>BAS H</p>	<p>This BAS scored negatively for some SA objectives concerning certain parts of the search area – these scores are in relation to flooding, water quality and quantity, biodiversity, climate change and access to employment opportunities. The appraisal highlights that general accessibility (schools, local centre) is good, although the train station and town centre are some distance. The appraisal recommends that development is avoided in the eastern area to avoid impacts on biodiversity, and that all areas of flood risk are avoided. There are no landscape designations within the search area, however the LTCA highlighted some of the area as medium to high sensitivity, and these areas should be avoided. The appraisal acknowledges that there will be small parts of the search area that are not impacted by any of the aforementioned issues, and these areas may be suitable for limited small scale development, however the areas at risk from impacts from flooding and on biodiversity mean that this search area is unsuitable for an urban extension. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>BAS I</p>	<p>This BAS has scored negatively in relation to landscape character, flooding, biodiversity, water quality and quantity, climate change, PDL and health and well being. However, there are some significant positive scores for this search area in relation to accessibility, travel and economic growth. In some ways this location is a sustainable one; however the green space and biodiversity deficit in Redhill are locally significant issues which, in combination with the high sensitivity of the landscape in this area, give more weight to the potential loss of this green space. On balance and compared with the alternative options this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for</p>	<p>No</p>

	development for urban extensions.	
BAS J	<p>This BAS only scores negatively for one SA objective – contaminated land. Part of the search area is an active landfill site, which would need to be avoided. There may also be mitigation measures or remediation required in proximity to this site. The area scores positively in terms of accessibility, transport choices and economic growth. The area also scores positively for landscape and historic character, meaning that in comparison to the other search areas development in this area will have lesser impact on this as a sustainability objective. There is also a large amount of PDL in the search area. In light of the limited negative impacts, and numerous positive impacts the appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	Yes
BAS K	<p>It is clear from the scoring of this BAS that development in the north of the search area is not sustainable. The objectives that indicate this are health and wellbeing (amenity value of north bund), flood risk, air quality and noise pollution.. The southern part of the search area has issues with flooding, and with biodiversity. The recommendations from this appraisal are that the north and south of the search area are not allocated for development.</p> <p>The central part of the search area has an opportunity to increase the sustainability of the existing area by the addition of better footpaths and trails, as part of a development brief, to allow connectivity from the bund area (south of M25) to the southern SWT nature reserve. This will increase the appraisal scoring in relation to health and wellbeing, which is a particular issue for this area. Development in this section would also address the regeneration priorities of the council better than alternative search areas in terms of social issues and physical environment. The appraisal recommends the mid-section of the search area be considered for limited small scale development. However the search area as a whole has limiting factors that would not be suitable for a large scale urban extension. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	No
BAS L	This BAS scores negatively for SA objective health and	Yes

well being due to the potential loss of recreation space and there being no GP or health facilities in walk-able distance. There is limited PDL in the search area. Concern was also raised about accessibility due to the distance the nearest schools and services, although this was balanced with the fact that there is a train station within the search area to give an overall neutral score for accessibility. There are positive scores for air and water quality, flooding, noise and light pollution and biodiversity. The appraisal scored this area with a significant positive score due to the low sensitivity of the landscape and historic environment. Balancing the concerns regarding accessibility to schools and other services with the low impact on the environment it is recommended that this search area lends itself to a large-scale development which would significantly alter the settlement size of Salfords. This would enable the services to come into the area, an additional primary school, and potentially an improvement in train frequency currently serving the settlement, which would all improve the sustainability of the area for existing residents. This scale of development would possibly be outside of the current plan period, and bringing it forward sooner may compromise regeneration and growth priorities elsewhere in the borough, particularly Horley. In order to be truly sustainable this search area would require a large scale development of around 2000 homes. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.

BAS M	There are generally positive and neutral scores for a number of objectives. Positive scores were given for most environmental objectives such as contaminated land, air, noise and water. Also flooding and proximity to employment and schools scored positively. There are no significant negative scores that are specific to this search area. Recommendations have been put forward to avoid development in the south of the search area, as development here would break up the east-west connectivity for biodiversity. There would also need to be mitigation for any development that would increase run-off into the watercourse. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.	Yes
BAS	There are positive scores for proximity to employment	Yes

N	<p>areas, and for most environmental constraints (water, noise, air quality). Accessibility and health and wellbeing score negatively in the appraisal due to the limited facilities and services within the search area. In order to create a sustainable development in this area (bearing in mind the limited services and facilities, and particularly a school) a large-scale development would be required in order to enable the provision of these factors. There are significant landscape sensitivities to consider, but the search area could potentially improve access to the train station for new and existing development, and the search area is situated on a main transport corridor which is served by the Fastway bus service. The appraisal recommends that this broad area of search be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	
BAS O	<p>This search area has negative scoring for biodiversity and water quality, but more significantly it scores negatively for flooding, both current flood issues, and predicted increases in flooding associated with climate change. The negative scoring indicates that this area is not suitable for an urban extension; however the positive scoring for accessibility indicate that it should not be ruled out for additional smaller scale development, with siting and design taking account of flood risk.</p>	No
BAS P	<p>The appraisal scores negatively for a number of objectives including air quality, noise, light, water quality, and flooding (both current issues and predicted increases in flooding associated with climate change). The area does have excellent accessibility, travel options and potential for low carbon technologies but the flooding and environmental impacts from Gatwick Airport are crucial in balancing the sustainability of this area as a future area for development.</p> <p>The negative scoring indicates that this area is not suitable for an urban extension, however the positive scoring for accessibility indicate that it should not be ruled out for additional smaller scale development, with siting and design taking account of flood risk, noise and air quality.</p>	No
BAS Q	<p>This broad area of search scored negatively against a number of SA objectives, these are: accessibility, biodiversity and economic growth. There were also significant negative impacts identified and these are: PDL, landscape and transport options and the need to travel.</p>	No

	<p>There are some positive sustainability attributes for the search area, and those are around environmental concerns such as air quality, light and noise, and climate change, the area is also at very low risk from flooding. The significant negative scores for travel and accessibility means that on balance the area is not suitable for an urban extension.</p>	
BAS R	<p>This area scores positively for lack of flood risk, however there are negative scores for a number of sustainability objectives, these are: health and wellbeing, accessibility, PDL, air quality, noise, and biodiversity. There are significant negative scorings against landscape, heritage, economic growth and the need to travel and travel options. It is for these reasons that this broad area of search should not be short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	No
BAS S	<p>The appraisal of this option has highlighted a number of significant negative impacts from designating this search area as an urban extension; these are for biodiversity, landscape and the need to travel and travel options. There are lesser negative scorings for health and wellbeing, PDL, accessibility and economic growth. There are no major environmental concerns such as air quality, noise and light and fluvial flooding is not an issue in the search area. In conclusion, the number of significant negatives against this option requires that the area is not short-listed for further investigation into the potential for development for urban extensions.</p>	No
BAS T	<p>The appraisal of this search area is reasonably well balanced in the number of positive and negative scorings, with the negative slightly outweighing the positive. The negative impacts from an urban extension on this location area around biodiversity, landscape and poor accessibility. The appraisal scores the area as significantly positive for flood risk, although as an alternative to other search areas that also do not have flood risk; this area has far greater negative implications for general sustainability issues such as reducing the need to travel and transport options. On balance the area is not suitable for an urban extension.</p>	No