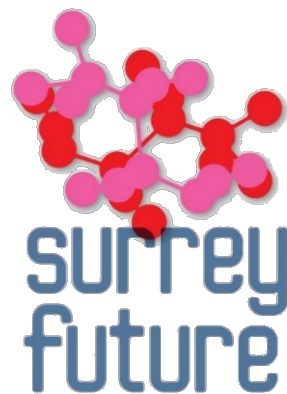




SURREY'S 2050 PLACE AMBITION

**A Collective Vision for Place Leadership,
Infrastructure and Good Growth**

Version 2 - 2023



Contents

Preface	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction	8
Context.....	11
Our Vision, Principles and Values	14
Our Priority Themes.....	16
Priority Theme 1: Address the climate emergency	16
Priority Theme 2: Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs	17
Priority Theme 3: Enhance the place offer of Surrey’s towns and urban areas.....	19
Priority Theme 4: Maximise the benefits of strong collaboration to achieve sustainable development in our key sub-areas	23
Priority Theme 5: Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery.....	25
Delivering our 2050 Place Ambition	27

Preface

The Surrey Place Ambition sets out a clear and coherent narrative about what Surrey's strategic partners want to collectively achieve over the next 30 years in terms of "good growth" but never have the challenges to deliver this been so great.

The county is home to some of the UK's most prosperous and economically successful places, but it also contains communities in need of support. Many of the challenges in these places are longstanding, but the Covid-19 pandemic brought these sharply into focus.

The need for a productive economy is important for Surrey's local communities. The county is also an important growth, innovation and exporting powerhouse for the UK and investment in Surrey is critical if the county is to maximise its contribution to the country's economic recovery and long term sustainable growth. There is a need to address the existing infrastructure deficit which places significant limits on Surrey's investment opportunities and therefore its potential in contributing to national growth. The UK cannot have a levelled up north without a functioning south and there is a need for a fair distribution of funding opportunities across the country.

Urgent global action is needed to address the impact of climate change. If we are to achieve net zero carbon emission targets by 2050, a big step change in how we think about, plan and deliver growth across Surrey, with the right type and level of supporting development and infrastructure, is needed now.

Despite these challenges, there are real opportunities for Surrey to grow and become even more attractive for residents and businesses alike. Across the county there is a deeply held ambition for the future which defines our approach to "good growth". This recognises the need to change the way we think about growth, placing the health and wellbeing of our environment and communities at the heart of our economic objectives. Vitrally, there is a shared determination to deliver this with all partners contributing proactively.

The Place Ambition sets out how this might happen in an integrated way, but this requires strong leadership at a political level and a willingness to take difficult decisions in the interests of ensuring that long term prosperity and overall success is secured for Surrey. All our partners are therefore fully committed to continue to work together to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, respond to the challenges of climate change and deliver long term "good growth" for all our communities.



Robert Moran,

Chair, Surrey Future Steering Board, 2017 – 2022

Executive Summary

Introduction

Surrey's 2050 Place Ambition sets out the collective, long term ambition of Surrey local authorities to achieve "good growth". It is not a statutory document, and this revised version refreshes version 1 which was produced in July 2019. New development needs to be supported and managed in a way that helps address climate change and the current infrastructure deficit and enables Surrey's economy to grow sustainably while at the same time contributing to improving the overall quality of the natural and built environment and well-being of residents. Although non-statutory, the Place Ambition nonetheless demonstrates the commitment of partners to ongoing cooperation to deliver good growth and align planned development and infrastructure investment in the county.

Its preparation has been informed by local plan objectives and requirements and other plans and strategies prepared by the borough, district and county councils and partners, and evidence developed to support them. While it looks to the longer term, it does not imply or identify any policies or specific development proposals beyond those in existing and emerging local plans although the delivery of some of the largest identified strategic sites will extend significantly beyond current local plan periods.

Key to our ambitious approach to delivering good growth is making full use of our own existing assets. But we cannot deliver good growth on our own; we will need the help of our strategic partnerships across Surrey and support from our wider sub-national partners and Government, particularly in relation to accessing additional funding and investment opportunities. We will also need to work with our local communities, making sure that there is wide ranging choice in housing, services and jobs across Surrey, and that our places are distinctive, attractive, well designed and full of character. Underlying all of this is our ambition to improve the overall quality of health and well-being across Surrey, recognising that healthy places and people are vital for our long term prosperity and fundamental to the delivery of good growth.

Vision and Approach

The Place Ambition sets out a vision for a county of well-functioning and connected places, with healthy communities and a high quality of life. Surrey recognises its important role in the wider South East economy and will build on its strengths while retaining the qualities which give the county its distinctive character. Local authorities and partner agencies will collaborate on positive and innovative solutions to shared challenges to tackle climate change, enhance the natural and built environment, secure greater economic prosperity and meet as much housing need as possible taking into account the various constraints and designations that cover much of the county.

Central to achieving this is the need for us to take an ambitious approach to facilitate the delivery of good growth for Surrey which:

- Is sustainable, focusing on the places where people both live and work or locations where appropriate investment and interventions will enhance sustainability.
- Supports overall improvements to the physical and mental health and well-being of our residents.
- Is supported by the necessary infrastructure investment - including investment in natural capital and nature recovery.
- Delivers high quality design in our buildings and public realm.
- Increases resilience and flexibility in the local economy.
- Delivers buildings and infrastructure ready for a zero-carbon future and builds resilience to the impacts of climate change and flooding.
- Is planned and delivered at a local level while recognising that this will inevitably extend at times across administrative boundaries.

Priority Themes

Five priority themes are intended to guide partners in delivering the vision and good growth. They are not mutually exclusive and should therefore be considered together.

- Priority Theme 1: Address the climate emergency.
- Priority Theme 2: Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs.
- Priority Theme 3: Enhance the place offer of Surrey's towns and urban areas.
- Priority Theme 4: Maximise the benefits of strong collaboration to achieve sustainable development in our key sub-areas.
- Priority Theme 5: Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery.

Sub-Areas (SAs)

The Place Ambition considers nine key sub-areas. These are broad areas within which significant new housing and/or employment development is proposed in adopted and emerging local plans, where new strategic infrastructure and investment to address existing infrastructure deficiencies is needed, and where impacts may cross administrative boundaries and it is essential for issues to be considered jointly by partners on a wider geographical basis. They are not areas for meeting unmet housing needs from elsewhere in Surrey or across the sub-area itself.

The SAs include new communities and areas where there are opportunities to maximise the value of strategic economic assets - be that transport hubs, universities, or strategic employment locations - to support long term prosperity.

The nine SAs in the Place Ambition are:

- SA1: Longcross-Staines-Heathrow Corridor

- SA2: Woking Hub
- SA3: Guildford Hub
- SA4: Blackwater Valley Corridor
- SA5: Cranleigh-Dunsfold Corridor
- SA6: Epsom-Leatherhead Corridor
- SA7: M23-Gatwick Corridor
- SA8: M25 J6/A22 Corridor
- SA9: M25 J10/A3 Wisley

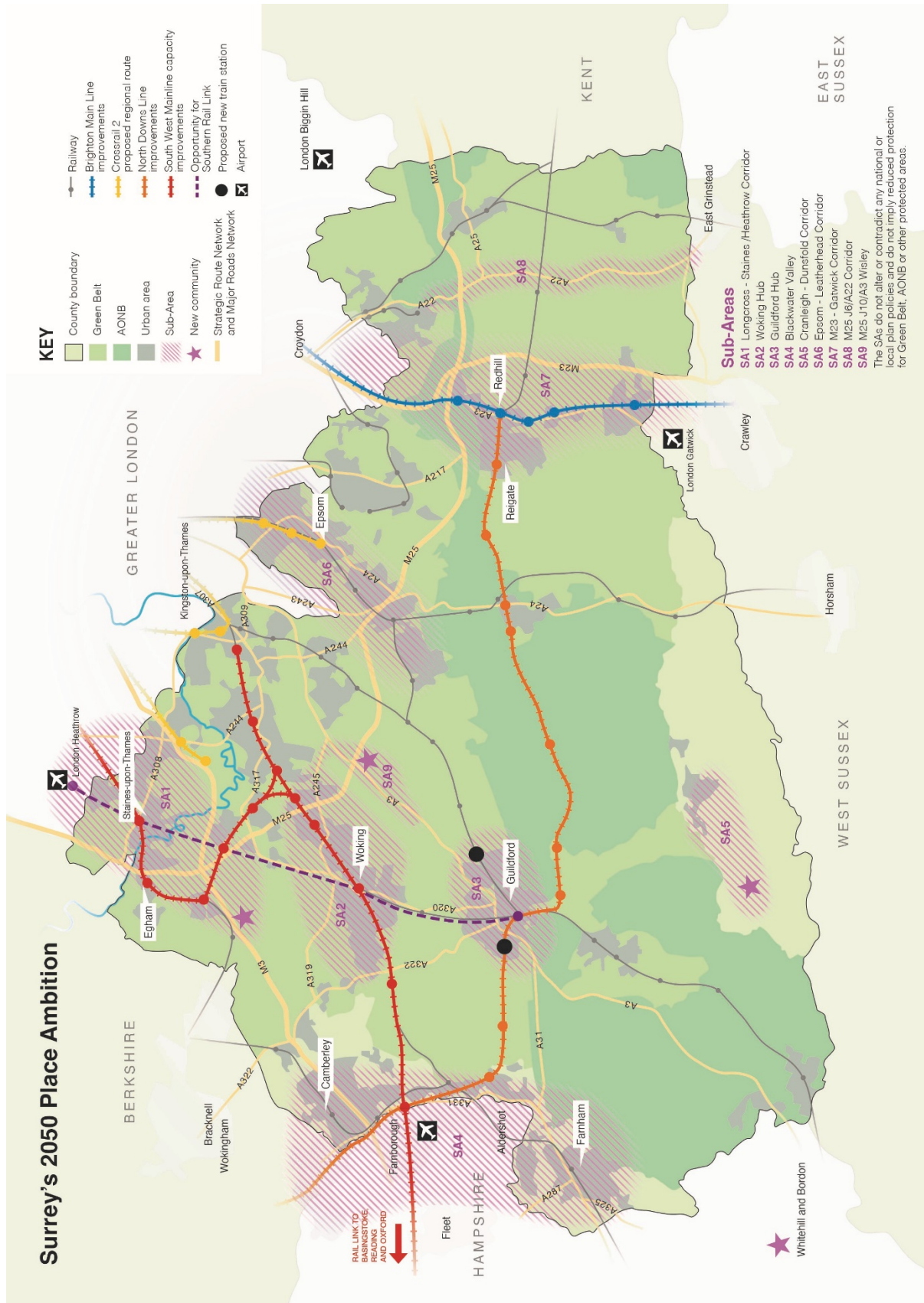
Figure 1 presents an overview of the spatial priorities for Surrey. The SAs, shown by indicative shading, do not alter or contradict any national or local plan policies and do not imply reduced protection for Green Belt, National Landscape (previously AONB) or other protected areas within them.

Implementation and Monitoring

Delivering “good growth” requires long term commitment and investment and collaboration with many different stakeholders and partners and will be achieved through:

- An integrated system for delivering good growth – The Place Ambition will be implemented through various plans and strategies and collaboration and joint working by partners who will seek to avoid duplication and promote efficiencies.
- Sub-area interventions – the interventions needed to achieve agreed priority outcomes for each SA.
- Place Ambition Urban Strategy – Priority Theme 3 is to enhance the place offer of Surrey’s towns and urban areas. One mechanism for taking this forward is through the Surrey Urban Strategy work programme.
- Delivering Surrey Spatial Strategies for Nature – Priority Theme 5 is to invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery. Implementation will include development and delivery of a number of spatial strategies for nature including the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
- Monitoring – a set of appropriate metrics to monitor progress on the implementation of the Place Ambition will be developed and kept under regular review. This will include progress on the agreed interventions for each SA.

Figure 1



Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Surrey's local authorities have a track record of working together to achieve shared objectives. In 2017, we produced a joint Interim Local Strategic Statement¹ to facilitate cooperation on strategic planning issues and in 2018, Surrey Chief Executives agreed to take this forward and, with strategic partners², produce a growth vision and strategy for Surrey as a whole.
- 1.2 Version 1 of Surrey's 2050 Place Ambition was published in 2019. It set out an ambitious approach to facilitate the delivery of "good growth" to enable Surrey to continue to play a full part in contributing to national economic prosperity over the next 30 years as a key driver of growth, innovation and skills and remain an excellent place where people can live, work and learn.
- 1.3 Since 2019, however, we have had to deal with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our communities and economy, and the urgent need to respond to climate change has escalated. This document refreshes the original version of the Place Ambition to take account of the impact of the pandemic, actions needed to support a zero-carbon future and new policy documents and other local and countywide work currently being undertaken across Surrey.
- 1.4 Facilitating the delivery of good growth, remains central to Version 2 of Surrey's 2050 Place Ambition. Inevitably, there will be local variations in what good growth looks like across the county, but essentially good growth for Surrey:
 - Is sustainable, focusing on the places where people both live and work or locations where appropriate investment and interventions will enhance sustainability.
 - Supports overall improvements to the physical and mental health and well-being of our residents.
 - Is supported by the necessary infrastructure investment - including investment in natural capital and nature recovery.
 - Delivers high quality design in our buildings and public realm.
 - Increases resilience and flexibility in the local economy.
 - Delivers buildings and infrastructure ready for a zero-carbon future and builds resilience to the impacts of climate change and flooding.

¹ [Interim Local Strategic Statement for Surrey 2016-2031](#)

² The eleven Surrey district and borough councils and Surrey County Council worked together under the auspices of the [Surrey Future Steering Board](#). Partners include Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnerships, Gatwick Diamond Business and Surrey Nature Partnership

- Is planned and delivered at a local level while recognising that this will inevitably extend at times across administrative boundaries.

Role of Surrey's 2050 Place Ambition

- 1.5 Nationally, the Government has introduced its ambition to address regional inequalities and to level up the country. In Surrey, our aim is that no one is left behind. This means tackling inequalities in our communities and improving outcomes for everyone by addressing health inequalities and housing needs particularly for affordable and specialist housing, improving education and skills training to enable people to access jobs, improving access to community and green spaces, tackling climate change, and embracing environmental improvements for future generations.
- 1.6 The Place Ambition contributes to this agenda by bringing partners together to collectively address shared challenges and by providing a spatial overview to help shape investment decisions to support good growth. The intention is to:
- Support effective and efficient joint working by providing consensus on a clear set of agreed objectives for delivering good growth in Surrey; highlighting those areas within Surrey and cross-border with adjoining areas where a strategic focus is required and agreeing interventions.
 - Help to align business/investment priorities of other key bodies, such as National Highways, the Environment Agency and utility companies.
 - Provide a collective voice for Surrey to enable partners to make a stronger case for infrastructure investment in Surrey – it is an important evidence base for lobbying.
 - Assist Surrey authorities with their ongoing work and cooperation when preparing local plans and satisfying the Duty to Cooperate³.
 - Provide a basis for working collaboratively and collectively on sub-regional and regional matters such as the long term growth of London.
- 1.7 It has been developed to help us maximise the opportunities to proactively manage growth in the most effective way by steering investing into key infrastructure and assets while at the same time enhancing the natural environment that makes Surrey a unique and attractive place for residents, businesses and visitors alike. It reflects growth that is already being planned for by boroughs and districts in their local plans⁴, the combined effect of this growth across the county, and cross-boundary issues with areas outside Surrey. District and borough councils continue to be

³ A legal requirement for local plans where authorities must demonstrate that they have engaged “constructively, actively and on an on-going basis” with neighbouring authorities and other organisations on strategic planning matters.

⁴ Surrey County Council produces the Minerals and Waste Local Plan for the county.

responsible for determining housing numbers and site allocations for housing and commercial development and the Place Ambition does not imply or identify any policies or proposals beyond current local plan periods. Local plans across the county are at different stages in the plan-making process and the Place Ambition aims to assist their alignment with the investment programmes of strategic infrastructure providers. Our urban areas will continue to be where we focus on facilitating delivery of good growth. Therefore, the Place Ambition has a focus on urban areas, but there is a need to continue to support our rural economy, communities and environment. Our strategic partners, including the districts and boroughs, the Surrey Hills National Landscape and the High Weald National Landscape have rural strategies and management plans which we will continue to support.

Context

Understanding the County

- 2.1 Surrey's unique strategic position with its proximity to London and Heathrow and Gatwick airports, access to the south coast, its excellent road and rail connectivity, its highly skilled workforce, diverse and increasingly digital business base, its world class education facilities and its excellent quality environment are all valuable assets which will be used to grow our businesses and talent base. However, the very assets that make Surrey such an attractive place are the ones that need proactive management to ensure that existing challenges are addressed and that they receive the right level of investment to enhance Surrey's offer for existing and future generations.
- 2.2 Urgent global action is needed to combat climate change and its impacts. This has been recognised through a number of Surrey councils declaring climate emergencies. County and local climate change strategies set out how carbon emission reductions will be achieved, which includes reducing carbon from transport, promoting energy efficiency improvements and supporting the creation of green technologies.
- 2.3 Surrey covers an area of 1,663 km², with 87% of the population living in urban areas and 13% in rural areas. 74% of the land is covered by national and international designations such as Metropolitan Green Belt and National Landscape (previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Surrey net housing completions were 5,100 in 2021/22 (up from 4,600 in 2020/21), but this is below the need figure of over 5,600 new homes a year that results from adding the requirement set out in up to date adopted local plans and the level calculated using the Government's standard method where local plans are not up to date.
- 2.4 Surrey has a very strong, productive, and innovative economy, contributing over £45 billion per year to the national economy, with a highly skilled workforce. Our key assets include a strong business base and four universities. The economy does not rely on one dominant sector but has strengths in several high-value, knowledge-based and innovative sectors. Nevertheless, the economy is expected to take time to adjust to the impacts of Covid-19. Some sectors, such as aviation, have been particularly severely impacted and changes in working patterns may lead to longer term adjustments in commuting and the ongoing decline of the high street. Although increases in working from home may also create new opportunities for high streets to develop and thrive.

Surrey in Facts and Figures

- The county is characterised by a polycentric settlement pattern of large and small towns but with no one dominant city or conurbation. Guildford is the most significant urban settlement and county town. Other major towns are Camberley, Epsom, Redhill, Staines-upon-Thames and Woking.
- Surrey is home to a wealth of natural capital, biodiversity and habitats, including a variety of landscape habitats, such as in the Surrey Hills National Landscape (which Natural England is currently proposing to extend) and the High Weald National Landscape. The county is also home to nationally and internationally rare areas of habitat, such as the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.
- Surrey is one of the most densely populated shire counties in England with a population of 1.2 million in 481,800 households. The population has grown by over 6% over the last ten years.
- Just under one in five of Surrey's population is aged 65+ and this group is expected to increase to over 25% of the population by 2041, which will present significant challenges for future care provision across the county.
- Surrey's economy is strong and GVA in 2019 was £45 billion, contributing 16% to the South East's GVA. However, the rate of growth is low and is expected to continue to be low or negative. New businesses in Surrey have been created at a lower rate than the national average. GVA per person has also grown more slowly than in the rest of the country over the last 20 years.
- The median annual pay for men in full-time employment in Surrey in 2022 was £44,186 which is £5,500 more than the South East average and £8,500 more than the average for England. The median annual pay for women in full-time employment in Surrey was £35,688 which is nearly £4,500 more than the South East average and £6,000 more than the average for England.
- The county is affluent but with pockets of social deprivation. There are significant inequalities in healthy life expectancy between wards within the county. This gap is linked to deprivation; with healthy life expectancy in the least deprived quartile 4.8 years higher for women and 4.7 years higher for men than in the most deprived quartile.
- Surrey has some of the most expensive places to live in the country with an average house price in September 2022 of £532,983 compared with £311,887 in England. Housing affordability – the ratio of median house price to median gross annual residence-based earnings – was 11.48 in 2020 compared to 9.57 for the South East of England. There is proportionally less affordable housing than other areas in the South

East and consequently a growing need for affordable housing especially for residents on low incomes.

- On average, Surrey's air quality is better than the national average with an index of accessibility to air quality score of 26.1 compared to 26.8 nationally. There are however 27 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and wide disparities between the north and the rest of the county.
- Surrey's carbon emissions are falling, but not quickly enough to meet 2050 net zero emissions targets, at current levels emissions from transport are expected to increase slightly. Currently, 46% of Surrey's emissions come from the transport sector, with housing responsible for 28% of emissions, public/commercial buildings 15%, and industry 11%.
- Surrey's transport connections are a key strength but also have limitations and constraints. Surrey's A roads have 66% more traffic than the national average leading to unreliable journey times and congestion, estimated to cost businesses £550 million per year.
- Car ownership in Surrey is high with 86% of households owning a car compared to the national average of 73%. Pre COVID-19, around 60% of Surrey's working population commuted by car, many for a distance less than 10 km. Electric vehicle uptake has increased in the UK and Surrey and the local transport plan includes a programme of activity to increase and promote electric vehicle charging facilities.
- About 131,000 of Surrey residents (19% of the working population) commute into London by train, leading to significant peak service overcrowding. Future levels of demand are unclear, but it is likely that some employees will commute less frequently.
- Surrey has good superfast broadband coverage at 98%, slightly higher than the English national average 96.3%. The priority is to improve residential and business access to Gigabit speeds.
- Estimated infrastructure costs to support planned growth were £5.5 billion in 2017 with a funding gap of £2.5bn. Since 2017, the gap will have risen due to increases in construction costs. Surrey also faces pressures on its infrastructure arising from planned development in neighbouring areas, such as outer London, Hampshire and Sussex.

Our Vision, Principles and Values

- 3.1 Our vision is for a county of well-functioning and connected places, with healthy communities and a high quality of life. Surrey recognises its important role in the wider South East economy and will build on its strengths while retaining the qualities which give the county its distinctive character. Local authorities and partner agencies will collaborate on positive and innovative solutions to shared challenges to tackle climate change, enhance the natural and built environment, secure greater economic prosperity and meet as much housing need as possible taking into account the various constraints and designations that cover much of the county.
- 3.2 Our shared principles and values guide the priority themes developed through our 2050 Place Ambition, seeking to mitigate any negative impacts and maximise the benefits for our local communities. We aim to do this by:
- Taking an ambitious place-based approach that reflects functional relationships and not necessarily administrative boundaries.
 - Leveraging our unique location, skills base and strategic transport connectivity to secure good growth.
 - Focusing growth and infrastructure investment in areas that, with the right interventions including enhanced connectivity, offer the greatest potential to support long term sustainable growth and increased productivity.
 - Addressing the significant challenge of housing affordability across Surrey and the growing need for housing for essential workers, by building more, well-designed affordable homes.
 - Supporting a strong economy through the retention and expansion of existing local businesses and increasing opportunities for growth sectors and new businesses to locate and invest in Surrey.
 - Maximising opportunities to enhance the health and wellbeing of Surrey's residents by encouraging active travel, improving air quality, improving access to high quality green spaces and ensuring that new development contributes positively to community amenities and infrastructure to help create high quality and healthy places where people want to live and work.
 - Mitigating the impacts of climate change on our environment and ensuring communities, business and infrastructure are resilient to the impacts of severe weather events including flooding, both now and in the future.
 - Safeguarding, investing in, restoring and creating new natural habitats which support biodiversity.

- Ensuring that all development is high quality and well-designed and ready for a zero-carbon future, with local authorities leading by example in delivering development that contributes positively to the value of our places and is resilient and adaptable to meet current and future needs.
- Using our own resources and assets to directly drive, influence and support growth across Surrey and specifically, to facilitate a more equitable access to homes and wider choice of housing to meet local needs.
- Taking a positive, proactive and responsive stance towards the opportunities for growth across Surrey to help demonstrate our individual and collective place leadership roles in overcoming and responding to the challenges ahead. We will ensure that this approach is embedded in our organisational cultures and in our local plans, policies and strategies.
- Capitalising on the opportunities provided by enhanced digital connectivity and associated transformation of business processes to maximise value from our assets and enhance the quality of the public service offer in both urban and rural areas.

Key Influencers

- 3.3 Our 2050 Place Ambition has been shaped by climate and environment, economic, spatial, infrastructure and health and wellbeing influencers at the local, county, regional and national levels. These include the local plans (including county waste and minerals plans), Surrey Hills Management Plan, Surrey Climate Change Strategy, Local Transport Plan (LTP4), One Surrey Growth Board's Surrey's Economic Future – Towards 2030, Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. Our focus, however, is on what we can realistically influence where there is a shared view about drivers of change and desired outcomes.
- 3.4 We recognise that our level of influence in terms of securing investment depends on how robust, coherent and deliverable our Place Ambition is seen to be and how compelling our place offer is considered by others. Surrey is strategically one of the most connected places both nationally and internationally in the UK which, combined with our high productivity (and potential to increase this) and our outstanding environmental assets, offers a highly attractive and competitive investment proposition. We must capitalise on this in securing and delivering good growth for our communities by collectively providing clear leadership and direction, influencing the priorities of other relevant organisations at a local, regional and national level, and ensuring that delivery happens on the ground.

Our Priority Themes

- 4.1 Our five priority themes for delivering the 2050 Place Ambition have been shaped by our shared vision, principles and values, together with the key influencers, recognising that there is a need to align priorities from the local to the national level and across different organisations within Surrey. The priorities are based around addressing the climate emergency, improving connectivity both within Surrey and with strategically important hubs, enhancing the place value of Surrey's towns, maximising the benefits of strong collaboration to achieve sustainable development in our key sub-areas (SAs) and investing in natural capital and delivering nature recovery.
- 4.2 The priorities are not mutually exclusive and should be considered together. By committing to deliver on all five, our aim is that Surrey will be a place that is resilient and responsive to future changes and external impacts, with a flexible approach to development which delivers high quality places, a strong economic offer and improves health and well-being.

Priority Theme 1: Address the climate emergency

- 4.3 Climate change is the most significant threat facing humankind today. The potential implications if the county does not deliver on our climate change ambitions are increased risk of flooding and extreme heat, disruption to our critical infrastructure, networks and industry, and increased risk to our health and wellbeing. Surrey's local authorities have acknowledged the severe and imminent threat that climate change poses by recognising a climate emergency and drawing up action plans to reduce their own environmental impact and to support residents and businesses to do the same.
- 4.4 Surrey's Greener Future Climate Change Delivery Plan estimates that Surrey needs to contribute to the decarbonisation and management of the electricity grid by increasing the capacity of renewable energy by 1244 MW of low carbon electricity through the installation of about 6.2 million solar panels and other forms of renewable energy.
- 4.5 Currently, 46% of Surrey's emissions come from the transport sector and Surrey's Local Transport Plan, LTP4, identifies the urgent need for action to respond to the climate emergency. The plan refers to the Surrey Climate Change Strategy that sets a target of a 60% reduction in transport emissions by 2035 (compared with business as usual). Several policies are identified to reduce carbon emissions:
- Planning for place - design and improve local neighbourhoods to reduce the number and length of car trips.

- Digital connectivity - promote and encourage access to high quality digital connectivity for all, provision of online public and community services.
 - Active travel/personal mobility - provide facilities to encourage many more journeys to be made actively (on foot, by bicycle, scooting etc).
 - Public/shared transport - high-quality, reliable, affordable, and joined up public, shared and demand responsive transport, supported by accessible and easy to use travel information and booking systems.
 - Demand management for cars - measures to decrease use of cars for some journeys.
 - Demand management for goods vehicles - measures to decrease use of certain goods vehicles, and/or at certain times, or in certain locations.
 - Efficient network management - managing the operation and maintenance of the highway network so that it runs smoothly, and the effects of traffic on communities and the environment are minimised.
 - Promoting zero emission vehicles - promoting rapid uptake of electric vehicles (and hydrogen vehicles where appropriate).
- 4.6 It is essential that climate change considerations run through the Place Ambition, to support the integrity and resilience of the natural environment and our communities. It is central to Priority Themes 2-5 and projects and interventions identified as important for delivery.
- 4.7 Ensuring the built environment is adapted to, and adaptable for, the full range of expected climate change impacts requires a cohesive approach and for local authorities and partners to work collaboratively to tackle climate change through effective planning. This includes promoting sustainable design and construction principles, achieving water efficiency standards and maximising energy efficiency while integrating renewable and smart energy technologies in order to minimise energy demand. We also need to ensure new development takes account of flood risk and look to increase the resilience of existing development in flood zones.
- 4.8 We will continue to work together to address the climate emergency through:
- Supporting the delivery of planning policies that are compatible with net-zero targets and adapted to the impact of climate change.
 - Exploring the scope to align low carbon planning policies across Surrey.
 - Developing guidance documents to promote climate compatible development.
 - Exploring the potential for carbon offset funding.

Priority Theme 2: Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs

- 4.9 With investment nationally focused on levelling up, it is vital that we have a clear and agreed set of shared strategic infrastructure priorities which offer the best

opportunity to improve connectivity within and between our centres, and between Surrey and other key national and international destinations. Covid-19 restrictions affected the nature of the relationship between London and Surrey, with many people who previously worked in London now regularly working from home. Going forward, the impact on travel patterns of more “hybrid working” is likely to mean less frequent commuting and more emphasis on creating places in which many of people’s daily needs can be met within a short walk or cycle. Investment in active travel and new transport technologies will help create neighbourhoods that support a low carbon economy.

4.10 We are working together with our partners to develop a coherent long term infrastructure investment strategy through the Surrey Infrastructure Plan (SIP)³. We will continue to review infrastructure priorities to:

- Ensure that investment in strategic infrastructure is focused in areas where it can unlock development opportunities and/or support better connectivity between Surrey’s main economic centres and key hubs, and between Surrey and other key destinations within the Wider South East and nationally.
- Ensure a more reciprocal relationship with London on common interests, recognising that Surrey’s proximity to the capital will remain one of its greatest economic assets and continue to work with the Mayor of London, Transport for the South East and partners across the Wider South East to address regional challenges and deliver strategic infrastructure priorities. Linked to this, as patterns of rail use become clearer and patronage continues to recover, work with our partners in and around London in continuing to lobby for the development of Crossrail 2.
- Build on existing measures and develop new measures that align with the “avoid, shift, improve” approach of LTP4.
- Improve rail connectivity between Surrey’s main towns and other key economic centres including London by securing investment in the North Downs Line, capacity improvements at Woking and Southern Rail access from Heathrow Airport to Surrey and beyond.
- Focus on improving stations within Surrey so they benefit our communities and support sustainable local economic growth. Develop stations by improving access to them by public transport and active travel modes and enhance overall quality

³ The SIP is a live document that is continually edited and updated consisting of a priority framework, list of projects and their current status. It is produced by the county council in conjunction with the districts/boroughs.

of services, for example through use of digitalised signalling and better timetabling.

- Through the Bus Service Improvement Plan for Surrey, enhance the quality of bus services through investing in infrastructure to allow faster journeys by bus, improving the coverage of the network, providing more coordinated bus services which integrate with other transport modes and improving service frequencies, reliability, fares and customer experience.
- Increase walking/cycling uptake through implementing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) across Surrey to link urban and rural built-up areas and public transport connections. Where possible this would involve the development of active travel and green corridors and making improvements to rights of way.
- Promote the operational efficiency/resilience and safety of our transport network through securing improvements along our strategic movement corridors and junctions, including the Strategic Route Network, the Major Road Network, and key transport hubs. Develop new and innovative infrastructure funding solutions and ensure that we are in a strong position to compete for new infrastructure funding and investment opportunities. Maximise the opportunities provided by technological advances in mobility.
- Develop county-wide digital infrastructure through working with commercial and public sector partners to enable access to full fibre and gigabit capable services, including those rural communities that face the greatest connectivity challenges.
- Build on the potential for digital technology to enhance connectivity, helping to reduce congestion on our roads and improve the vitality and economic contribution of our urban and rural areas, and to increase our ability to address the impacts of climate change and improve the overall health and well-being of our residents.

Priority Theme 3: Enhance the place offer of Surrey's towns and urban areas

4.11 Our towns and urban areas will continue to be where most of Surrey's homes, services and jobs are located. With three quarters of the land in Surrey being covered by Green Belt and national and international environmental designations, there is a need to make effective use of our urban areas and make them attractive, healthy and safe environments to live and work in. Supporting growth in these areas and promoting improved connectivity based on public transport and active travel will provide opportunities to create more sustainable places.

- 4.12 Surrey's network of towns includes 27 considered to be of strategic significance. These have been identified through assessing population and employment data, information on the function and location of towns and future growth plans as well as being informed by the hierarchies of town centres the local planning authorities identify in their local plans.
- 4.13 These towns will often be the focus for investment to unlock major development sites, improve movement and connectivity and support economic prosperity and local service provision. In several towns such as Farnham, Horley, Staines, Caterham and Weybridge, place-based collaborative working involving a range of partners is already underway to deliver infrastructure improvements and revitalisation.
- 4.14 Nine of the towns have a key role in serving the wider regional economy and are identified as a focus for significant development. These are:
- Camberley (including Frimley)
 - Egham
 - Epsom
 - Farnham
 - Guildford
 - Reigate
 - Redhill
 - Staines-upon-Thames
 - Woking
- 4.15 Other towns are strategically significant but relatively small in area and population and serve less extensive catchments. These are:
- Addlestone
 - Ashford
 - Banstead
 - Caterham
 - Chertsey
 - Cobham
 - Cranleigh
 - Dorking
 - Esher
 - Godalming
 - Haslemere
 - Horley
 - Leatherhead
 - Oxted
 - Sunbury
 - Walton-on-Thames

- West Byfleet
- Weybridge

- 4.16 The growth potential for each of the 27 towns is set out in the relevant local plan and their centres may be the subject of masterplanning activities and town centre improvement strategies in response to external impacts on their roles and vitality. Covid-19 has accelerated a number of trends that were bringing about changes to Surrey's high streets and we are seeing a new focus on revitalising centres by moving away from an over reliance on retail and using public sector assets to deliver multi-functional space and the co-location of different council and health services. Guildford, Reigate/Redhill and Woking in particular, will continue to deliver a strong residential and economic offer and play a key role as major transport hubs in enhancing Surrey's connectivity.
- 4.17 Changes to permitted development rights (PDR) that allow the change of use from commercial, business and service uses (class E) to residential use (C3) came into force in 2021. PDR can have a positive effect on local commercial property markets by removing poor quality, unoccupied space which no longer meets business requirements as well as providing a much-needed supply of housing. However, given the constraints on development opportunities in Surrey there are some towns where higher quality office space has been lost as a result of PDR and in others there is significant pressure for residential development in established office locations. The permanent removal of office stock which could have been refurbished in the future represents a real risk to the long term economic growth of these places. This is an issue which is having implications across the whole of Surrey and work is being undertaken to report on the situation county wide and the effect of the pandemic on potential future needs for commercial space.
- 4.18 It is recognised that given Surrey's proximity to London there are no options for delivering sustainable development and large new settlements of the same scale that is possible in other parts of the country, without compromising some of our most valuable assets or redirecting investment away from the main urban areas. Nonetheless, there are a few opportunities to deliver new communities to help meet housing needs and support our economic priorities between now and 2050. Three new communities are being progressed in the following locations:
- Dunsfold – allocated in Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites, adopted February 2018. Proposed new community allocated for 2,600 homes in the local plan and in March 2018 the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government granted outline planning permission for a new village of 1,800 homes. The site currently has approximately 31,500 sqm of employment floorspace and the outline planning permission is for a net increase of approximately 26,000 sqm.

- Longcross – allocated in Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, adopted July 2020. Allocation includes 1,700 new homes and 79,000 sqm employment floorspace. Delivery underway at Upper Longcross.
- Wisley – allocated in Guildford Borough Local Plan: strategy and sites, adopted April 2019. Residential led, mixed use development allocated for approximately 2,000 homes and 4,300 sqm of employment floorspace.

4.19 Priority Theme 3 is to maximise the potential of our existing and new urban areas by making sure land is used in the most efficient and versatile way, and meets our identified needs, as far as possible. It is vital that, by focusing growth in these places, the overall place value is enhanced through high quality development, provision of green spaces and access to a range of services, leisure, culture, jobs, housing types and travel options, meeting the different needs across all generations. We will engage with local communities to unlock the potential of Surrey’s towns to drive creative thinking and ensure that outcomes are locally owned and tailored. Across our urban areas we will look for opportunities and projects to deliver attractive, healthy, accessible and safe neighbourhoods for communities. Typically, this may involve schemes in town centres and their surrounding residential areas to improve conditions for walking and cycling and reduce traffic dominance.

4.20 One mechanism to help address these aspects and support the implementation of this strategic priority and local plan policies is the Place Ambition Urban Strategy work programme and we will continue to collaborate to unlock the potential of all Surrey’s towns and urban areas to:

- Enhance the built environment by ensuring that all new development and the redevelopment of existing buildings recognise local character and contribute positively to the overall place value of urban areas in terms of building design and quality, including the conservation and reuse of heritage assets and street design that focuses on a ‘healthy streets’ approach creating streets that are pleasant, safe and attractive.
- Increase the choice of new homes offered, with the emphasis on diversifying the types of new homes provided to meet our needs, including more affordable homes and homes to meet our ageing population. Work proactively with developers and consider the role of a residential offering as part of town centre revitalisation.
- Safeguard our valuable economic assets, particularly employment land and premises within town centres and close to sustainable modes of transport, ensuring that there continues to be a flexible supply to meet changing economic needs, catering for established, growing and start-up businesses and attracting inward investment.

- Depending on the specific details and locations of development, allow the removal of poor-quality stock from the employment land supply where sites are poorly located.
- Manage regenerate and/or dispose of public sector land and assets in a way that contributes to meeting identified needs and improving overall quality of place.
- Promote high street revitalisation through diversification and encouraging the development of multi-functional space and the co-location of different services.
- Maximise the contribution Surrey's natural capital makes to securing 'clean' growth, by improving the overall quality and accessibility of our green and blue infrastructure within and between our urban areas, through the proactive management of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, securing additional provision through development contributions and making better use of non-operational land.
- Place Surrey in the best position to respond to and mitigate against the impact of climate change, by anticipating the risks in the way we plan and deliver services in future and ensuring new buildings and infrastructure are ready for a zero-carbon future.
- Improve flood resilience in our urban areas, working with key bodies such as the Environment Agency to reduce flood risk overall and use new opportunities for development to reduce existing flood risk.
- Focus transport investment on active travel and public transport, improving overall mobility and accessibility within and between our urban areas.
- Promote healthy and inclusive places which contribute positively to people's wellbeing by enhancing walkability and connectivity and providing access to and engagement with the natural environment. Health Impact Assessments can identify the health impacts of projects and be used to maximise their positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts. Safety is also an important consideration.
- Monitor changes in land use as a result of new permitted development rights to inform local policies, strategies and investment decisions.

Priority Theme 4: Maximise the benefits of strong collaboration to achieve sustainable development in our key sub-areas

4.21 The Place Ambition identifies nine key sub-areas (SAs) with significant long term potential for delivering good growth. These are broad areas within which significant

new housing and/or employment development is proposed in adopted and emerging local plans. New strategic infrastructure and investment to address existing infrastructure deficiencies as well as to support new development is needed and impacts may cross administrative boundaries making it essential for issues to be considered jointly by partners on a wider geographical basis. The SAs include new communities and areas where there are opportunities to maximise the value of strategic economic assets - be that transport hubs, universities or strategic employment locations - to support long term prosperity. They are not areas for meeting unmet housing needs from elsewhere in Surrey or across the sub-area itself.

4.22 Our nine key sub-areas are:

- SA 1: Longcross-Staines-Heathrow Corridor
- SA 2: Woking Hub
- SA 3: Guildford Hub
- SA 4: Blackwater Valley Corridor
- SA 5: Cranleigh-Dunsfold Corridor
- SA 6: Epsom-Leatherhead Corridor
- SA 7: M23- Gatwick Corridor
- SA 8: M25 J6/A22 Corridor
- SA9: M25 J10/A3 Wisley

4.23 Although most of the SAs are centred on existing and proposed new urban areas, particularly the larger towns within Surrey, some reflect the significance of key transport corridors where there is priority being given regionally to long term investment and improvements. In many cases, the areas straddle boundaries with neighbouring authorities, not just within Surrey but with surrounding areas, and strong collaboration will be required to ensure priority outcomes can be delivered, which may require new collaborative working arrangements to be set up.

4.24 The importance of these areas will be highlighted through plans and strategies for strategic investment, asset management and land disposal and when engaging with other strategic partners and Government to maximise all investment and funding opportunities. For some of these sub-areas, this includes the significant role they can play in attracting inward investment to support our priority sectors and innovation through land and premises and key links to training opportunities (especially further and higher education) to ensure a skilled and agile workforce.

4.25 For each of the SAs, a number of priority outcomes for the next 10 years and the potential strategic projects needed to achieve them have been agreed and relevant partners identified. The types of projects vary between the SAs reflecting the agreed outcomes, but overall they aim to:

- Support the delivery of a diverse supply of new homes to meet housing needs including those of a changing workforce and help boost productivity.

- Support a small number of carefully planned urban extensions and new communities to boost the supply of new homes and employment land.
- Focus investment, such as in infrastructure, to unlock sites and improve movement and connectivity between key hubs and along strategic movement corridors.
- Protect strategically important land and premises where appropriate, including within town centres that are well served by public transport, considering what the potential future needs may be to maintain a flexible and adaptable land supply, provide flexible workspace and multi-functional space to ensure that the right type of premises and land is readily available and ensure resilience.
- Integrate flood risk management measures to improve the resilience of communities within the SAs.

Priority Theme 5: Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery

- 4.26 Surrey has a wealth of environmental assets ranging from those with international and national status, to those of local importance. However, according to the 2017 State of Surrey’s Nature report, it also has one of the fastest declining wildlife populations of any county in England. Nature is being increasingly confined to small, fragmented areas with little or no connectivity.
- 4.27 The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan sets out a natural capital approach, that recognises the environment as a key contributor to the overall economy. The Environment Act 2021 enshrines a number of components of the Environment Plan in law and aims to improve air and water quality, tackle waste, improve biodiversity and make other environmental improvements. The Act introduces a range of legal requirements including biodiversity net gain for built development and the creation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, which will be key in helping to build a Nature Recovery Network.
- 4.28 Within Surrey we will focus on spatial strategies for nature to guide funding decisions and to enable the delivery of multi-functional benefits in priority areas. Surrey Wildlife Trust is already leading on innovative work to drive private investment in natural capital through the development of a Natural Capital Investment Fund.
- 4.31 The county, district and borough councils will continue to work together with Surrey Wildlife Trust and other partners to avoid adverse effects on the environment, improve resilience to climate change and invest in natural capital by:
- Positively managing and improving the condition of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of nature importance.

- Conserving and enhancing the distinctiveness of Surrey's landscapes and the natural beauty of the Surrey Hills National Landscape and High Weald National Landscape having regard to landscape character assessments and Management Plans.
- Ensuring that land used for mineral working is restored to an appropriate future use and managed so that it brings value to the environment and local community.
- Recognising the importance of natural capital and the role of ecosystem services and pursuing opportunities for improving biodiversity and the air and water environment alongside new development and creating a coherent connected network of accessible multi-functional greenspaces.
- Setting out biodiversity improvement priorities, including the enhancement of the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas identified within the county.
- Making use of public sector land for investment in natural capital.
- Providing Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to mitigate the impacts of new housing development on Special Protection Areas which also delivers new accessible and good quality green infrastructure.

Delivering our 2050 Place Ambition

- 5.1 Delivering good growth requires long term commitment and investment and collaboration with many different stakeholders and partners. The Place Ambition will be implemented through collaboration with many different strategic stakeholders and partners and through various plans and strategies many of which have already been developed. These are listed in Figure 2 below which describes Surrey's Integrated System for Achieving Sustainable Growth. This highlights the key role of the borough and district and county councils in delivering the priorities and co-ordinating and facilitating investment.
- 5.2 The fourth priority theme of the Place Ambition is to focus on strategic projects in nine key SAs to support their long term potential for delivering good growth. This includes investment in new strategic infrastructure and to address existing deficiencies and improve connectivity both within Surrey and between other strategically important economic areas.
- 5.3 Finally, we will develop a set of metrics to monitor progress on the implementation of our priorities and to measure our success in facilitating the delivery of good growth. This will include baseline indicators to tell us about the prevailing conditions in Surrey and highlight where we need to change the emphasis of our interventions and actions. We will also monitor delivery of projects agreed for each SA.
- 5.4 Progress in delivering the Place Ambition will be overseen by the Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group (SISG), which has a core membership of borough and district authorities and the county council. The overall focus and objectives of the SISG are to align infrastructure, economic growth, investment priorities and spatial planning interests; provide a focus on delivery and clear outputs/outcomes through a collective effort to tackle key challenges; and gain a clear understanding of common issues and strategic infrastructure constraints for which a single voice across Surrey can drive greater change than the lobbying efforts of each authority working separately.

Figure 2: Surrey's Integrated System for Achieving Sustainable Growth

