



## Introduction

Over the next twenty years more development will be required in Mole Valley to deliver Government house building targets and to meet the needs of the local community for new affordable homes, jobs, shops and other services, including schools, medical facilities and recreation requirements.

It is the Council's responsibility to plan for this new development by working with the local community to produce what is called a Local Development Framework or LDF. This is a suite of documents which will guide where and what type of development will take place in the District and how it will be provided. The Mole Valley LDF is one of the most important pieces of work currently being undertaken by the Council.

The first document that is being prepared for inclusion in the LDF is the Core Strategy. This sets out the overarching vision for the District over the next twenty years and explains in broad terms how much and where new development will take place. It does not allocate sites for specific types of development. This detailed planning will follow after the Core Strategy has been approved.

We are at stage two of a three stage process of preparing the Core Strategy. Stage one explored the issues facing Mole Valley and the options for addressing them. We received many helpful comments which have helped us prepare this the second stage in the process – the Council's preferred options for addressing the issues facing the District.

The preferred options are briefly outlined in this Newsletter. Further detailed information is contained in the full document 'Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options Consultation document'.


We would like your comments on these preferred options which will be used to help us deliver the final stage of the Core Strategy's preparation – submitting it to the Government for approval.

## The Vision for Mole Valley

The Core Strategy needs an overarching vision for the District. Therefore, taking into account the vision of the Mole Valley Community Plan, national and regional planning policy and the views that were submitted in response to preceding consultation documents, the vision for planning in Mole Valley is proposed as follows.

***“Mole Valley will take its share of the Region's growth of homes and jobs and provide for the needs of its communities but in a way that minimises significant harmful change to its distinctive character, environment and feel, and mitigates its impact on climate change. The District's communities will have safe, convenient and sustainable access to the services and facilities they require.”***

This will be achieved by a commitment to accommodating development and growth in a way that is sustainable and safeguards the distinctive characteristics of the District's towns, villages and countryside which are enjoyed and appreciated by residents and visitors.

 To read more on the way that this vision will be achieved, see pages 15 to 17 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.


## Where will Development be Directed? (A Spatial Strategy)



One of the key principles of the Core Strategy is to ensure that development contributes to creating more sustainable communities whereby housing and employment opportunities, and community services and facilities are located as close together as possible.

It is proposed that the majority of new development within the District takes place in the most sustainable locations where services and facilities are available, principally Leatherhead and Dorking (including North Holmwood) and to a lesser extent Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham.

Some limited development will also be directed towards the larger rural villages within the District in order to meet local, business and community needs. The Council proposes that the Green Belt is safeguarded as far as possible and any release of land will only be considered if sufficient suitable land is not available within the built-up areas of the District to meet development needs. If this should be the case, the Council will only consider the most sustainable Green Belt locations on the edge of the built-up areas.

 To read more, see pages 18 to 22 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.



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## WHAT WILL THE STRATEGY DELIVER?

The Council is proposing to make provision for the following development over the next twenty years:

### New Homes for Mole Valley




In the period to 2026 the Council is required by Government to make provision for at least 3,760 new homes within Mole Valley, the majority of which will be directed towards the main built-up areas of the District. This represents a 10% increase on the existing number of houses in the District.

Whilst it is important that this number of new homes is provided, the Council believes that it is equally important that these new homes are of a tenure, type and size to meet local needs.

Housing affordability is a big issue within Mole Valley and the Council proposes to increase the percentage of new homes that are 'affordable' particularly for the social rented sector. The Council considers that all sites should contribute towards the provision of affordable housing either on-site (on sites of 10 or more gross units) or via a developer contribution towards the provision of affordable housing on sites of 1 - 9 gross units.

In order to meet the needs of the community the Council will also look to encourage the provision of two and three bedroom homes particularly suitable for newly forming households, young couples and expanding families. Meeting the needs of the increasingly elderly population and the housing needs of the travelling community are also issues which the Core Strategy addresses.

To meet the affordable housing needs of rural communities it is proposed that small scale affordable housing schemes may be allowed as an exception to the normal constraints on development in these areas.


 To read more, see pages 25 to 45 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council has also produced a number of background documents see [www.molevalley.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/ldf) for details.

## Successful Town, District, Local and Village Centres

Mole Valley's town, district, local and village centres play an important role in the life of the District's communities and provide a range of retail, business, leisure and recreation opportunities.

The Council is keen to ensure that the vitality and viability of these centres are safeguarded and enhanced. A vision for each centre – Dorking, Leatherhead, Ashted, Fetcham, Bookham and the rural villages – is set out in the Revised Preferred Options consultation document and an accompanying strategy explains how it is envisaged the vision will be delivered.

Our studies have identified a need for more supermarket floorspace in Dorking and Ashted in particular and this is reflected in the proposed strategies for these two centres. However, no sites have been identified in the Core Strategy as this is something that will be addressed in a subsequent document that will allocate land for a range of specific new developments.

 To read more, see pages 45 to 57 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.

### Sustainable Economic Development

The local economy plays an important role in delivering sustainable growth that contributes to the national economy. This vitality needs to be maintained and enhanced. The District is physically well located (e.g. proximity to London, motorway connections and international airports) and its attractive towns, villages and countryside means it is a highly sought after area by businesses looking to locate near London.


The Council has to try and balance the pressure for economic growth and the benefits that brings with protecting the environmental features that make the District such an attractive area to live, work and visit.

To reconcile these potential conflicts, economic growth will be encouraged by making the best use of land already in employment use. For example, by the more intensive use of sites; maintaining a supply of suitably located sites and supporting development which maintains and enhances Leatherhead and Dorking's

respective roles.

The diverse rural economy also needs to be maintained. Wider considerations such as the potential for new employment opportunities arising from the growing economy and supporting the needs of businesses, visitors and tourism are being considered.

Not all economic factors are land use related and the Core Strategy will be used to help address some key issues including matching the community's skills base to future business needs and reducing the need to travel to work by car.

 To read more, see pages 58 to 62 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council has produced a Local Economy and Employment Land Position Statement which it intends to review.

### A Continuing High Quality Environment

From the landscape that our towns and villages are set within down to an individual street of houses, it all has character, and in Mole Valley it is generally of a very high quality. The Council is therefore proposing that the character of an area surrounding a development site be that rural or urban, town centre or residential, must be considered and respected. To help applicants, the Council is preparing two documents. The Mole Valley Landscape Character Assessment describes the varying landscape across the District and its key features. The Council is also starting work on Urban Character Area Assessments which will set out the key characteristics of the District's main urban areas to help ensure development proposals respect their surroundings.

Mole Valley also contains some valuable areas of flora and fauna, including some sites of European significance. The Council is therefore proposing that development proposals must at all times consider the needs of wildlife and enhance the biodiversity of the District, for example through seeking to retain hedges, trees and water courses within development sites and ensuring that green open spaces are retained.



To read more, see pages 63 to 72 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council has produced a Draft Mole Valley Landscape Character

Assessment which will be available to view and comment on.

## Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

Mole Valley is fortunate to have large areas of exceptional natural or semi-natural open space available to the public. There are also many recreation grounds, allotments, sports halls and village halls, providing access to sports and recreation for residents across the District. However, there are some deficiencies, particularly in terms of play facilities for children and young people and more general amenity space. The Council believes that all open space, sports and recreation facilities are valued by the community and should be protected from redevelopment. In addition it is proposing to seek new sites in some communities where facilities are lacking. However, this will be hard to achieve, as there are many demands and constraints on the use of land in the District.



To read more, see pages 72 to 75 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council has produced an audit of open space, sports and recreation facilities across the District and consulted widely on the issue. Further detail is available to view in the Mole Valley PPG17 Assessment.



A View over the North Downs.

## HOW WILL THE STRATEGY BE DELIVERED?

### Adequate Infrastructure, Services and Facilities

There is a growing concern that the provision and quality of infrastructure has not kept pace with housing development. It is necessary therefore, to ensure that sufficient infrastructure is provided to support the anticipated level of growth in the District. To meet the overall cost of providing new infrastructure, it is proposed that developers will be required to pay a tariff for every new development, which will be ring-fenced to help pay for new infrastructure. To help identify the infrastructure that is required and to coordinate its delivery, the Council will work in partnership with other service providers in both the public and private sectors.

It will also be necessary to safeguard against the loss of existing services and facilities as there are few opportunities to replace them once they are gone.



To read more, see pages 77 to 79 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council is preparing, in conjunction with service providers, a Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements - Position Statement, which will be available to view and comment on.

### Improve Travel Options and Accessibility

Traffic congestion is a major issue in Mole Valley. For the most part, however, transport issues are addressed by the Highway Authority - Surrey County Council. Nevertheless, the Core Strategy has a role to play in the management of the traffic impact of all new development and to bring forward policies that wherever possible reduce the need to travel. Therefore, in accordance with the spatial strategy, new development will generally be focused in the existing built-up area, where travel choices are the greatest.

Within the District there is also a need to improve the general level of accessibility to

key services and facilities for all members of the community. So schemes that lead to improvements in accessibility, and within developments give priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users will be supported by the Council.



To read more, see pages 80 to 82 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.



### Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

Ensuring that we are living within the environment's limit is a key principle of sustainable development, which the Council is committed to addressing. A major challenge is addressing the issue of and effects from climate change at the local level.

Alongside ensuring that development is sustainably located, it is proposed that the causes and effects of climate change in the District are reduced and mitigated against by introducing sustainable construction methods; increasing renewable energy use; and incorporating energy conservation principles / requirements into new development.


New development and the redevelopment and refurbishment of the existing building stock can help tackle the causes of climate change through reducing the reliance on energy sources that generate greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. They can also help mitigate our impact on climate change through, for example, careful design and efficient resource use. This is highly relevant considering the long life span of developments.



To read more, see pages 83 to 86 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.

## Reduced Flood Risk, and Environmental Pollution


Flooding and its consequences is increasingly hitting the headlines. The Council has therefore had to consider this issue when preparing the Core Strategy. With support from the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council the extent of land at risk from flooding across the District has been assessed. This is used to help determine where development can take place without placing it, or others at further risk. The impact of climate change is also an important consideration in this assessment. Following this work the Council is proposing that housing development should not be placed in areas of high or moderate flood risk as there is land available elsewhere within the District with a lower level of risk. In addition the Council wishes to see greater use of the range of sustainable approaches to surface water drainage management to ensure that new development does not unnecessarily add to the level of run-off which, in some areas of the District is causing localised flooding.



To read more, see pages 87 to 89 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. In addition the Council has produced a Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which looks at the sources of flooding and levels of risk across the District, including the impact of climate change, which is available to view and comment on.

## Monitoring and Managing Delivery

To assess the effectiveness of the Core Strategy policies, the Council needs to have a framework in place to monitor its policies against targets and key indicators. The Council already has a duty to submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to Government. The AMR's indicators can be used as the basis for a framework to monitor the Core Strategy policies together with the development of locally specific indicators. Indicators include, for example, the monitoring of the number of dwellings completed per year and the quality of SSSI's. The indicators relate to economic, social and environmental objectives.



To read more, see 89 to 96 of the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options.

## Sustainability Appraisal

The assessment of policies and their contribution, or otherwise, towards various sustainability objectives is ongoing.

The Council published its original Sustainability Appraisal Report in March 2006 and an assessment of the Further Issues and Options in February 2008. A revised Sustainability Appraisal Report will be published for consultation in due course.

### Mole Valley ViewPoint

If you want to take part in the debate about anything suggested in the Core Strategy, why not go to our new online interactive message board at:

[www.molevalleyviewpoint.co.uk](http://www.molevalleyviewpoint.co.uk) where you can post your views by video, MP3, image or text.

But remember, if you want the Council to formally consider your views, you must use the Consultation Portal or put them in writing.

### Drop-In Sessions to discuss the Revised Preferred Options

The Planning Policy Team would like to invite you to one of our 'drop-in' sessions to discuss the contents of the Revised Preferred Options. There will be a small exhibition, all the background documents will be available to view and we will be able to assist you in the many ways that you can comment. We will be at the following locations:

<b>Tuesday, 6th of May - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> St. Mary's Church Hall, Fetcham
<b>Thursday, 8th of May - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> Ralli Rooms at Ashted Peace Memorial Hall
<b>Saturday, 10th of May - 10.00am - 3.00pm</b> Leatherhead Swan Centre
<b>Saturday, 17th of May - 10.00am - 3.00pm</b> St. Martin's Walk, Dorking
<b>Monday, 19th of May - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> Park House, Leatherhead
<b>Wednesday, 21st of May - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> Capel Village Hall
<b>Wednesday, 28th of May - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> Leigh Village Hall
<b>Thursday, 5th of June - 2.30pm - 7.30pm</b> MVDC Council Offices, Dorking



## We Welcome Your Views

You are invited to comment on the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options. All comments must be received by:

**FRIDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2008**

### How to Comment

To view and then comment on the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options Consultation document please go to [www.molevalley.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/ldf) and follow the link to our new Consultation Portal. All supporting documents are also available to view on the website and Consultation Portal.

Alternatively, the document can be downloaded from the above web address along with a comments form, which can be filled out and then emailed to: [ldf@molevalley.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@molevalley.gov.uk).

All documents can be viewed and comments handed in at the Council Offices in Dorking or the HelpShop in Leatherhead during their normal opening hours. All the local libraries also hold copies of the documents.

### Further Information

Please contact the Planning Policy Team using the contact details on Page 1 if you need any further information about this consultation, the Core Strategy or the LDF.

### The Next Steps

Following the current public consultation the Council will consider all of the comments received and they will be used to help draw up the next version of the Core Strategy which will be submitted to the Secretary of State in October for examination next year.