

Tandridge District Local Plan 2024-2044



Tandridge District Council

Regulation 18: Early engagement consultation

January 2026



Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.2	Why we are preparing a new Local Plan.....	3
1.3	What is a Local Plan?.....	5
1.4	Legislative and policy context	5
1.5	Consultation stages	6
1.6	How to respond.....	7
1.7	Next steps.....	7
2	Tandridge District profile.....	8
3	Consultation topics	9
3.2	An initial vision for the Tandridge District	9
3.3	Where development should go.....	11
3.4	Housing provision	13
3.5	Affordable housing	14
3.6	Economy, employment and retail	15
3.7	Infrastructure, transport and delivery.....	16
3.8	Our places	16
3.9	The historic environment	17
3.10	Natural environment and nature recovery	17
3.11	Health, wellbeing and communities.....	18
3.12	Climate change and sustainable design	18
3.13	Monitoring and delivery	18
4	Glossary	19



Bletchingley

1 Introduction

1.1 Tandridge District Council is preparing a new Local Plan, which will guide development and investment across the district up to 2044.

This consultation represents the first stage in preparing the new Plan. We are asking residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to share their views on the main issues and priorities that will help shape the new strategy.

At this stage, no decisions have been made. The Council is seeking views on the scope, direction and key themes of the Local Plan before draft policies or sites are developed. Your feedback will directly shape the next stage of plan-making.

1.2 Why we are preparing a new Local Plan

The government requires every local planning authority to prepare a Local Plan to provide a vision and framework and set out planning policies for future development. Once adopted, the Local Plan is the key consideration in making all planning decisions.

Tandridge District Council's existing planning framework the Core Strategy 2008 and Detailed Policies Document 2014 are in need of updating having been prepared under previous iterations of national planning policy. The new Local Plan will reflect current and future needs, updated evidence and national policy changes.

The new Local Plan will:

- Provide a clear and up-to-date planning framework for managing new development.
- Identify where new homes, jobs and services will be located.
- Protect and enhance the district's valued countryside and communities.
- Support climate resilience, nature recovery and infrastructure investment.

The Local Plan is also being taken forward to respond to the government's commitment to 1.5 million new homes being built within the course of this parliament. The government is clear that it expects all local authority areas to play their part in achieving this and to enable this, it has already introduced a number of planning reforms, including:

- Revising the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to allow areas of Green Belt to be reclassified as grey belt.
- Introducing a new standard method for calculating housing need with higher mandatory housing targets.
- Removing the Green Belt protection against urban sprawl applying to villages.

The new standard method establishes a housing requirement for Tandridge of 827 homes per year. This increases to 993 homes per year for the first five years as government policy also requires an additional 20% to be brought forward from the end of the plan period to help boost choice in supply. Notwithstanding, the housing requirement derived from the government's standard method is a very significant increase from the Council's current adopted Core Strategy housing requirement of 125 homes per year. Completions at present average around 250 homes per year, which brings into focus the scale of the challenge facing the Council in adopting a Local Plan that responds as far as possible to the new housing requirement for the district. The government are also consulting on further proposed changes to the NPPF aimed at enabling the release of more land to help meet housing needs.

The Council's new Local Plan must meet the new rules that are predicated on the starting assumption that all areas and plans should meet the standard method in full, or it will not pass the examination process. The government also expect every local planning authority to have an up-to-date Local Plan in place quickly to help meet their commitment to see 1.5 million homes built nationally by the end of the parliament. While the latest government policy is clearly emphasising the need for areas to meet the standard method, it also still recognises that where significant constraints exist, they could affect an area's ability to meet development needs. Historically, planning constraints such as Green Belt, National Landscapes and limited infrastructure have meant the Tandridge District has lower housing requirements than other areas. It is now for the Local Plan process to assess whether this will continue to be the case.

A Local Plan allows more local control over development and avoids costly planning appeals. Without a new Local Plan, the district is vulnerable to development proposals, particularly housing, which do not meet with local needs or priorities. If the Council refuses an unsuitable development, it is likely to be challenged, resulting in planning by appeal on speculative applications that are inappropriate development and do not deliver much needed infrastructure. This is happening at the moment.

Caterham on the Hill



1.3 What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan is the key planning document for a local authority area. It sets out a long term vision and framework for the future development of the district. It guides decisions on where new homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure should be located, while identifying which areas should be protected from development.

The Local Plan provides the basis for planning decisions made by Tandridge District Council. It allocates land for housing and employment, sets out policies for sustainable development, respects the environment and ensures the delivery of infrastructure such as transport, schools, health facilities and utilities. It also helps attract investment and supports local priorities for climate change, biodiversity and community wellbeing.

Local Plans are a statutory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and must be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and align with national policy. Once adopted, the Local Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the Tandridge District and will be used to determine all planning applications in the district.

1.4 Legislative and policy context

Preparing the Local Plan is governed by national legislation and policy, including:

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) or successor regulations relating to the proposed new system for Local Plans.
- Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) and Planning Practice Guidance.

The current Duty to Cooperate system, or the new cross-boundary strategic planning mechanisms (as updated by national reforms), will require ongoing collaboration with neighbouring councils, Surrey County Council and prescribed bodies such as National Highways, Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England.



1.5 Consultation stages

This consultation represents initial early engagement that is being run under the current Local Plan system through Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. In November 2025, the government announced details of the proposed new plan making system which is expected to be brought into force during 2026. This early consultation is an opportunity to gather initial views and identify priorities before the Council prepares its detailed policy options.

Table 1 outlines the subsequent stages of the plan-making process under the planned new regime as set out in the Council's latest Local Development Scheme. This will be updated once further details on the new system are fully known.

Table 1: Plan-making process milestones

Stage	Indicative date	Purpose
Preparatory evidence gathering and scoping	From now	<p>This stage focuses on commissioning and updating key evidence base documents such as the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). ■ Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). ■ Green Belt Assessment. ■ Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study. <p>Early scoping work will identify key spatial issues, opportunities and constraints to inform the plan's scope and direction.</p>
Scoping and early participation	Mid 2026	Identify priorities, challenges and objectives for the Local Plan. This phase will refine the scope of the plan and key themes ahead of Gateway 1 ensuring early alignment with the Duty to Cooperate and emerging evidence.
Plan vision and strategy development (including first consultation)	Late 2026	To develop and test the Local Plan vision, objectives and spatial strategy options. This includes the first public consultation to determine the preferred strategy direction, ensuring choices about growth, development distribution and infrastructure are informed by evidence, policy requirements and community feedback.
Evidence gathering and drafting the plan (including Advisory Gateway 2)	Early 2027	To consolidate evidence and translate the preferred strategy into a draft Local Plan, supported by detailed policies, site allocations and supporting technical documents. This stage includes the Advisory Gateway 2 review to test the soundness and robustness of the draft plan before formal consultation.
Engagement, proposing changes and submission of the plan (including second consultation)	Mid 2027	To carry out the statutory consultation on the proposed submission version of the Local Plan, responding to representations and making necessary modifications prior to formal submission for examination. This stage will demonstrate legal compliance and soundness, supported by the submission of all evidence and consultation statements.
Examination	Early 2028	To enable an independent Planning Inspector to assess whether the submitted Local Plan meets the legal and soundness tests set out in national policy. This stage may include hearing sessions, main modifications and further public consultation as required by the Inspector.
Finalisation and adoption	Mid 2028	To finalise the Local Plan following receipt of the Inspector's report, incorporating any required modifications and proceed to formal adoption by the Council. This marks the completion of the plan-making process and establishes the Local Plan as the primary development plan document for decision-making.

1.6 How to respond

You can respond to this consultation:

- Online: www.tandridge.gov.uk/localplan2026 or scan the QR code.
- E-mail: localplan@tandridge.gov.uk.
- By post: Planning Policy, Tandridge District Council, 8 Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0BT.



The consultation runs from Monday 19 January 2026 to 11.59pm on Sunday 1 March 2026.

All responses will be summarised in a Consultation Statement, which will inform the next stage of the Local Plan.

1.7 Next steps

Following this early engagement:

- The Council will review and analyse all feedback.
- Evidence will be updated and options developed for future development locations.
- A further Issues and Options consultation will follow.
- A draft Local Plan will then be published for formal public participation.

Your feedback now will help shape the future of the Tandridge District including its homes, environment, economy and communities, for generations to come.



Godstone



Oxted

2 Tandridge District profile

The Tandridge District lies in the east of Surrey, covering around 248 square kilometres between the southwestern edge of Greater London and the districts of Mid Sussex and Wealden, with Reigate & Banstead and Sevenoaks to the west and east respectively. The main built up areas in the district are Caterham, Warlingham / Whyteleafe in the north and Oxted / Hurst Green / Limpsfield just south of the M25 motorway. There are also smaller villages and countryside hamlets.

The district's natural environment is one of its greatest assets. The majority of the district is rural, encompassing diverse and distinctive landscapes which underpins local identity, provides habitats for wildlife and shapes the character of towns and villages. The Surrey Hills National Landscape runs through a large area of the district (and which is proposed to be extended in some parts of the Tandridge District) with the High Weald National Landscape also extending into the district.

Around 94% of the district is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt, reflecting its vital role in preventing urban sprawl and maintaining the separation of settlements. The district also includes numerous Conservation Areas, listed buildings and sites of ecological or landscape importance (referred to as Areas of Great Landscape Value), alongside areas at risk of flooding. These planning, environmental and heritage assets are central to the district's identity but also constrain the availability of land for development, creating a delicate balance between growth and protection.

Tandridge District has a population of approximately 88,000, with a mix of rural and suburban communities. It has high levels of commuting mainly by car, strong links to London and Gatwick Airport and a local economy dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises, professional services and rural industries. The area enjoys a high quality of life, but faces challenges related to housing affordability, infrastructure capacity and climate resilience. The new Local Plan will play a crucial role in ensuring future development meets local needs while safeguarding the district's unique environment and character.

3 Consultation topics

- 3.1 The following section outlines a proposed vision for the Tandridge District that the Local Plan will aim to deliver by the end of the plan period in 2044. This section also sets out the main themes the new Local Plan must address through new strategy and planning policies. Each topic includes background context explaining why it matters and a series of consultation questions.

3.2 An initial vision for the Tandridge District

An important part of any Local Plan is to establish a vision for what the area should aim to achieve over the plan period. An initial vision has been created that seeks to respond to the area's profile as exists today, identify what is important to safeguard and what is needed to support our communities and environment by 2044. The initial vision which will guide the preparation of the Local Plan is as follows:

By 2044, the district will have retained its distinctive rural and historic character while delivering development to meet needs in a sustainable way and within the environmental and infrastructure limits that exist. Communities will be supported by thriving local centres, high-quality homes, more affordable housing, well-connected and modern infrastructure and a healthy natural environment.

Development will have been planned and delivered in a way that meets local needs, supports the economy and responds to the challenges of climate change all while reflecting community priorities and the district's environmental and infrastructure constraints. It will be guided by principles of sustainability, accessibility, resilience and quality of place. Homes, jobs, services and infrastructure will be located in the most sustainable and appropriate locations, reducing the need for long-distance travel and supporting strong, self-sustaining communities.

The district will continue to be strongly defined by its Green Belt, countryside, towns, villages and places where people enjoy access to open space, nature and community life.

The district will see significant progress towards low-carbon living, supported by improvements to transport options, energy efficient design and integrated green infrastructure. New development will be directed to the most sustainable and well connected locations, prioritising those with good access to public transport, walking and cycling routes and local services, helping to reduce reliance on car travel.



Caterham on the Hill

Transport will play a critical role in shaping sustainable communities:

- Public transport links (rail, bus and active travel corridors) will be enhanced to improve accessibility between towns, villages and key destinations.
- Streets, neighbourhoods and town centres will be designed to encourage walking, cycling and safe, sustainable movement, including new connections between town and villages and the wider countryside.
- New homes and workplaces will be planned around multi-modal transport options, making it easier for residents to travel without needing to drive.
- Charging infrastructure, mobility hubs, shared transport and digital connectivity will support cleaner, more efficient travel choices.
- Development patterns will reduce the need to travel long distances, with more opportunities to live, work and access services locally.

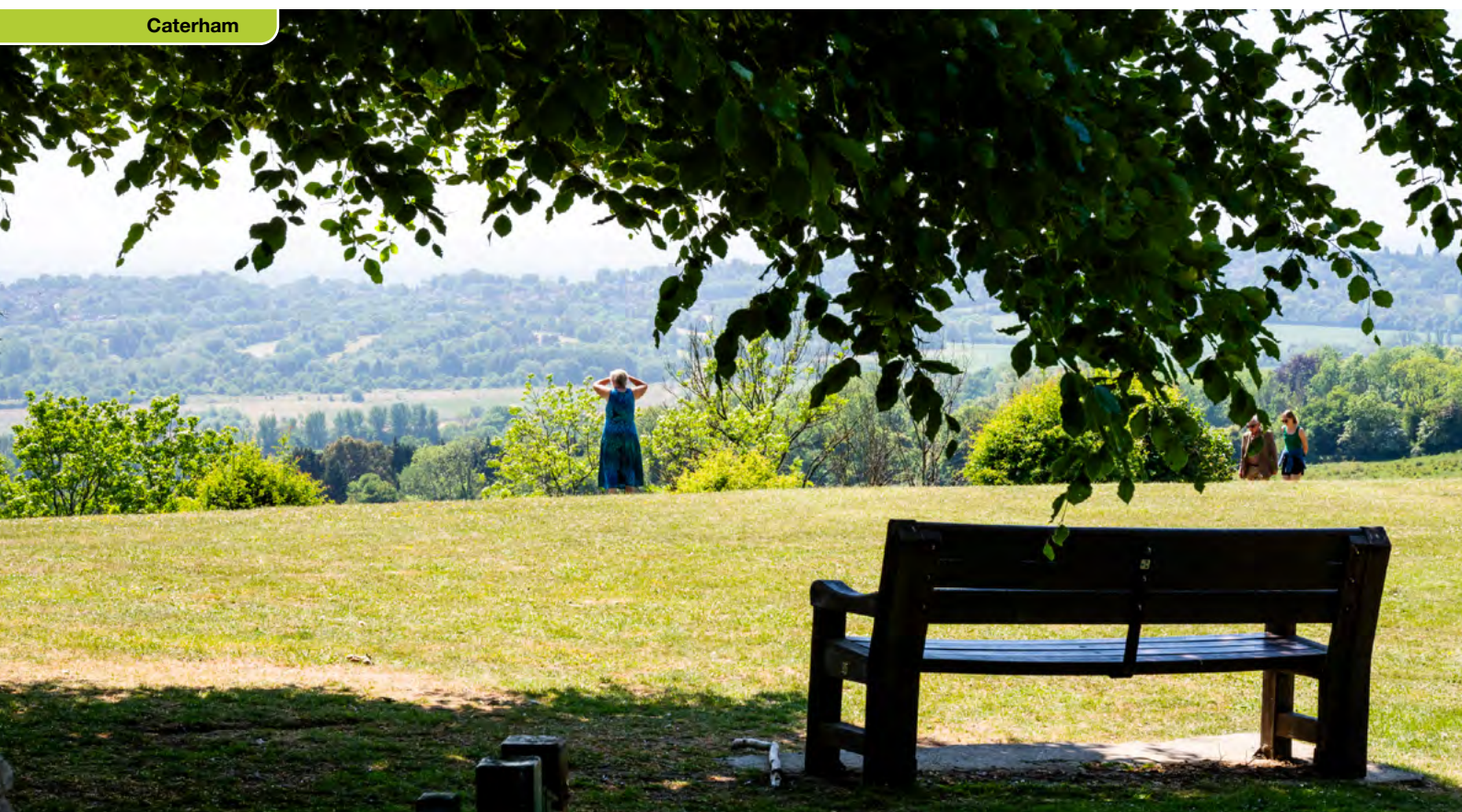
Growth across the district will have been guided in ways that reflect community priorities, environmental constraints and the importance of supporting sustainable transport. The Local Plan will identify the most accessible, well connected locations for development, supported by necessary infrastructure and high quality design.

By the end of the plan period, the vision for the district will be to:

- Provide well designed homes meeting the needs of all ages and incomes.
- Support a diverse and resilient local economy, including rural and digital enterprises.
- Deliver infrastructure and services that keep pace with growth, such as schools, healthcare, green spaces and sustainable transport links.
- Protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, contributing to Surrey's Nature Recovery Network.
- Create healthy, well connected communities reducing reliance on private car use.
- Be recognised as a model for sustainable growth within a predominantly Green Belt district, balancing protection with opportunity.

Through this consultation, the Council is inviting feedback on whether this vision reflects what residents want for the Tandridge District by 2044. It will also shape the priorities and detailed objectives that will follow in later stages of the Local Plan.

Caterham



3.3 Where development should go

Tandridge District faces complex challenges in determining where future development should be located. Around 94% of the district is within the Metropolitan Green Belt, leaving very limited land outside it for development. In addition to Green Belt, the district is subject to other significant constraints including two National Landscapes running through large parts of the area, extensive areas of flood risk, ancient woodlands and locally valued landscapes (designated locally as Areas of Great Landscape), conservation areas and other heritage assets and areas protected for their biodiversity value.

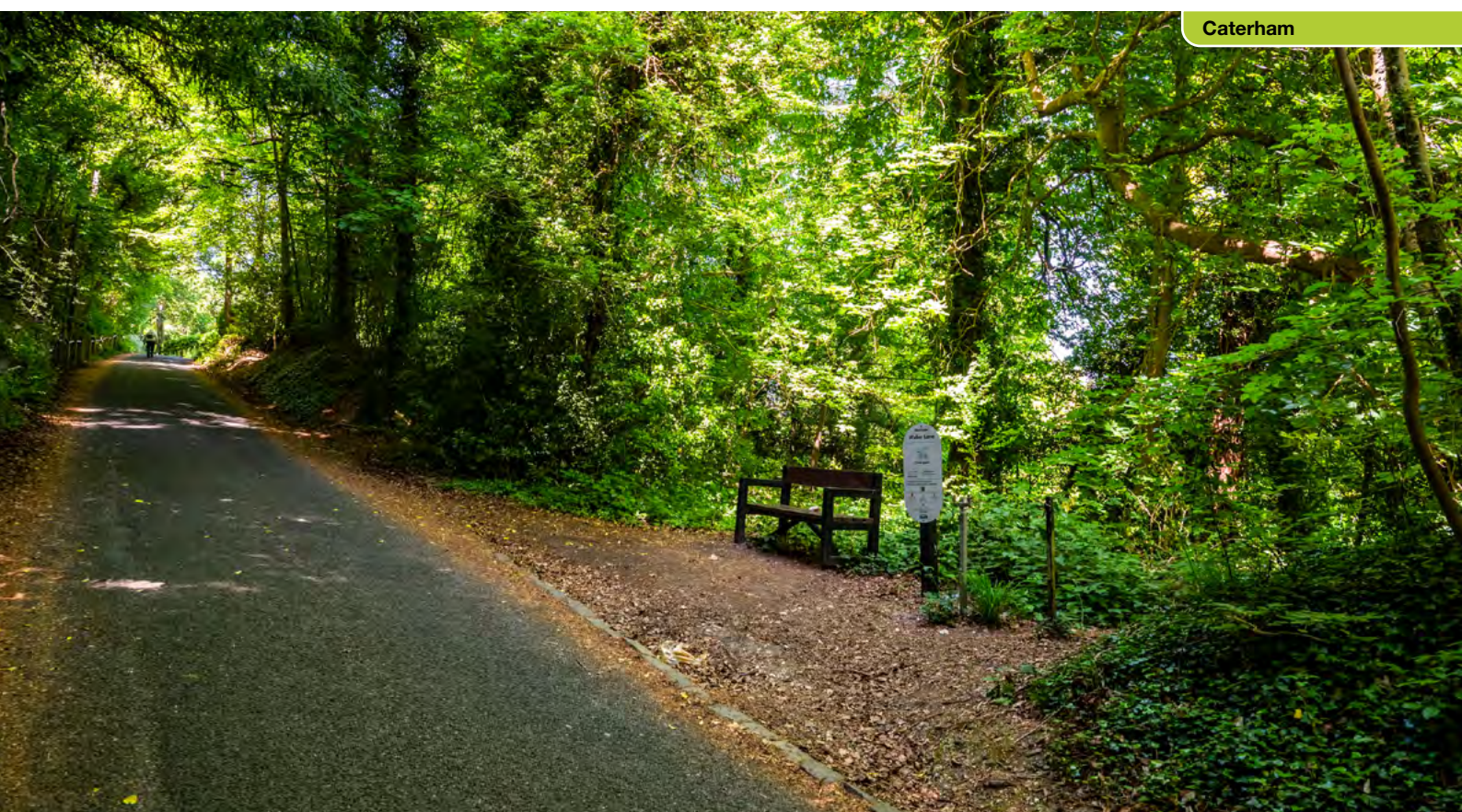
The district is also significantly constrained by infrastructure capacity deficits in its local and strategic road networks, access to railway stations, medical and community facilities, school places, accessible open spaces, shops, access to jobs and other services. The infrastructure issues were a significant factor in the previous local plan not being progressed and remains a key aspect for this new plan to consider when assessing how much new development can reasonably be accommodated.

The environmental, policy and infrastructure constraints presents a very challenging and constrained context for the Local Plan in planning to meet its needs. Notwithstanding, the National Planning Policy Framework requires as the starting point for the Council to plan positively to meet its identified housing and employment needs over the plan period alongside due consideration of the area's constraints.

The Green Belt is fundamental to the district's identity, providing open countryside, distinct settlement patterns and a strong sense of place. It plays a crucial role in preventing urban sprawl, safeguarding the setting of towns and villages and maintaining the character of the countryside.

Green Belt in the district is acknowledged by the Council as being a finite and precious resource that has shaped the character of the area. However, the government's drive for more housing and changes to national planning policy leaves the Council with no option but to assess whether any areas of the Green Belt could be considered suitable for development in the Local Plan.

While the Green Belt is fundamental to the identity and character of the district, the scale of housing development now required will therefore likely mean some land in the Green Belt will need to be released through the local plan process. The effects of the changes to national planning policy are already being seen with speculative planning applications being allowed at appeal due to the level of housing need that has been established by the government's standard method. The Council believes the Local Plan is the most appropriate way to plan to meet needs in its area, which is one of the main reasons why it wants to adopt it as soon as possible as well as to provide longer term protection against speculative proposals. The Local Plan process will look to identify the most sustainable and least harmful locations for development within the Green Belt, while ensuring the overall purposes and integrity of the Green Belt are preserved.



Caterham



Godstone

This approach will be guided by robust evidence, landscape and environmental assessment and community engagement, ensuring any change is limited, justified and accompanied by clear environmental and design safeguards (for example, new green infrastructure, enhanced public access to open space and high quality, sustainable design). Protecting and enhancing the Green Belt will remain at the heart of the district's spatial strategy even as the Council accommodates essential growth responsibly.

In addition to Green Belt, it is recognised the identity of our towns and villages and wider environment provides a special character and place to live for our residents. The level of housing and other development required, however, could also require some changes to character within our settlements as part of planning to meet needs as required by national planning policy. We would like your views on the best way to manage such change and arrive at the appropriate balance for growth that best delivers against the vision for our district.

In arriving at the right balance for where development will be located, the Local Plan will include a locational development strategy to set the overall pattern of growth and define the hierarchy of settlements across the district. It must balance meeting needs with protecting the environment, infrastructure capacity and local character.

Potential approaches include:

- **Towns and larger village intensification:** this would see growth predominantly delivered on previously developed land within existing towns and the larger villages, where services and transport links already exist. However, this option would likely require significant changes to the character of our towns and villages through promoting more flatted developments and other higher density forms of development.
- **An even distribution of development across the district:** This would see an even spread of development across the district with all towns and villages being allocated a proportionate share including exploring the release of Green Belt / Grey Belt land. This would also allow for proportionate growth at smaller rural settlements to meet local housing needs and help sustain local shops, schools, services and the local economy.
- **A focus on new settlements:** This option would see a significant amount of the housing need being delivered through one or more new settlements. This would enable new communities to be formed with the required infrastructure to support delivery of sustainable development. This could also enable there to be proportionately less development at existing settlements in the district.
- **Balanced mix of the above:** This option would combine the most sustainable and environmentally acceptable aspects of the above three options to deliver needs. For example, this could promote use of previously developed land, allow some organic growth on the edges of existing settlements and also deliver a new settlement in an appropriate location in the district.

The Council is required by national policy to ensure the Local Plan must plan positively to accommodate identified needs in a sustainable and deliverable way. Maintaining the current 'status quo' in terms of trying to accommodate development needs, without a step change in our spatial development strategy, is not an option.

3.4 Housing provision

The delivery of new homes is one of the most pressing challenges facing the Council. The government's Standard Method says the district needs approximately 827 new homes per year (which increase to 993 homes per year for the next five years due to the need to add on a buffer to address past under supply). This reflects national objectives to increase housing supply and make homes more affordable.

At present, the district's housing land supply is heavily constrained by Green Belt, limited brownfield opportunities and infrastructure capacity. However, national policy requires the Council to plan to meet as much of this housing need as possible.

The Local Plan must demonstrate it has explored all reasonable options including urban intensification, brownfield redevelopment, the sensitive use of Grey Belt land and proportionate expansion of existing settlements.

The Plan will not only determine how many homes are required but also what types of homes are needed. The district must cater for a diverse population — including families, first time buyers, older residents, people with disabilities, those in need of affordable or social housing and gypsy, travellers and travelling showpeople.

A balanced housing strategy is essential to support a thriving and inclusive community. Housing design quality is also key. Future development must respect local character, provide attractive and safe environments and contribute to the district's climate and environmental objectives through sustainable design.

The Council prefers new development to be on brownfield land. Brownfield land is land that has been built on before (with some exceptions) and is now available for new development. However, the district, is unlikely to have enough brownfield land to meet the government's target of 827 homes per year.

Grey belt

The changes in national Green Belt policy to introduce the concept of grey belt will have implications on land use strategy and the availability of land for development in the district. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines grey belt as being land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and / or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b) or (d) that were brought in to define the function of Green Belt.

- Purpose (a) seeks to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.
- Purpose (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- Purpose (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.



Caterham Valley

The NPPF excludes land as being grey belt where the application of policies in the NPPF for national landscapes, heritage, flood risk and habitats sites provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

A Green Belt Assessment is underway to provisionally identify land that could reasonably be concluded to be grey belt. It should be noted that guidance that supports the NPPF explicitly excludes villages as being large built-up areas or towns for the applications of purposes (a), (b) and (d). Grey belt land could, therefore, exist around some of the district's various villages. It also means that grey belt does not necessarily only include land that is previously developed and could in some instances utilise open countryside around villages where it does not contribute strongly to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) or (d). Being grey belt does not automatically mean development is deemed acceptable as there are still tests to be applied regarding impact on countryside, character and whether a location is suitably sustainable. These aspects will be assessed in detail as the Local Plan progresses to ascertain whether any grey land could be considered for development.

3.5 Affordable housing

Ensuring the delivery of affordable homes is one of the key challenges we face, with many households unable to access market housing for rent or sale. The Local Plan must therefore set a viable and robust policy framework for the amount and type of affordable housing required from new development.

The December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) continued the policy that local authorities may determine the tenure mix and types of affordable housing appropriate for their area, types of which are identified in the glossary of the NPPF, but include:

- a. Social rent.
- b. Other affordable housing for rent.
- c. Discounted market sales housing.
- d. Other affordable routes to home ownership.

Historically, the Council has prioritised social rent and shared equity products delivered through Registered Providers (RPs). However, experience over the past several years demonstrates RPs are increasingly unable to take S106 affordable homes, due to viability constraints, grant limitations, or strategic focus elsewhere. This has already led other districts to increase their use of commuted sums in lieu of onsite provision, enabling councils to bring forward their own affordable housing directly.

Caterham



Tandridge District Council delivers its own Council homes and this provides a unique opportunity to shape and grow a high quality, locally controlled affordable housing portfolio. The emerging Local Plan must therefore consider a flexible approach which allows:

- Onsite delivery using RPs where feasible.
- Onsite delivery using the Council's own direct ownership model.
- Commuted sums in lieu, where onsite provision is not feasible, enabling the Council to deliver homes elsewhere in the district.
- A tenure mix that better reflects local affordability, income profiles and housing needs.

Implementation and production of affordable housing policies are determined through an evidence led approach. It is important to stress that the Local Plan's affordable housing policy, including the percentage requirement, tenure split and delivery mechanisms, will be determined by evidence, not by the outcomes of this consultation.

Evidence sources will include (but are not limited to) the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment and viability assessments. Public responses will help inform the priorities and principles, but the final policy will be driven by robust analysis in accordance with national policy, viability and legal requirements.

3.6 Economy, employment and retail

A strong and resilient economy is vital for the district's long term sustainability. The district benefits from being close to London, Gatwick Airport and the M25 corridor, providing access to wider employment markets. However, the local economy is predominantly small scale and service based, with many residents commuting elsewhere for work mainly by car. Communities are also served by established town and village centres that provide local jobs and other everyday services.

The Local Plan must create the conditions for a more balanced economy, supporting jobs locally while enabling access to wider labour markets. This includes protecting existing employment land, identifying new business and logistics opportunities and encouraging flexible workspace provision.

It will also support new economic sectors such as digital, creative and environmental industries, as well as rural enterprises, farming, tourism and homeworking. Good transport links and digital connectivity is key to achieving a balanced, sustainable economy.

The district's economy is characterised by small and medium sized businesses, professional services, logistics and rural industries. Future policy will seek to:

- Protect existing employment land from being lost to housing.
- Support new and emerging sectors, like digital, creative, low carbon and environmental services.
- Encourage rural businesses, farming, tourism, homebased businesses and affordable coworking spaces.
- Promote mixed use regeneration, bringing workplaces into town and village centres.
- Improve digital and transport links to reduce long journeys to work.

The Council will also explore how planning can help deliver local skills training and employment opportunities linked to new development.



Caterham Valley

3.7 Infrastructure, transport and delivery

Delivering sustainable growth depends on timely and coordinated investment in transport, infrastructure and community facilities. The district already experiences pressures on roads, schools, health facilities and utilities. Future development must be carefully planned with improvements in capacity and access.

The district already experiences severe capacity and safety issues with the Strategic Road Network and any development must not overly impact this. Where necessary, highways improvements and mitigation measures will be introduced to support development, including through the provision of sustainable transport options.

The Local Plan will be supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), setting out baseline levels of infrastructure, what infrastructure is required, when it will be delivered and how it will be funded. Working with partners including Surrey County Council, National Highways, the NHS and utility providers, the Council will seek to align development with investment.

Developer contributions through Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy will help fund local improvements. Community involvement will also help prioritise local projects to ensure growth delivers tangible benefits to residents.

3.8 Our places

Every town, village and rural community in the district has its own distinctive identity shaped by its history, setting, buildings and people.

As the Local Plan looks to the future, it is essential to understand what local people value most about their area, what gives it its special character, what should be protected and where change might be acceptable or even beneficial. This might include the look and feel of local streets, access to countryside, community facilities, transport links, heritage assets, or the mix of housing and services.

The Plan will use this feedback to inform guidance and policies, general and specific to the individual areas, ensuring new development respects and enhances local character rather than eroding it. This approach reflects the government's direction on design codes and place making, which encourage each community to help define the qualities that make its area distinctive.

3.9 The historic environment

Tandridge District's distinctive character comes from varied landscapes, historic settlements and cultural heritage. The district contains numerous Conservation Areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and archaeological sites, as well as historic farmsteads, ancient woodland and rural landscapes.

The Local Plan will aim to protect and enhance these assets, ensuring growth respects the qualities that make the district distinctive. Policies will safeguard designated heritage assets such as, Conservation Areas, listed buildings and locally important heritage assets, while promoting high quality design that complements the historic settings. The Local Plan will protect and enhance these assets and explore opportunities for:

- Conserving heritage significance and settings through appropriate policies and management.
- Promoting high quality, context responsive design through local design codes that reflect traditional materials, forms and street patterns.
- Encouraging heritage led regeneration and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings for housing, workspace and community use.
- Supporting community initiatives to record, interpret and celebrate local history and identity.

Protecting heritage is not about preventing change but about ensuring new development adds value, reinforces local identity and contributes to sustainable placemaking.

3.10 Natural environment and nature recovery

Protecting and enhancing nature and the natural environment is a core objective of the new Local Plan. Tandridge District's rural landscape, woodlands and habitats make a major contribution to the district's identity, biodiversity and quality of life. However, wildlife habitats have been fragmented over time by development, climate change and changing land use. Tandridge District is close to the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC where residential development, without mitigation, has been identified as having a likely significant effect on these designations' environmental integrity.

National legislation, including the Environment Act 2021, requires local authorities to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in new development and to help implement Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). These strategies identify priority areas for habitat creation, enhancement and connectivity at county and district level. The Local Plan will need to reflect and support the priority biodiversity areas identified in the emerging Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Plan must therefore support a coordinated approach to nature recovery, ensuring growth actively contributes to restoring the district's ecological networks. The Local Plan will play a vital role in implementing these objectives by identifying where nature recovery can best take place and by ensuring development contributes positively to these outcomes.

Further to this, the Surrey Hills National Landscape covers around 15% with the High Weald National Landscape also extending into the southern part of the district. The Surrey Hills National Landscape is also proposed to be extended by around 30% in total, a significant proportion of which relates to land within the district. As the extension is expected to take place before the adoption of the Local Plan it is relevant to consider as a land use constraint at this early stage of the process. These nationally designated areas are protected for their scenic quality, biodiversity and cultural heritage. The Local Plan must conserve and enhance their character and setting, ensuring new development respects their natural beauty, local distinctiveness and tranquillity.

3.11 Health, wellbeing and communities

Good planning helps people live healthy, fulfilling lives. The Local Plan will aim to create safe, inclusive and connected communities where residents can easily access services, green space and opportunities for physical activity.

It will promote active travel (walking, cycling), integrate open spaces and play areas within new developments and ensure residents have access to healthcare, education and community facilities.

Designing places that encourage social interaction, safety and inclusivity is key to achieving healthier lifestyles and stronger communities.

The Plan will also recognise the role of planning in addressing wider health determinants such as air quality, noise, access to nature and the quality of the built environment.

3.12 Climate change and sustainable design

Tackling climate change is a top priority. The Plan will help deliver the national transition to net zero carbons, reduce emissions from buildings and transport and ensure new development is resilient to future climate impacts. This includes improving energy performance, promoting renewable energy and ensuring sustainable building practices through high quality design codes.

This means planning for:

- Energy efficient, low carbon buildings using sustainable materials and technologies such as heat pumps and solar panels.
- Sustainable design principles which reduce water and energy use.
- Integrated green roofs and urban greening where appropriate and promote passive heating/cooling to minimise overheating.
- Electric vehicle charging and active travel infrastructure (walking and cycling) to reduce car dependency with improved public transport connections.
- Climate resilient layouts to manage flood risk and provide multifunctional green infrastructure.

The Plan will require development to go beyond minimum national standards where feasible, delivering greener neighbourhoods and long-term environmental benefits.

3.13 Monitoring and delivery

A Local Plan must be deliverable and monitored to ensure it remains effective. The Council will publish an Authority Monitoring Report annually to assess progress on housing delivery, infrastructure, employment land supply and environmental performance.

Regular monitoring will ensure transparency and accountability. If delivery rates fall significantly below targets, or national policy changes materially, an early review of the Plan may be required.

Monitoring will also help measure whether the Local Plan's policies are achieving wider social, economic and environmental outcomes.

4 Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable housing	Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).
Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)	Land designated locally to be of high landscape quality with strong distinctive characteristics which make them particularly sensitive to development.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	CIL is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to help fund and deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.
Design code	A set of illustrated design requirements providing specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
Duty to cooperate	A legal requirement that mandates collaboration between local planning authorities and other public bodies on strategic matters that affect more than one area.
Green Belt	Land designated to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The five purposes of Green Belt are to (a) check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another, (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and (e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
Green infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits.
Grey Belt	Land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d). Grey belt excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Local Housing Need (LHN)	The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in the PPG.
Local Plan	A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.
National Landscape	Areas legally designated as areas of outstanding natural beauty under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	NPPF contains national policy guiding the preparation of Local Plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)	PPG contains national guidance to aid interpretation and application of national policy contained in the NPPF.
Open space	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement between a planning authority and a developer that ensures certain works related to a development are undertaken in order to mitigate the impact of development.
Plan period	A plan period refers to the duration during which a local plan is in effect and generally covers a 15-20 year period.
Previously developed land (Brownfield Land)	Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land
Renewable and low carbon energy	Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).
Self-build and custom-build housing	Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual.
Spatial development strategy	A plan containing policies to deliver housing and infrastructure across a strategic area (such as a County) prepared by Mayor or the relevant higher tier authority.
Sustainable transport	Transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra-low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.



Tandridge District Council
Council Offices, 8 Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0BT.

customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk

www.tandridge.gov.uk

