

SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT

POLICY SE1

Natural Resources and Pollution Control

Designated areas and features of acknowledged importance within the natural environment should be conserved and enhanced.

Development should be located and designed to promote the efficient use of energy and water, and the careful use of natural resources, including land and soils.

Development which requires the provision of new water supply or sewage treatment infrastructure should not prejudice existing water abstractions, river flows, water quality, wetland habitats or fisheries.

Development must comply with prevailing standards for the control of emissions to air, water and land. The planning authorities will not permit development which, by reason of noise, odour, radiation or light pollution, would be harmful to the environment or to other land users in the area and will avoid locating sensitive development in the vicinity of known sources of pollution or hazard.

3.1 **P**rotection of the environment requires that development should not prejudice the quantity or quality of important elements of the natural environment. Where the scale or nature of a proposed development, its potential impact on the environment, or its location in relation to sensitive areas could affect areas or features of acknowledged environmental importance, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be undertaken. Such developments must also be considered against the objectives set out in various

national strategies, for example, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the National Air Quality Strategy, as well as European Directives and international obligations.

3.2 The policy is central to ensuring the prudent use of the basic natural resources of air, land and soils, water and minerals, and protecting the environment. These are key strands of the national strategy for sustainable development. One of the basic resources, often neglected in the past, is soil quality, which contributes to a range of environmental and economic goods. Development should re-use previously developed land and be more intensive in form to promote the conservation of land. The more concentrated form of development will facilitate adoption of energy conservation measures, which along with greater use of public transport, cycling and walking, can help to reduce the growth in greenhouse gas emissions. New development should be as sustainable as possible, designed to achieve a BREEAM or EcoHomes standard of 'excellent' (please see Glossary).

3.3 Water resources to support development are finite without major investment in new storage facilities and the attendant environmental impacts associated with them. This, and the uncertainty over future seasonal fluctuations in supply associated with climate change, supports taking a precautionary approach to resource conservation. Ground and surface water resources need to be protected from the pressure for over-abstraction and from pollution to ensure that they remain available to provide drinking water, to sustain agriculture and related activity and to support wetland habitats. Creation of ponds for storage of winter rainfall for subsequent

agricultural use reduces pressure on water resources and should be supported.

3.4 The impact that increasing discharge rates has on water quality in Surrey's rivers raises concern. In particular, in headwater locations, the dilution rates for sewage effluent are low. Further development in areas where treatment works are at or near capacity must not be allowed prior to the upgrading of the treatment works. Development prejudicial to the achievement of river water quality objectives will not be acceptable.

3.5 If a proposed development has any potential pollution risk associated with emissions or discharges to air, land or water, the risk must be reduced to comply with national or European standards of control, whichever is the more stringent. The planning authorities, in conjunction with other agencies, will promote the use of the best available techniques to achieve this. The Environment Agency has specific responsibilities in relation to the regulation of waste management, radioactive substances and emissions to air from complex industrial processes, as well as regulating discharges to the water environment. Other forms of pollution, such as noise, odour and light emanating from a development, will be controlled in the interests of local amenity and the environment. Where Air Quality Management Areas have been designated, or known sources of pollution or potential hazard exist, restrictions on the form and nature of development proposals will be imposed in the interests of personal safety.

How the policy will be implemented

- ① The local planning authorities will:
 - ② select locations for development which contribute to conserving the use of natural resources and avoid harm to areas of environmental or cultural importance;
 - ② require Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for major developments, those in sensitive locations or those that impact on features of particular importance;
 - ② produce EIA Best Practice Guidance to assist scoping of EIAs in Surrey;
 - ② adopt policies which require use of the principles in *Surrey Design* concerned with resources;
 - ② include policies in local development frameworks which promote greater efficiency in the use of energy by improved siting, layout and design of development, better building insulation, passive solar design and use of energy efficient domestic appliances and heating systems;
 - ② adopt policies which require careful use of natural resources and the salvaging and re-use of secondary aggregates in construction;
 - ② consult water supply undertakers and the Environment Agency to ensure that adequate water resources are available to meet demands arising from development;
 - ② promote, in conjunction with water companies and the Environment Agency, the incorporation of water efficiency measures in new development;

- ④ consult the Environment Agency where development poses a pollution risk or a threat to groundwater quality;
- ④ require development affecting contaminated or unstable land to include measures to rectify the problems identified;
- ④ phase development in relation to the available capacity of sewage treatment works to deliver effluent which does not prejudice river water quality objectives.
- ④ The local authorities will:
 - ④ consult and liaise with other agencies to ensure best practice is applied to limit polluting discharges to air, land and water;
 - ④ designate Air Quality Management Areas where standards are not satisfactory and develop action plans including land use planning responses;
 - ④ resist further development in areas of known risk from pollution or other hazard.

Indicators of policy performance

- ④ Number of occasions when air quality fails to meet statutory targets
- ④ Number of development schemes with water efficiency measures
- ④ Water quality in rivers and groundwater
- ④ Number of pollution incidents
- ④ Trends in the level of groundwater

POLICY SE2

Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

Development for the generation of energy from renewable resources of wind, sun and biomass as a contribution to the regional target will be encouraged. Small scale proposals to serve individual buildings, or small groups of buildings, are becoming practicable and will be supported. In areas such as the AONBs, landscape considerations may preclude larger schemes, but small scale schemes may be acceptable.

Commercial and residential development should be designed such that a minimum of 10% of the energy requirement is provided by renewable resources. The use of combined heat and power or similar technology will be encouraged, and for all developments in excess of 5,000 sq m floorspace should be regarded as the norm.

All types of development should incorporate energy efficiency best practice measures in their design, layout and orientation.

3.6 **A** long term objective in the UK is for more energy to be generated from sources which emit little or no carbon dioxide, and in particular from renewable energy resources such as solar or wind power and biomass. The Government's present target to achieve 10% of UK electricity generation from renewable resources by 2010 will only be achieved if development providing for such technology is permitted. Targets of generation capacity from renewable sources for the South East region have been developed by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA). The SEERA strategy

proposes that planning authorities should undertake assessments of potential and collaborate on a sub-regional basis to identify how the targets are to be achieved.

3.7 In Surrey, SEERA's research indicates that biomass has considerable potential in the period to 2016. The England Rural Development Programme provides support for biomass projects, although landowners are unlikely to commit to growing fuel crops until a local market is available. Wind power is capable of making a valuable contribution either in the form of clusters of small wind turbines and/or single large turbines. Solar power, either passive or active, is a further valuable resource although it is assumed that the contribution from active solar power (photovoltaics) will be greater after 2016. Electricity generation from landfill gas will continue to make a limited contribution to energy supply up to 2016.

3.8 Development of biomass processing plant and wind turbines to enable the exploitation of renewable energy resources should be encouraged where the wider benefits outweigh any local impacts on amenity and character. Particular care will need to be taken in the case of proposals within areas designated for their landscape or nature conservation quality. Technological advance is also facilitating the localised generation of energy from renewable sources to meet the needs even of individual buildings and opportunities should be taken wherever possible to adopt such technologies in smaller schemes.

3.9 The energy demands from new development should reflect the wider national objective of increasing supply from renewable resources by incorporating appropriate technology within the design of buildings. Larger

development sites provide the opportunity to promote innovative approaches to heat and energy, such as district heating or combined heat and power (CHP). Mixed use schemes in and around town centres offer particular opportunities to share both heating and cooling demands between different users. These technologies offer substantial benefits in terms of energy efficiency, reducing the impact of development over its lifetime.

3.10 Greater energy efficiency is an objective common to all forms of development and further guidance is given in *Surrey Design*. Energy efficient design and layout should be seen as the norm for new development, with passive solar design being the basic starting point. Development briefs for larger schemes should establish the need to incorporate measures that go beyond the minimum requirements set out in the Building Regulations.

How the policy will be implemented

- ② Local development frameworks will include policies to:
 - ② encourage renewable energy generation from wind, sun and biomass resources including supply for individual properties;
 - ② require new development to provide a proportion of its energy requirement from renewable resources;
 - ② encourage the use of combined heating (and cooling) and power schemes for major developments;
 - ② promote energy conservation in construction of buildings (building energy ratings).

- ① *Surrey Design* promotes energy conservation through innovation and layout designs which make best use of natural light and energy.
- ① The local planning authorities will:
 - ② collaborate on the assessment of the local potential for renewable energy generation in the light of the regional targets to 2026;
 - ② identify criteria for the assessment of renewable energy proposals.
- ① The local planning authorities will collaborate on the assessment of the local potential for renewable energy generation and the sub-regional deployment of such resources.

Indicators of policy performance

- ① Energy generated from renewable sources in Surrey
- ① Proportion of new buildings achieving high energy conservation rating
- ① Take up of energy conservation schemes within existing buildings
- ① Number of district heating systems and installed capacity of CHP plant

POLICY SE3

Flooding and Land Drainage

Development for residential or commercial purposes in undeveloped areas at high risk from flooding is unacceptable. A flood risk assessment will be required for any proposal within a high risk area and for new residential development in areas of low to medium risk. Proposals for redevelopment of existing buildings and their curtilage within areas where there is a high risk of flooding should aim to improve conditions locally and not worsen flood risk elsewhere in the catchment.

New development should not lead to an increase in run-off, which would exacerbate flood risk elsewhere. The regulation of run-off will be required as part of development proposals, including the use of sustainable drainage solutions as appropriate, to reduce the impact of development on flood risk elsewhere.

New development will not be permitted in the functional floodplain unless it relates to the use or management of the water environment or to open recreation.

3.11 Significant areas of Surrey within each of the main river catchments are prone to flooding. The predictions of the impact of climate change include the prospect of increased flood risk as a result of higher rainfall, greater seasonality in rainfall and a greater incidence of extreme events. The Environment Agency produces indicative flood risk maps for main rivers showing areas at risk of flooding from an event occurring once in a hundred years. These may be supplemented by Section 105 maps for some stretches of the main rivers. PPG25 *Development and Flood Risk* defines events of this

magnitude as high risk and advises that residential or commercial development should not take place within undeveloped areas exposed to such a risk.

3.12 The implications of larger residential schemes in areas of low to medium risk also need careful assessment. PPG25 defines low risk as areas where flooding may occur in an event with a return period of once every thousand years. The Environment Agency is in the process of producing indicative maps for this level of risk. Flood risk assessment should become the norm for all developments within high risk areas and for larger developments elsewhere. The planning authorities will liaise with the Environment Agency on the outcome of flood risk assessments and run-off mitigation proposals.

3.13 Many existing buildings within the Mole, Wey and Lower Thames catchments lie in areas of high flood risk. Proposals for redevelopment of existing buildings and land within these high risk areas will be carefully assessed in consultation with the Environment Agency. The objective will be to reduce risk to people and property as far as possible by the design and method of construction.

3.14 The control of run-off within the catchment as a whole can help to reduce risks to existing property in the future. At appropriate locations, the use of sustainable urban drainage solutions will be promoted in all new development or redevelopment schemes across the catchments to control the rate and quality of run-off as close to its source as possible. Advice on sustainable urban drainage is included in *Surrey Design* as part of the

advice on resource efficiency in new development. The intensification of development within existing urban areas imposes extra demands on sewerage infrastructure which need to be mitigated. Development which would exacerbate the threat of pollution from the surcharging of the sewerage system at times of flood will only be accepted where improvements are undertaken contemporaneously. Advice from the water utility companies will be sought as appropriate.

3.15 The natural function of undeveloped parts of flood plains needs to be retained as a means of mitigating the risk of flooding elsewhere. This is a greater priority given the predicted effects of climate change. There will be a presumption against development which affects the open nature of undeveloped parts of the flood plain or reduces its capacity to store water at times of flood. Some land uses such as recreation and mineral working may be acceptable in such areas and development related to essential infrastructure or river management functions may be necessary.

3.16 The role played by floodplains in absorbing and retaining flood waters and their consequent value as wetland habitats has diminished. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan places emphasis on the restoration of wetland habitats and in floodplains this can also bring benefit in helping protect people and property elsewhere in the catchment. The land use imperative in floodplains is therefore to restore their natural function and expand wetland habitats at the expense of other land use.

How the policy will be implemented

- ① The local planning authorities will:
 - ⊗ require the provision of flood risk assessments for development proposals within areas of high risk of flooding and for larger developments in areas of low to medium risk;
 - ⊗ consult the Environment Agency on development within previously developed land at high risk from flooding;
 - ⊗ promote source control techniques to regulate land drainage and ensure that run-off from development does not exacerbate flood risk downstream;
 - ⊗ in partnership with the Environment Agency, resist development within undeveloped parts of flood plains and adopt a precautionary approach.
- ② *Surrey Design* provides advice on sustainable urban drainage systems.
- ③ Liaison with the Environment Agency and water utility companies on issues of flood risk and land drainage will inform implementation of this policy.

Indicators of policy performance

- ① Development on land at risk from flooding
- ② Number of development schemes with source control measures

TARGET 5

POLICY SE4

Design and the Quality of Development

Development should contribute to improvements to the quality of urban and rural areas whilst retaining features that contribute to sense of place. The design, both of buildings themselves and of the way they integrate with their surroundings, must be of a high standard. Within this framework, new residential development should be built at a density which makes best use of limited land resources.

The layout of new development and the opportunities presented by redevelopment within built-up areas should give emphasis to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, thereby enhancing movement choice.

The local planning authorities will identify, promote and safeguard a framework of open spaces and green corridors for each settlement.

3.17 **D**evelopment, particularly where higher densities are proposed, is often seen as a threat to the quality of life within existing developed areas but there is no reason why this should be so. The design and layout of new buildings and landscape features are ways in which new development can complement what already exists, strengthen the sense of place or form the basis of new character. Design excellence and a design led approach to development are national and regional objectives which must be applied locally and are a means of achieving greater efficiency in the use of urban land.

3.18 Design excellence will also be concerned with the objectives of sustainable construction which include:

- Ⓞ high energy efficiency and increased use of renewable supplies;
- Ⓞ high water efficiency with sustainable supply and water collection systems;
- Ⓞ healthy buildings – natural light & ventilation, non-toxic materials;
- Ⓞ maximising the use of local and regional materials and products;
- Ⓞ minimising waste.

3.19 The Spatial Strategy seeks to make the best use of urban and suitably located previously developed land. This puts a premium on the quality of development if higher densities are to be achieved and the objective of improving the quality of life is also to be satisfied. Higher densities also have other benefits, such as improving the viability and patronage of public transport services, increasing support to a range of local services and offering improvements in energy conservation and the potential for alternative means of energy generation, such as combined heat and power schemes (CHP).

3.20 PPG3 sets out minimum density standards for new residential development, avoiding densities below 30 dwellings per hectare and encouraging development at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare or higher in central locations. The local planning authorities should have regard to this guidance, and to the principles set out in this Plan and *Surrey Design* when setting local density guidelines. Where residential development is proposed on its own or as part of a mixed use scheme in

an area with good public transport accessibility, such as within and around a town centre, higher densities of over 50 dwellings per hectare (net) should be sought. Significantly higher densities may be appropriate to deliver the objectives for the centres of strategic importance.

3.21 An imaginative approach to design and density should create attractive developments which enhance the character of an area. To ensure that higher density development makes a positive contribution to improving the quality of the living environment, proposals will need to be accompanied by:

- Ⓞ an infrastructure and needs statement which demonstrates that the proposed development addresses local social, economic and transport needs, particularly the need for affordable housing, and does not overload local infrastructure or exacerbate existing deficiencies. Effective mitigation measures should be proposed to overcome, reduce or avoid any identified harm; and
- Ⓞ a design statement which demonstrates how the development responds to relevant design principles and identifies the positive benefits of higher density development to urban form, movement and the overall sense of place.

3.22 All development proposals, including small scale infill and redevelopment schemes, will be required to satisfy the fundamental design principles set out in the design guide *Surrey Design*, the maxim being that proposals must be good enough to approve, not bad enough to refuse. Small scale infilling and redevelopment schemes should not prejudice the established character and sense

of place within existing primarily residential areas. Where green or open space is protected, this should be because it contributes to public amenity or nature conservation. Integration with existing development, particularly to facilitate and widen transport choices and connections, is a prerequisite of good design.

3.23 Surrey's towns and villages are rich in character. A traditional building, a famous landmark or view, or a natural asset like a stream or meadow, distinguish localities and stamp an identity on a settlement. Many features may already be protected through legislation but others are worthy of retention in their own right. Such local identity should be cherished and not submerged by anonymous new development. Where significant change is anticipated, consultation with local communities may be warranted to achieve new development which is sympathetic in form and layout to that which already exists.

3.24 Open land, such as parks, allotments and recreational areas, is important and appreciated by residents and visitors alike. Often a "corridor" that links open spaces can be just as important, whether it is a river or stream, or even a railway line or road. These can in themselves provide opportunities for informal recreation, have biodiversity significance, or form part of pedestrian or cycle routes. A greenspace strategy for settlements is required to ensure that future developments create the opportunity for new open spaces to be made or for improvements to the network and linkages between existing open spaces and playing fields to be achieved.

How the policy will be implemented

- ② *Surrey Design* promotes a design led approach to new development to:
 - ③ promote good design through the development process;
 - ③ create attractive and accessible places that are easy to move through;
 - ③ ensure that all development contributes to local character and distinctiveness;
 - ③ conserve energy and water, maintain and enhance biodiversity and reduce waste and pollution;
 - ③ encourage vibrant and mixed communities where people feel safe;
 - ③ create places and buildings for people that are safe;
 - ③ make the best use of the available land;
 - ③ maximise the potential for the future conversion of buildings and occupation for alternative uses.
- ② The local planning authorities will:
 - ③ adopt policies which require all new development to be of the highest design quality in accordance with the objectives and principles set out in *Surrey Design*;
 - ③ require design statements, as part of an application for development sites to explain the design philosophy and integration with surroundings;
 - ③ as part of a design statement, encourage an objective assessment of the sustainability of a development by using the SEEDA Sustainability Checklist, the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Methods (BREEAM) or equivalent;

- ④ identify areas for urban renaissance and renewal;
- ④ identify and justify areas of special character;
- ④ identify local features contributing to sense of place;
- ④ identify a greenspace framework including strategic open space and corridors;
- ④ promote conservation area enhancement schemes;
- ④ promote the use of village design statements, parish plans and conservation area appraisals;
- ④ work with local communities to develop a shared vision of the type of built and physical environment they wish to see;
- ④ set density standards for new residential development;
- ④ prepare development briefs to guide the appearance, layout and density of major new residential development;
- ④ require the submission of infrastructure and needs statements where there is a net increase in dwelling provision.

Indicators of policy performance

- ④ Number of major developments subject to a design statement
- ④ Number of design awards achieved for new development
- ④ Adoption of greenspace strategies
- ④ Area of and accessibility to greenspaces according to their function
- ④ Number of developments achieving a BREEAM rating of 'excellent'
- ④ Average density of new residential development
- ④ Density of development in and around town centres relative to urban and rural areas

TARGETS 6 & 11

POLICY SE5**Protecting the Heritage**

Surrey's valuable cultural heritage of buildings, sites and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced. Heritage resources are irreplaceable and development affecting them will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that there is an overriding need for the proposal which outweighs the need to protect the heritage interest, and that no alternative is possible.

Prior archaeological assessment, and if necessary evaluation, will be required on all development of sites over 0.4 hectares or within areas of high archaeological potential. Where important archaeological remains are found, there will be a preference for their preservation in situ.

A record will be required of any features discovered, removed or altered.

3.25 Surrey is one of Britain's most historic counties, with many buildings, landmarks and landscapes that remind us of our proud heritage and are irreplaceable assets. The historic environment not only provides an important insight into our cultural heritage but also contributes to the identity and distinctiveness of a place. Policy SE5 will ensure that development conserves the heritage and, where possible, enhances it as well. Surrey's Heritage Strategy contains further guidance as to how the heritage will be conserved whether by initiatives associated with development or otherwise.

3.26 Every effort should be made to protect the historic environment, for instance, by encouraging the sensitive re-use of historic buildings for purposes which meet economic or social needs. Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the local economy and conservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage supports this activity.

3.27 This policy also affords protection to features of archaeological importance. Scheduled monuments and other sites of national importance are already given strong protection. In order to safeguard other, presently unknown, archaeological resources, the developer will be required to take responsibility for the provision of an assessment prior to development on larger sites or areas of known high archaeological potential. Assessment may result in the need for a site evaluation: the outcome of this evaluation will indicate whether in situ preservation is recommended. Recording of archaeological features or buildings that are altered, disturbed or removed as a consequence of development will be required. Such a record is essential if knowledge of their contribution to the cultural heritage of the county is to be retained for the benefit of future generations.

How the policy will be implemented

- ① The local planning authorities will:
 - ② include policies in their local development frameworks for the protection of buildings/areas of heritage value (listed and locally listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, areas of special historic landscape value, county sites of archaeological

importance, sites and areas of high archaeological potential);

- ② include policies in their local development frameworks to require archaeological assessment and evaluation, and to provide for subsequent preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and for adequate recording of features and listed buildings affected by development;
 - ② promote schemes for enhancement of conservation areas;
 - ② periodically review the schedule of listed and locally listed buildings with a view to making any appropriate additions, and review buildings at risk;
 - ② promote schemes under the Townscape Heritage Initiative and the Local Heritage Initiative;
 - ② promote the elements of the Heritage Strategy which relate to the built environment, the countryside and archaeological resources.
- ② Supplementary planning guidance will provide further policy advice on archaeology and historic landscapes, including that arising from the Historic Landscape Characterisation and Extensive Urban Archaeology Strategy Projects.

Indicators of policy performance

- ② Development adversely affecting heritage buildings, sites or areas, and historic parks and gardens
- ② Number and proportion of listed buildings at risk
- ② Number of sites and buildings where preservation in situ is achieved
- ② Number of schemes for the enhancement of conservation areas
- ② Proportion of developments on sites over 0.4 hectares or within areas of high archaeological potential for which a prior assessment of the archaeological resources was prepared
- ② Records made where development affecting sites or areas takes place

TARGET 7

POLICY SE6

Biodiversity

Biodiversity within Surrey should be conserved and enhanced and development will be expected to contribute to actions safeguarding and managing habitats identified as important through the UK and Surrey Biodiversity Action Plans, or where they are protected by wildlife legislation. Species protection will contribute to safeguarding biodiversity. This will be secured by:

- 1 ensuring that site evaluation is undertaken to establish the nature conservation value of proposed development sites;
- 2 providing for the identification, safeguarding and management of existing and potential land for nature conservation as part of development proposals, particularly where a connected series of sites can be achieved.

Features within the landscape which are of importance for wild fauna and flora should be protected. Development should seek to retain such features and their management will be encouraged by agreements or conditions as appropriate.

Developers will be required to provide information on species or features present within sites, or on adjoining land, and to propose how impacts on their conservation will be mitigated.

3.28 **B**iodiversity includes all living things; it includes rare or threatened species but encompasses the whole of the natural world. The threat to biodiversity is an increasing one in a world facing pollution, climate change and development pressures. Policy SE6 aims to

tackle that threat in Surrey while at the same time ensuring we meet our commitments to conserve biodiversity outlined in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

3.29 The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) sets out how Surrey's biological resource is to be conserved and enhanced for future generations. It identifies ten priority habitats within the county. Habitat action plans address the need for conservation and management of land within these important habitats. Habitats are not simply a countryside issue as one of the action plans for Surrey covers urban areas. Development will be expected to contribute to these biodiversity objectives and local development frameworks will identify locations where habitat creation can be achieved.

3.30 The EU Habitats Directive and advice within PPG9 *Nature Conservation* point to the need to conserve wildlife outside the designated sites. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy highlights concern over the decline in many species of birds and mammals in the UK. There are many features within the landscape that are of benefit to the survival and dispersal of species, e.g. rivers and streams, ditches, field boundaries, ponds and small woods. Such features should be properly managed and wherever possible conserved by careful detailed planning. Preventing further fragmentation by safeguarding existing habitats and improving linkages between them will help to maintain the current range and diversity of flora and fauna.

3.31 Where development, essential to meet social and economic objectives, requires the removal of features, their replacement or the enhancement of similar features in the locality should be provided for. The developer

should undertake a prior assessment of the development site in order to ascertain whether it contains species or features of importance to Surrey's biodiversity, how these are affected by the proposal and what mitigation is to be undertaken.

How the policy will be implemented

- ① Local development frameworks will:
 - ② include policies to conserve and enhance biodiversity, ensure protection and management of key habitats, conserve features of value to wildlife, provide for species protection, and provide for measures to offset loss or damage to landscape features which are of value to wildlife such as trees, hedgerows and ponds;
 - ② include a species protection policy;
 - ② identify features of major importance for wild fauna and flora.
- ① Local planning authorities will:
 - ② require prior assessment of the development site by the developer to provide information on species and features of the landscape important to Surrey's biodiversity;
 - ② use conditions and agreements to manage development affecting species and features of the landscape important to Surrey's biodiversity;

- ② identify locations and proposals for habitat and species managements, restoration and creation.
- ① English Nature's Natural Areas profiles and policy, including advice on geological and physiographical sites and features of interest, will be followed.
- ① The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan will provide specific habitat and species targets and local development frameworks will identify locations where habitat creation is proposed.
- ① When preparing local development frameworks and assessing planning applications, advice on local nature conservation issues will be sought from the appropriate agencies.
- ① Supplementary planning guidance provides further information on Biodiversity and Nature Conservation.

Indicators of policy performance

- ① Area of each key habitat for which Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan prepared and area of these habitats created or restored

TARGET 8

POLICY SE7**Nature Conservation**

Land or water habitats designated as of importance for nature at an international, national, regional or county level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international, national or local importance.

Development, whether directly or indirectly, which may harm designated sites that are important for nature conservation will be permitted if mitigating measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts or where it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance, and that no alternative site is available.

3.32 Conservation of land or water comprising habitats designated as important to nature conservation is essential for the maintenance of Surrey's biodiversity and has implications for the quality of life of Surrey's residents. The nature conservation value of a site should be taken into account in all developments both in the countryside and the urban areas.

3.33 Sites of nature conservation and natural history importance have been designated by reference to their international, national, regional or local importance and are identified in local plans. Sites designated for their nature conservation importance cover about 15% of Surrey and it should therefore be possible to meet development requirements without prejudice to this land. The intention of the policy is that there should be a

presumption against development which directly affects such sites. This protection extends to indirect impacts, such as changes to groundwater levels or potential downstream pollution, which may harm their nature conservation interest. Wildlife corridors between such sites should be created, conserved and enhanced.

3.34 Where a proposal does affect a site, the presumption against development will be assessed in relation to the status of the site as set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, the Habitats Regulations 1994 and PPG9, the potential impact on the interests which justify its importance, the need for the development and the objectives of the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan. The presumption against development will be strongest for internationally and nationally designated sites as mentioned in RPG9. Where development harmful to a designated site takes place, measures to compensate for the loss of nature conservation value must be provided by the developer.

How the policy will be implemented

- ① Local development frameworks will:
 - ⊗ include policies to protect land of nature conservation value/earth science interest including SPAs, potential SPAs, SACs, candidate SACs, Ramsar Sites, SSSIs, NNRs, LNRs, SNCIs and RIGs (all are defined in the glossary);
 - ⊗ include policy and proposals on the protection of Local Nature Reserves.
- ① Supplementary planning guidance provides further information on Biodiversity and Nature Conservation.
- ① When preparing local development frameworks and

assessing planning applications, advice on local nature conservation issues will be sought from the appropriate agencies.

- ④ The local planning authorities will periodically reassess the status of nature conservation sites in conjunction with other agencies.

Indicators of policy performance

- ④ Area of land in active conservation management
- ④ Area of designated sites and extent of loss, damage or enhancement of such land resulting from development
- ④ Creation of wildlife corridors between designated sites

TARGET 8

POLICY SE8

Landscape

The quality of landscape in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) should be conserved and enhanced. In the AONBs, development inconsistent with the primary aim of conserving the natural beauty of the landscape will be resisted. Major development will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for development is of national importance, and that there is no alternative site.

Development in the AGLV will be expected to maintain the existing character of the area particularly in locations which are visible from the AONB or contribute to the setting of urban areas.

Elsewhere, development should retain the distinctiveness of the County Landscape Character Areas, thereby conserving and enhancing the diversity of the Surrey landscape. Development will be expected to contribute to meeting the objectives of local countryside management projects and, in particular, to improvements to areas where landscape is becoming degraded, especially on the urban fringe.

3.35 Significant parts of Surrey's countryside are recognised nationally as of high landscape quality and designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). An AONB Management Plan exists for each, prepared in response to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and local planning authorities will have regard to this in considering development proposals in the area. There will be a presumption against major

residential or commercial development within these areas, while new development in areas visible from the AONB should not prejudice enjoyment of their natural beauty. However, there are numerous villages in the AONB and limited development to provide services and local employment for these communities may be necessary. Where this is the case, schemes should respect the character of the settlement and of the surrounding countryside in order to conserve the qualities for which the AONB was designated. Mineral resources may need to be worked in the AONB or nearby and in either case mitigation of the impact of any development will be required to a high standard.

3.36 Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) were designated in the 1950s before the AONB and are significant within Surrey in conserving the landscape setting of some towns, in part acting as a buffer to the AONB and also for their own inherent landscape quality. Landscape quality within the AGLV will be conserved and detailed criteria to guide development in these areas will be developed within the context provided by the countryside character assessment and set out in relevant local development frameworks. The review of landscape character will develop criteria specific to each of the 25 County Landscape Character Areas (which are set out below) and also identify areas of degraded landscapes where action needs to be taken to arrest the decline in landscape character.

3.37 Surrey has a rich diversity of landscape, reflecting the variety of geology, topography, land cover and human influence on the countryside. The Countryside Character Initiative was developed by the Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency) and English Nature with the help of English Heritage. The underlying philosophy is the recognition that every part of the countryside has a distinct character which is important to people's enjoyment of the English countryside. It does not deny that some areas are of higher quality than others, but the National Map defines, at a regional level, areas of broadly similar character and suggests management opportunities to conserve or enhance this character. The national map of countryside character shows seven countryside character areas in Surrey. A more detailed assessment, *The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands* (SCC 1997), has enabled the identification and description of 25 County Landscape Character Areas within these seven areas. Retaining this diversity, which is a characteristic feature of Surrey's countryside, requires that development should respect the elements of the landscape which contribute to the individual character of the different areas. The box sets out the basic components of Surrey's landscape as defined in the National Map and how the more detailed countywide assessment relates to this.

Regional Countryside Character Areas (7)	Surrey Countryside Character Areas (25)	Sub-division of Surrey area for descriptive purposes (17)
Thames Valley	Thames Floodplain	Stanwell Laleham and Sunbury Molesey Thorpe
	River Thames	
Thames Basin Heaths	Western Surrey	Virginia Water Chobham and Ottershaw Bagshot and Pirbright Worplesdon Painshill
	Blackwater Valley Lower Wey	
Thames Basin Lowlands	Wanborough Ockham and Clandon Lower Mole Esher and Epsom	
	North Downs	Hogs Back Ranmore and Hackhurst Downs Mole Gap Woldingham, Chaldon and Box Hill
Wealden Greensand	Puttenham and Seale Greensand Plateau	Shackleford Witley and Churt Dippenhall Dockenfield
	Valleys of the Upper Wey Hindhead Greensand Hascombe Greensand Pippbrook and Tillingbourne Leith Hill Greensand Holmesdale Reigate Greensand	Limpsfield Chart Nutfield and Tilburstow Reigate Heath Deepondene
Low Weald	Wooded Weald Open Weald	
High Weald	Upper Medway	

How the policy will be implemented

- ② The County Council, in partnership with the relevant authorities, will:
 - ② review the AGLV in Surrey as part of a wider assessment of landscape quality and character;
 - ② define criteria to guide development design in relation to character and quality.
- ② The local planning authorities will include policies in their local development frameworks to conserve the diversity and distinctiveness of the landscape.
- ② *The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands (FSLW)* identifies 25 County Landscape Character Areas (see box); supplementary landscape guidance will be prepared, to illustrate how the character and local identity of these areas can be conserved.
- ② The Forestry Commission and other agencies will promote multi-purpose woodland management.
- ② Management plans for the Surrey Hills and High Weald AONBs will be implemented.
- ② Schemes based on the Countryside Agency Local Heritage Initiative will be undertaken.

Indicators of policy performance

- ② Type, amount and quality of development in AONB and County Landscape Character Areas
- ② Maintenance of distinctiveness within and between landscape character areas

POLICY SE9

Trees and Woodland

Trees and woodlands, particularly ancient woodlands, will be protected and their management promoted. The planning authorities will seek to ensure that the extent of tree cover in the county is maintained and in particular will resist the fragmentation and loss of woodland.

Proposals for new development will be expected to show how new planting and existing trees and woodland will be effectively managed and integrated whether in town or country. Development associated with the positive long term management of woodland resources, such as wood to energy schemes or the processing of local wood, will be encouraged.

Hedgerows, parklands and wood pasture are a characteristic feature in many parts of the county and should be safeguarded where their landscape, biodiversity, or historical interest is significant.

3.38 **S**urrey is England's most wooded county with almost three times the national average woodland cover. The well wooded nature of Surrey's landscape contributes to making Surrey an attractive place in which to both live and work, adding to the quality of life. While appropriate new planting is welcome, particularly in relation to new development and linking or expanding woods, the conservation and management of existing woodland is more of a priority. Selective felling may be required to retain historic landscapes and in areas of nature conservation value in order to maintain or promote biodiversity.

Encroachment of trees and scrub on to valuable open habitats such as heathlands and grasslands will result in the loss of their wildlife value. Habitat management including removal of trees in such circumstances is appropriate.

3.39 The Government's England Forestry Strategy recognises the important role woodlands play in delivering a range of benefits for society. These range from their function as carbon sinks and their role in ameliorating atmospheric pollutants, to their value in reducing both the visual and audible impact of development. Woodland is an important ecological resource and also an important resource for recreation and tourism. Timber is a valuable commercial crop and wood fuel is potentially a major source of renewable energy in Surrey.

3.40 Ancient woodlands over two hectares in size are identified in English Nature's provisional inventory of ancient woodland. Ancient woods are important as historic landscapes and in the contribution they make towards biodiversity. They are an irreplaceable national resource and will continue to be conserved.

3.41 Individual and groups of trees within the urban area have a number of roles, not least the psychological one of providing contrast and tranquillity within towns. Intensification of development in urban areas should not be at the expense of the contribution which trees can make to the street scene, air quality and sense of wellbeing.

3.42 Hedgerows can be a significant feature in the landscape and may be important for a number of reasons. Important hedgerows should be conserved and other hedgerows should be retained as features within new development wherever possible.

How the policy will be implemented

- ② The local planning authorities will include policies in their local development frameworks to conserve woodland, to encourage schemes which promote woodland management and to protect individual or groups of trees, including specimen and veteran trees, within both urban and rural areas.
- ② The Forestry Commission and other agencies will be encouraged to promote multi-purpose woodland management.
- ② The Forestry Commission should be consulted where tree felling is proposed to determine whether or not a felling licence is required.
- ② Supplementary Planning Guidance is available in *The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands – Part 3 – Woodland Strategy*.
- ② Where a planning application may affect ancient woodlands, the Forestry Commission should be consulted in accordance with Circular 9/95.

Indicators of policy performance

- ④ Loss of woodland cover to development
- ④ Extent and quality of woodland cover
- ④ Extent of woodland under active management
- ④ Number of schemes which exploit woodland resource
- ④ Loss of semi-natural or ancient woodland

POLICY SE10

River Corridors and Waterways

Development should conserve the character, setting, ecology and heritage of river corridors or waterways. Development ancillary to water-based recreation will be encouraged where consistent with the above.

The function of rivers and waterways as green corridors within and between urban areas should be safeguarded as part of a greenspace strategy for settlements and as valuable links in access between town and country.

3.43 **S**urrey has many rivers, streams and canals, each of which are important features in the landscape or townscape and for many people, contribute to their quality of life. They also contribute to sustaining ecological diversity by forming a basis for wildlife corridors and supporting one of the priority habitats in the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Some of the rivers and canals are extensively used for boating and all provide recreational opportunities as linear routes either through town or country or linking the two. Use of rivers and waterways for boating requires the provision of infrastructure in the form of boatyards and moorings. Floodplains are a characteristic feature of many corridors and it is important that this natural function is not prejudiced.

3.44 Surrey's waterways combine some or all of these functions as well as being important in providing a rich heritage of industrial archaeology. It is important that they are cherished and that development affecting them

should seek to conserve or enhance their character, retaining features of natural and cultural heritage importance. In urban areas, the redevelopment of riverside and canalside sites should promote enhancement of the townscape, the natural qualities of the river/canal and its role as a corridor for movement and recreation, linking with other open space. This should form part of a greenspace strategy for each settlement, as required under Policy SE4.

How the policy will be implemented

- ④ The local planning authorities will:
 - ④ identify river corridor policy areas for the Thames, Wey, Mole, and Blackwater rivers and for tributaries within their catchments;
 - ④ identify and protect corridors for the Basingstoke and Wey and Arun Canals;
 - ④ identify a green framework, including strategic open space and corridors (greenspace strategy).
- ④ The local authorities and other agencies will:
 - ④ develop a River Thames Policy Area Strategy;
 - ④ promote integrated management of the Mole Gap between Dorking and Leatherhead;
 - ④ promote the Wey and Godalming Navigation conservation area;
 - ④ encourage/facilitate public access for water-based or waterside recreation, including use of corridors as linear features in town and country;
 - ④ promote the creation of buffer zones along watercourses.

Indicators of policy performance

- ④ Number of development related enhancement schemes within river corridors