



Appendix 1

Strategic Context

APPENDIX 1: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Background

This section provides an overview of national and local planning policies and other guidance relevant to open space, sport and recreation. The policies and guidance set out below reflect the current policy context, however it should be noted that a number of changes to planning policy are currently in progress.

The government has stated its intention to remove all Planning Policy Guidance Notes / Planning Policy Statements and replace them with a National Planning Framework which will set out all of the government's policies for planning in a single document. Until such a time as the National Planning Framework is issued the national guidance documents detailed below will remain relevant.

In July 2010 the government revoked the Regional Strategies, however this decision was the subject of a High Court challenge which ruled that the revocation was unlawful. For the time being, this means that regional planning policies and targets remain in place. However, the government has made clear its intention to promote legislation that will remove regional policies.

Further changes to the planning system are expected with the enactment of the Localism Act. This will give new powers to local communities to draw up neighbourhood plans and grant planning permission for new developments in their areas, which may have implications for the future delivery of local open space, sport and recreation facilities.

Current Policies and Guidance

1. Planning Policy Guidance 17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation 2002

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 recognises that sport, open space and recreation contribute to people's quality of life and can play an important role in delivering a range of other government objectives including the promotion of health and well being, social and community cohesion and sustainable development.

PPG17 states that Local Authorities should undertake robust assessments of current and future needs for open space, sport and recreation in their areas as well as audits of existing provision. These local assessments of needs and opportunities should be used as a basis for setting local standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities to inform local strategies and development plan policies and site allocations. Further guidance on setting local standards for open space, sport and recreation is provided in *Assessing needs and opportunities: A companion guide to PPG17*.

PPG17 emphasises the importance of maintaining an adequate supply of open space, sport and recreation facilities and states that existing open space, sport and recreational

buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. Specific guidance is also given on development affecting playing fields.

PPG17 also gives guidance on planning for new open space, sport and recreation facilities, setting out general principles and specific guidance on different types of facilities and locations.

The Consultation Paper on the new Planning Policy Statement: '*Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment*,' (March 2010) sets out policies which seek to provide a streamlined and consolidated approach to the following three components: conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and the habitats and species it supports; green infrastructure; open space and land and related facilities for sport, recreation and play. It was envisaged that this PPS would replace *Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* in so far as it relates to landscape protection, soil and agricultural land quality and forestry; combining with it *PPS 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*, *PPG17* (above) and aspects of *PPG 20: Coastal Planning*. In addition, it would introduce policies on Green Infrastructure.

2. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development 2005.

PPS 1 provides that development should ensure an appropriate mix of uses, including the incorporation of green spaces.

The supplement to PPS1 (2007): '*Planning and Climate Change*' states that in selecting land for development, and specifically in deciding which areas and sites are suitable and for what type and intensity of development, planning authorities should take into account the contribution to be made from existing and new opportunities for open space and green infrastructure to urban cooling, sustainable drainage systems, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Spatial planning strategies and any development should help deliver, amongst other things, GI and biodiversity as part of a strategy to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

3. Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (June 2010)

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) identifies the importance of good design that contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. It highlights matters to be considered when assessing design quality, which include providing or enabling good access to community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) and providing for the retention of or re-establishment of biodiversity within residential environments.

PPS3 highlights that where family housing is proposed, it is important to ensure the needs of children are considered and that there is good provision of recreational areas, including play areas and informal play. The guidance states that these should be well-designed, safe, secure and stimulating areas with safe pedestrian access.

4. Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (2008)

PPS12 sets out the Government's policy on local spatial planning. It requires local planning authorities to plan for green infrastructure requirements, defining GI as '*a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities*'. It notes in paragraph 4.8 that: '*.. core strategies should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution*'. This evidence should cover who will provide the infrastructure and when it will be provided. PPS12 also calls for local planning to make links with the strategies and investment plans of other organizations; this is important for GI development and open space strategies given that its many functions can help meet a broad range of policy objectives.

5. The Draft National Planning Policy Framework July 2011

The draft National Planning Policy Framework which will eventually replace all PPGs and PPSs states that local planning authorities should, 'set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.'

6. Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation 2005

The broad aim of the Biodiversity Strategy for England (2002) '*Working with the Grain of Nature*' is that planning, construction, development and regeneration should have minimal impacts on biodiversity and enhance it wherever possible. In moving towards this vision, PPS9 sets out three key aims:

- to promote sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development.
- to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology.
- to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance by enhancing biodiversity in green spaces and among developments..... and ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.

It sets out requirements for policies to be included in the Local Development Frameworks for the protection of sites of biodiversity and geological conservation value. It requires the maintenance of networks of natural habitats by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans and that such networks should be protected from development and where possible strengthened by or integrated within it.

7. Circular 5/2005 Planning Obligations

Developer contributions can make a significant contribution to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities. This Circular sets the circumstances in which it is appropriate to seek contributions towards from developers towards the provision of facilities necessary to meet the needs of the development. The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy is likely to result in significant changes to the way in which developer contributions are collected in future.

8. The Community Infrastructure Levy: An Overview November 2010

This publication does not constitute policy or guidance but sets out the purpose of the Community Infrastructure Levy and how it is to operate. The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new levy that local authorities in England and Wales can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The levy will be used as the mechanism for pooling contributions from a variety of new developments to fund infrastructure, which may include open space, sport and recreation facilities. This is therefore likely to be of relevance for the collection of developer contributions to fund open space, sport and recreation facilities.

After April 2014, local authorities will no longer be able to use planning obligations as the basis for a tariff to fund infrastructure. However, in certain circumstances it will be possible to use planning obligations to provide site specific mitigation measures

9. Sports England Strategy 2008-11

The Sport England Strategy was launched in 2008. At its centre is a call for greater focus on creating a world –leading community sports system which can become the springboard for nationwide sporting success. The strategy aims to encourage people from all walks of life to play and to keep playing sport, identify and nurture talent and make sure involvement in sport is a rewarding experience. It aims to ensure that the Olympics and Para-Olympics deliver a long lasting grass roots legacy. The strategy is focused on three areas and sets the following targets:

Grow

- One million more people taking part in sport by 2012/13
- More 5 – 16 years olds people taking part in five hours of PE or sport per week and more 16 – 19 year olds taking part in three hours sport per week

Sustain

- More people satisfied with their sporting experience
- 25% fewer 16 – 18 year olds dropping out of at least five sports

Excel

- Improved talent development in at least 25 sports

In 2008 Sport England, in partnership with the Local Government Association, published a document entitled *Our Sporting Commitment*, which outlines how local authorities and Sport England can act together to achieve shared aims and objectives. Sport England also published *Shaping Places through Sport*, which aims to show how sport can help local authorities to create healthier, safer and more cohesive communities.

10. Field in Trust (formerly the National Playing Fields Association)

The National Playing Fields Association was established to ensure that every person could have access to recreational space within easy reach of their home. The NPFA urged the adoption of a minimum standard in terms of space which was known as the 'six acre standard'. The NPFA has now changed its operating name to Fields in Trust (FiT) and the original advice has been re-issued as *Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play*. The standard states that there should be a minimum standard of 2.4 ha per 1,000 people of outdoor playing space. A breakdown of the FiT standard is set out in the table below:

Category	Size per Population
Outdoor Sport	1.6 – 1.8 ha per 1,000 population
Children's Playing Space	0.6 – 0.8 ha per 1,000 population
Total Playing Space	2.4 ha per 1,000 population

FiT also recommends the provision of different types of play areas for a range of age groups. There are three categories of provision identified for new housing developments. These are Local Areas for Play (LAPs), Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAPs) and Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAPs). However, these standards are not compulsory and PPG17 states that Local Authorities should adopt their own standards based upon a local assessment of needs and opportunities.

11. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW Act) 2000

The key elements of the CRoW Act of relevance to Open Space Assessments are:

- The Act provides for public access on foot to certain types of open land comprising mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land. The CRoW Act provides for a significant area of open space within the Borough.
- The Act places a duty of Government Departments to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity and maintain lists of species and habitats for which conservation steps should be taken or promoted, in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity. It also provides increased powers for the protection and management of SSSIs and strengthens the legal protection for threatened species.

- The Act clarifies the procedures and purpose of designating Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). It requires relevant authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs when performing their function. In line with the CRoW Act, RBBC and other adjacent authorities have prepared a Management Plan for the Surrey Hills AONB. This provides for the management and enhancement of a significant proportion of the borough's open space.

12. UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP); England's Biodiversity Strategy

The UK BAP is the UK Government's response to the Convention on Biodiversity Diversity, which called for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect, and wherever possible to enhance existing biological diversity. England's Biodiversity Strategy, *'Working with the Grain of Nature'* 2002 aims to deliver the UK BAP in England, and specifically, the programme towards achieving the 2010 target to halt biodiversity loss. It seeks to make biodiversity part of mainstream thinking and emphasises that healthy, thriving and diverse ecosystems are essential to everybody's quality of life and wellbeing. A measure of success of conserving England's biodiversity is how the status of 'BAP priority species and habitats' is changing. The Surrey BAP translates the UK BAP into action at the local level, raises awareness, and ensures opportunities for conservation and enhancement are fully considered as a basis for monitoring progress in biodiversity conservation, at both local and national level. It contains 10 Habitat Action Plans and 1 Species Action Plan. This Local Biodiversity Action Plan provides a framework within which action for biodiversity can be prioritise by RBBC under the Biodiversity Duty.

13. Local Authority Biodiversity Duty - Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of the NERC Act requires *that 'Every public authority (including borough councils) must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.'* The *'Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty,'* aims to help local authorities have regard for, and take account of, biodiversity. A key theme of England's Biodiversity Strategy is that effective conservation of biodiversity requires that it is integrated into a wide variety of activities. It is recognised that the activities of local authorities have an important role to play in biodiversity conservation. For example the NERC Act promotes the following by local authorities:

- Proactive development of policy and strategy to integrate biodiversity conservation into local programmes and activities such as LDF policies, corporate priorities, sustainable community strategies and neighbourhood renewal and delivery through local biodiversity action plans. It also encompasses integration of green infrastructure strategies which can play a positive role in biodiversity conservation.

- Positive management by the council and its partners of Council controlled land, including designated sites and protected and priority species; the management of green infrastructure and specific sites such as road verges, farms, school grounds and watercourse sites.
- Management of the effects of development on biodiversity (see the key national planning policy relating to biodiversity, PPS9, above), e.g. through developing a good evidence base on biodiversity; actively seeking opportunities to enhance biodiversity; creating and improving GI; using Natural England's ANGSt guidance for informing planning policy for creating green space; LDF policy and development control.
- Education, advice, awareness and community engagement– e.g. encouraging biodiversity in education.

14. The Natural Environment White Paper June 2011

The government's Natural Environment White Paper, 'The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature,' outlines the Government's vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years. It provides policy to protect and improve the natural environment, aiming to halt the decline in habitats and species, degradation of landscapes and erosion of natural capital, through more joined-up action at local and national level to create an ecological network resilient to changing pressures. It also provides the framework for growing a green economy and re-connecting people and nature. New initiatives are proposed on the development of Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas and for biodiversity offsetting in a number of pilot areas.

An important contributor to this White Paper was the review entitled, '*Making Space for Nature*,' or the Lawton Review 2010. This is an independent review of England's wildlife sites and the connections between them, with recommendations the help achieve a healthy natural environment. It will be a key complement to Green Infrastructure and a driver for green corridors. The report provides evidence that England's wildlife sites are generally too small and isolated, leading to declines in many of England's characteristic species and that with climate change the situation will get worse. The report sees the natural environment as providing us with a range of benefits (food, water etc) – ecosystem services, and that biodiversity under-pins most if not all of them. The report makes 24 recommendations for action to benefit wildlife and people, focused on the need to achieve a coherent and resilient ecological network. Five themes are identified:

- To continue to improve the management and condition of wildlife sites.
- To plan ecological networks, including restoration areas – a suite of high quality sites.
- To protect and manage surviving patches of important wildlife habitat.
- To become better at deriving multiple benefits – exploiting 'win-win' opportunities.

- To deliver strong leadership and collaboration between all partners to achieve the step change that is needed.

Above all it calls for Making Space for Nature. The government's response to this was included in the White Paper.

15. Natural England's Green Infrastructure (GI) Guidance 2009 and the South East Green Infrastructure Framework

The Guidance provides an overview of the concept of GI, mapping out the wider policy priorities and drivers for green infrastructure. It aims to facilitate a coordinated and consistent approach to GI Strategies, provide guidance in delivery, promote the contribution of GI to 'place-making' and demonstrate the added value of GI to plans and projects. Detailed guidance and exemplar projects are provided.

The South East Green Infrastructure Framework was prepared on behalf of a partnership of regional organisations. It aims to establish GI as an integral and essential component of sustainable communities and provides guidance on how GI can be delivered through the planning system and local partnerships.

16. Natural England ANGS^t Standards

Natural England promotes the adoption of three key standards to deliver high quality and inspiring visitor experiences in green spaces close to where people live, and to connect people with the natural environment. One of these is the Access to Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGS^t). ANSG^t is a tool which assesses the current levels of accessible natural greenspace within, say a Local Authority area in order to help local authorities identify where adequate provision is being made and where action needs to be taken to deliver appropriate level of natural space close to people's homes. The standards are provided in Section 5 of this report: Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces.

17. The South East Plan 2009

As previously stated, the South East Plan remains in place for the time being but is likely to be revoked in the future. The policies of the South East Plan that are most relevant to open space, sport and recreation provision are as follows:

Policy CC8 Green Infrastructure:

This sets out that local authorities and partners will work together to plan, provide and manage connected and substantial networks of accessible multi-functional green space. They should be planned and managed to deliver the widest range of linked environmental and social benefits including conserving, enhancing biodiversity as well as promoting recreation, social and benefits to underpin well-being. They will be created and managed as a framework of green spaces and other natural features that will boost the sustainable development of settlements and increase the environmental capacity of the locality and region as a whole helping communities to be more resilient to the effects of climate change. The policy highlights that the designation and management of green infrastructure will be particularly important in Regional Hubs (Redhill- Reigate is a

Regional Hub as designated in the South East Plan) where there may be a need to enhance the existing environmental capacity.

Policy S1 Supporting Healthy Communities:

This states that local development documents should reflect the role the planning system can play in developing and shaping healthy and sustainable communities by providing access to parks, open spaces, recreational and cultural facilities and incorporating healthier forms of transport such as cycle lanes and safe footpaths in planned developments.

Policy S5 Cultural and Sporting Activity:

This encourages local authorities to increase participation in sport, recreation and cultural activity. Provision for activities should be based on audits of supply and estimated demand/growth. Audits should cover the quantitative, qualitative and accessible nature of provision.

Local development documents should contain policies to meet local needs based around encouraging participation by disadvantaged groups, local facilities accessible by healthier transport methods, joint provision where appropriate and policies encouraging workplace and everyday provision for increased physical activity.

18. The Reigate & Banstead Community Plan 2020

The Community Plan contains a number of objectives that link with the use and accessibility of open spaces, sport and recreational facilities:

Your Environment

- Improve access to the countryside and greenspaces so that everyone has the opportunity to use these places for leisure, learning and enjoyment
- Design wildlife habitats into new developments so that the natural environment is more diverse than today
- Continue to protect the very best examples of landscape character
- Encourage more travel on foot and by bicycle to improve our health, get us out in the community and reduce car dependency

Neighbourhoods for the Future

- Revitalise Redhill Town Centre through the development of key sites and improved transport links, which encompass new public spaces, integrated housing, leisure and shopping facilities

Vibrant Communities

- Promote the health benefits of healthy eating and an active lifestyle to reduce obesity and other health related issues

- Increase our use and support of community venues such as village halls so that they remain viable and vibrant.

19. Reigate and Banstead Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015

The Corporate Plan is currently under review and the Corporate Plan 2010-2015 Consultation Draft has recently been published. Under the theme of Self-reliant and Thriving Communities – A Clean Green Safe and Healthy Borough, the draft Corporate Plan makes the following commitment:

“We will continue to encourage residents to enjoy healthy and active lifestyles so that they can enjoy a better quality of life. We will do this by providing access to high quality leisure facilities such as parks and open spaces and by investing in the improvement of our leisure centres.”

The draft Corporate Plan identifies the following priorities:

Redhill

- Complete the refurbishment of the Donyngs Leisure centre by the end of 2011
- Carry out the first improvements in Memorial Park Redhill in 2011 and complete the full scheme by 2014

Horley

- Complete the Leisure Centre by 2012

Preston

- Develop and implement plans for community and leisure facilities, including a new Leisure Centre, and new housing on the Merland Rise Recreation Ground site

20. Reigate & Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005

The Borough Local Plan 2005 sets out policies and site allocations for the Borough which are used in determining planning applications. The Council is in the process of developing a Local Development Framework which will eventually replace the Borough Local Plan. However, most of the policies in the Borough Local Plan have been saved and these remain in force until such time as they are replaced by policies of the Local Development Framework.

The saved policies most relevant to open space, sport and recreation are:

- Pc 1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Great Landscape Value
- Pc 2E Existing and Proposed Local Nature Reserves
- Pc 2G Local Nature Conservation Interest

- Pc 3 Woodlands
- Pc 5 Countryside Management
- Pc 6 Urban Open Land
- Re 1 Retention of Existing Recreation Uses
- Re 3 – 12 Outdoor Recreation and Indoor Recreation

The policies of the Borough Local Plan 2005 that make up the Horley Master Plan will remain in place until the development of the new neighbourhoods in Horley has been implemented. The most relevant of these saved policies are:

- Hr33 Land Allocations for Public Open Space
- Hr34 Land Allocation for Leisure Centre
- Hr35 Land Allocations for Allotment Provision
- Hr38 Riverside Green Chain

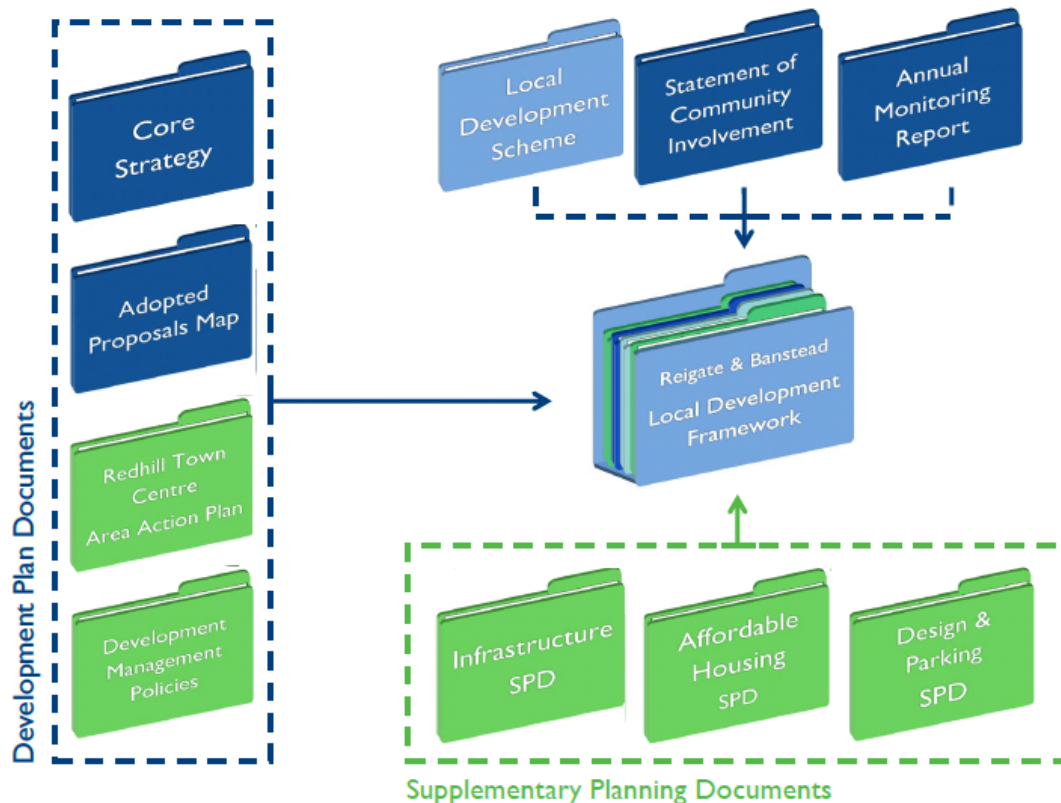
The Horley Infrastructure SPD, which sets out the required developer contributions towards infrastructure for the new neighbourhoods, will also remain in place until the developments have been completed.

21. Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance: Outdoor Playing Space Provision December 1996

This document contains detailed guidance on outdoor playing space provision requirements to supplement the policies of the Borough Local Plan. In accordance with Policies Ho9 and Re6 of the Borough Local Plan, the guidance seeks to implement the National Playing Fields Association Six Acre Standard for outdoor playing space and sets out how the standard will be applied. The document provides information on different types of play provision and sets out design principles for the provision of outdoor playing space in residential developments.

22. Local Development Framework

The Council is in the process of producing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to set out new planning policies for the Borough. The LDF will take the form of a suite of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. These will include the Core Strategy, which will set the strategic policy for the Borough and the Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan which will include detailed policies and proposals for this part of the Borough. The Council also needs to develop policies to manage new development and to allocate sites for specific types of development and this will be done through the Development Management Policies (DMP) DPD. The diagram below shows the components of the LDF.



Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is the spatial strategy for the borough for the next 15 years and beyond, which will include:

- a spatial vision setting out how the borough is expected to change over the period of the strategy
- a set of spatial objectives outlining the main policy directions to help realise the spatial vision
- a series of strategic policies to address the vision and objectives
- an implementation and monitoring section including indicators and targets.

The emerging Core Strategy seeks to achieve a sustainable approach to growth which preserves and encourages prosperity, protects valued and vulnerable parts of the environment alongside ensuring that adequate services and infrastructure are provided to support the community. The strategy will focus on areas within the Borough that are well served by shopping, leisure and community facilities and are highly accessible. The strategy will direct development to the most sustainable locations first and only as a last resort or, in very special circumstances, direct development to locations that are less well serviced or less sustainable. The spatial strategy also recognises the role of regeneration areas in the Borough.

The Core Strategy includes objectives in relation to preserving and enhancing the Borough's valued landscapes and natural environment, promoting healthy lifestyles, providing community services and infrastructure to meet the needs of residents. It also contains a commitment to developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy which will plan, provide and manage a network of multifunctional green spaces across the Borough.

Development Management Policies

Once adopted, the Development Management Policies will form the basis for decisions on planning applications and in combination with the Core Strategy and the Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan, will replace the saved policies of the Borough Local Plan 2005. In addition to setting out development management policies, this document will also allocate sites for different land uses and developments. Alongside the policy document will be a Proposals Map, showing site allocations such as housing and employment sites and protective designations such as the Green Belt and conservation areas.

The Development Management Policies will allocate land for open space, sport and recreation and will provide policies to manage the provision, protection and improvement of open spaces and recreation facilities.

Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan

The Redhill Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide detailed policies and site allocations specific to the Action Plan Area which will direct the development required to regenerate the Redhill Town Centre. This will include measures to provide enhancements to open spaces within the Town Centre.