



Elmbridge
Borough Council
... bridging the communities ...

Elmbridge Local Plan

Esher

Settlement Investment
& Development Plan

Options Consultation

April 2013



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Summary

What is this consultation all about?

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that local plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of an area”

Paragraph 155- National Planning Policy Framework

There have been many changes to the planning system over recent years. The Government is now promoting the production of a Local Plan, a single document that deals with all matters relating to the management and planning of development. However, Local Authorities do have the option to develop their Local Plan through a series of separate related documents. Given that the Council’s Core Strategy is up to date, compatible with the Government’s planning framework ¹, and has its own locally assessed housing requirement, continuing to develop the Local Plan as a portfolio of documents is the most sensible way forward. In completing our Local Plan portfolio we want to work closely with the community in order to reflect local needs and aspirations as far as possible, with the aim of providing clarity and certainty for those who wish to develop within the Borough. The delivery of our strategy will only be successful if we engage with all those who are affected by new development, infrastructure and services, and all those who provide it. The Council is committed to taking a strong leadership role, co-ordinating skills, resources and knowledge. We will adopt a proactive approach to the planning and management of development in order to ensure that the aims of the Core Strategy are delivered where, when and how we intend.

The aim of Settlement Investment and Development (ID) Plans is simply to plan for investment and development within local areas in partnership with the local community. Elmbridge has 8 distinct settlements, which have very different characters and communities. Recognising these differences, and working together, drawing on the opportunities that arise and addressing the challenges that new development may bring, is key to maintaining local choice, control and ownership. It is the Council’s view that to ‘do nothing’ and sit back and wait for development to happen is a poor way to plan for the future of the Borough. Settlement ‘ID’ Plans will make a significant contribution to the delivery and management of development that provides for the level of growth set out in the Core Strategy, supported by improved infrastructure and services.

1.[National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)]

Settlement ID Plans identify;

- Open spaces that need to be protected and some earmarked for enhancement
- Employment land that should remain as such because of its strategic importance
- Schools and colleges where there are opportunities for expansion
- Key sites for the delivery of housing, commercial and community development
- Pitches for Gypsies and Travellers
- Infrastructure improvements and priorities

This document is for consultation purposes only. The Council has already directed a significant amount of resources into holding workshops with the local community, landowners, businesses and potential developers. They have provided useful forums to openly discuss needs, aspirations and intentions, but these were just the start of the process. The document presented here is for wider consultation. The aim is that the final version of the plans will truly reflect local aspirations, while acknowledging that landowners and developers are key to delivery.

How you can tell us your views

We are consulting on this document for a 6-week period between **8 April 2013 and 20 May 2013**. Please let us know what you like, what you don't like, and where improvements can be made. Changes are inevitable and we hope that consultation responses can add a greater element of local distinctiveness to each plan.

Within this period, planning officers will be visiting your local area, giving you more opportunity to provide input, and influence future development and infrastructure provision. Visit our web site to see when we will be in your area. We strongly encourage you to use our new on line consultation portal. This is easy to use and the most efficient way of dealing with comments. Log on to our website and, if you need help, just telephone the number below and we will be happy to assist.

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What are we planning to do next?

Once we have received your comments, we will give consideration to all of them and decide what changes should be made in order to better reflect the views of the community whilst being mindful that we do need to plan for growth and be realistic about delivery.

You will be able to see what difference your comments have made in the Consultation Statement which will set out how and why the comments made during the consultation have either been taken on board and influenced the final document, or have not been considered appropriate for inclusion. The Consultation Statement will be available on the Council's website.

If significant changes are considered necessary, either due to the nature of responses or the submission of new information, we will re-consult and everyone will have a further opportunity to comment. In the event that only minor changes are necessary, the plans will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent inspector in the at the start of 2014. At this point, you still have an opportunity to comment on the plans if you so wish. However, it is hoped that by adopting a collaborative approach to drawing up these plans, they will benefit from a significant amount of support from the local community and objections will be kept to a minimum.

Stage in process	Date	Re-consultation necessary (alternative dates)
Publication	November 2013	Summer 2014
Publication for independent examination	December 2013	Autumn 2014
Adoption	Autumn 2014	End of 2014

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1 Introduction

The Planning Strategy for Elmbridge

1.1 The Elmbridge Core Strategy, adopted in July 2011, sets the overarching strategy for the Borough. It adopts a local approach to the promotion of sustainable growth, directing the right sort of development to the right places, whilst protecting the environment and providing community infrastructure.

1.2 In considering the soundness of this planning strategy, the independent planning inspector wrote;

“In terms of housing, employment and other development, the plan provides for growth, reflecting the Government’s agenda, and generally it strikes the right balance between needs and demands”.

‘In its approach to the Green Belt the plan is also consistent with the Government’s Planning for growth agenda. This makes clear that wherever possible the answer to proposals should be yes, while ensuring the key sustainable development principles set out in national policy would not be compromised’

1.3 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Government has published a new planning framework. The Council considers that its Core Strategy is compatible with this planning framework.²

1.4 However, the Core Strategy forms only part of the Elmbridge Local Plan and a commitment has been made to prepare further documents to direct and shape future growth. The diagram overleaf illustrates the family of documents that will make up the Council’s Local Plan and how they relate to each other.

Progress so far

1.5 In response to local concerns about the impact of new development on local character and infrastructure, the Council prioritised the production of two documents which were adopted in April 2012;

- Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document
- Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.

1.6 In addition, a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, the first in Surrey, which was adopted in April 2013³. This sets a charge of £125 per square metre for new residential development and £50 per square metre for retail development. The

2.[The compatibility checklist can be found at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning]



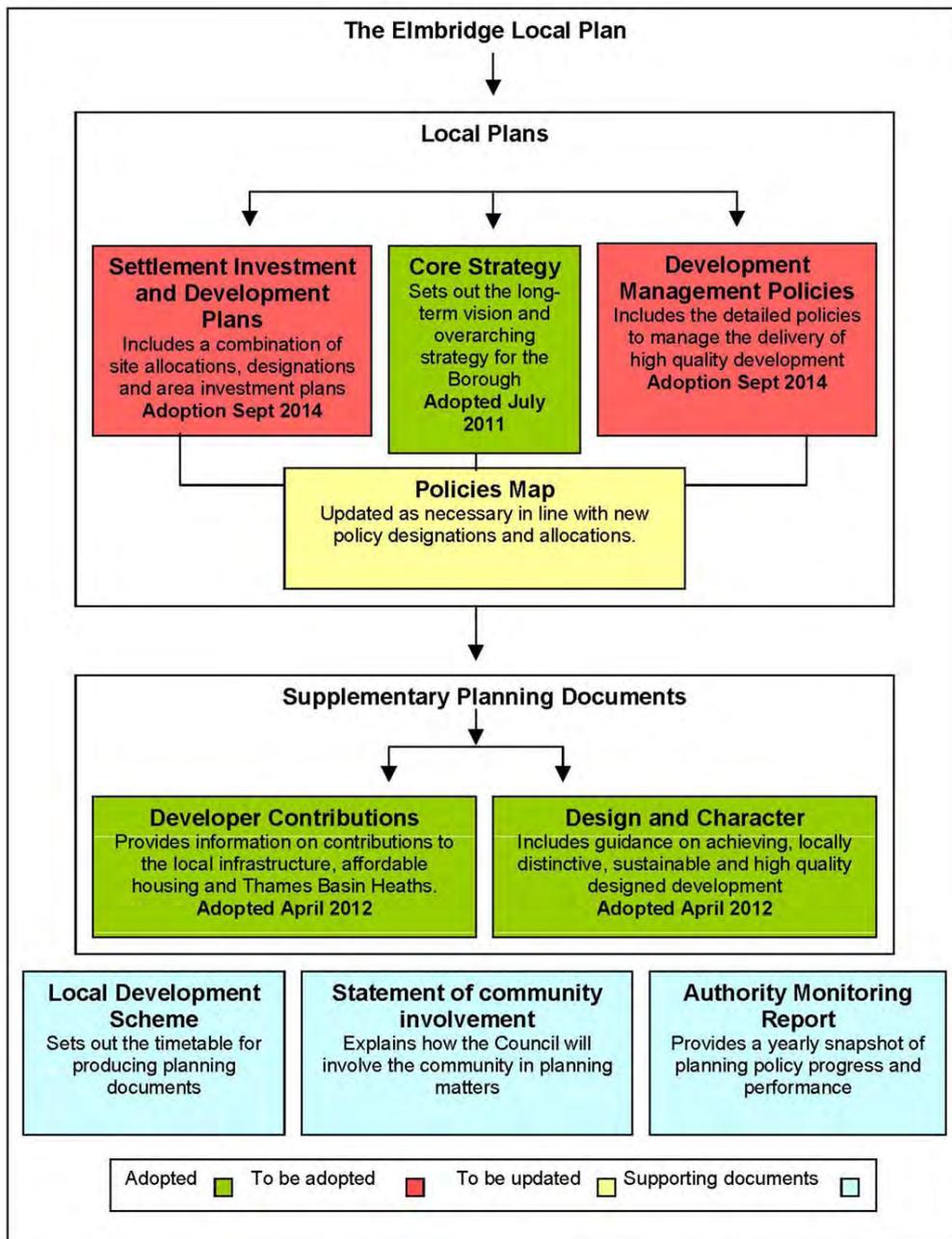
aim is to provide clarity about expectations prior to buying land, and ensure that new development contributes to the creation of an environment where growth is not stifled through lack of infrastructure and investment. It is estimated that this charge will raise in the region of £24 million over a 10 year period which will go towards funding a comprehensive package of infrastructure improvements across the Borough.

1.7 The Council is now producing the remaining documents that will complete its Local Plan;

- The Development Management Plan
- Settlement ID (Investment and Development) Plans

1.8 These two documents are being produced concurrently and are both subject to consultation now.

3.[CIL is a new levy that will be charged on new developments. The money raised can be pooled and used to fund infrastructure that the council and the local community wants - for example, new or safer road schemes, school expansion or improvements to leisure facilities. Further details of CIL including a summary can be found on the Communities and Local Government website and the Council's website www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning]



Supporting new development that's right for local areas

1.9 The Council will adopt a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals. We will work with the local community as well as developers to find solutions, which means that appropriate sites will be allocated for development wherever possible, in order to provide a clear and coherent plan that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Borough. Whilst promoting the right sort of development in the right places, we are committed to making sure that the

key sustainable development principles set out in the Government's planning framework are not compromised.

Why is it good to have a plan?

1.10 With or without a plan, development will happen anyway. Adopting a plan led approach allows the Council to take a strong leadership role that will steer development within the Borough, protecting valued open spaces, directing investment in improved infrastructure where it is needed most, and delivering development of a type and within locations that are considered to be most appropriate. Such an approach means that the Council has to make difficult decisions, but it allows us to manage and plan for development, taking account of the potential impact on local areas.

1.11 The Core Strategy commits to the delivery of approximately 3,375 new homes between 2011- 2026. This equates to 225 units each year. In the first 2 years, we anticipate that 550 units will have been completed , 100 above the requirement. Whilst this puts the Council in a strong position with regards to retaining decision making at a local level, this supply needs to continue, and in a manner that the Council chooses, rather than decisions being made by the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State.

1.12 By taking a proactive approach the Council can plan ahead, ensuring that the right infrastructure comes forward at the right time. Only through the identification of where and how growth is likely to happen can effective infrastructure planning take place.

1.13 ID Plans, prepared for each of the 8 individual settlements within Elmbridge, will make a significant contribution to supporting the delivery and management of development that;

- Protects land from development where appropriate,
- Provides the required level of growth set out in the Core Strategy, and
- Improves infrastructure and services to support this growth.

1.14 Through encouraging the local community to take part in this process, it is hoped that these Settlement ID Plans, will reflect local opinion as far as possible. We will do all that we can to take on board your views but we are duty bound to plan within the context of the Government's wider growth agenda. We think our approach will achieve the best results for local communities, achieving the right blend of local knowledge and professional expertise. Nevertheless, there are alternatives.

What if you don't like the plan for your area?

1.15 Tell us. Nothing is set in stone but we do have to start somewhere, and if we don't ask we won't know. However, if you really want to take control and make the

decisions yourself, you can. Local communities do have the option of preparing their own neighbourhood plans. These can set planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications, but they do need to be prepared in the overall context of the Core Strategy and the Government's planning framework.

1.16 Importantly, neighbourhood plans cannot be used to restrict development. They can steer development and set out plans for more development than set out in the Core Strategy but not less.

1.17 Whilst there have been some expressions of interest by local community groups, no proposals for a neighbourhood plan have been progressed. This does remain an option should community groups decide they wish to prepare their own local neighbourhood plan for growth.

1.18 Another alternative is to sit back and wait for development to come, not knowing where, when or how much - a sure way to create uncertainty and 'lag' with regards to infrastructure provision. It is an alternative that avoids making difficult decisions but fails to plan properly for the future of our local areas. As a responsible Council, we will make the difficult decisions and plan for the future.

What will Settlement ID Plans do?

1.19 The Settlement ID Plans have 3 distinct roles;

- i. Protecting sites in their current use –these are **designated** to ensure that they are not lost to other uses.
- ii. Identifying key sites for new development – these are **allocated** and will act as a framework within which the Council can plan and manage growth in the future
- iii. Assessing infrastructure needs- these will need to be prioritised in line with the delivery of new development in an area, together with an assessment of its impact and the aspirations of the local community.

1.20 Each ID Plan will differ dependant on its local character, the capacity of existing infrastructure to accommodate growth and the opportunities available for new development and environmental enhancement.

Protecting land for existing uses

Open Spaces

1.21 Overall, open spaces within the urban area will be given greater protection than before through Development Management policy- DM5.⁴ This sets out that existing open spaces should not be built on unless:

4.[The Council's Draft Development Management is also being consulted on at the moment. Please visit our web site to take part in this consultation and consider the new policies we propose to protect our open spaces]

- “An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports or recreational provision the needs of which clearly outweigh the loss”.

1.22 In addition the Government’s planning framework⁵ sets out an additional protection that can be given to green spaces of particular importance to local communities. These can be designated as ‘Local Green Space’ and will benefit from the same level of protection as Green Belt. However, in considering the designation of Local Green Space, the framework states that:

“The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- Where the green area is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”

1.23 As open space is afforded a higher level of protection than has previously been the case it is considered that the existing Strategic Open Urban Land designation is no longer relevant.

Employment land

1.24 In line with Core Strategy policy CS23 Employment Land Provision, the designation of Strategic Employment Land will seek to ensure an adequate, yet flexible, supply of employment land. In considering the designation of sites, paragraph 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework needs to be taken into account;

“Planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. When there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to

5.[Paragraphs 76, 77 and 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework]

market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable communities”

1.25 The Council regularly monitors the demand for employment floorspace as well as employment land projections for the Borough. The need for certain types of employment land is changing. Currently, there is a high level of vacant office floorspace and the need for industrial land is declining. However, we need to take a long-term view of what we may need in the future and balance this against the need for other uses, specifically the continual demand for housing and in particular affordable housing.

1.26 Careful consideration will need to be given to designating areas as Strategic Employment Land. The balance needs to be struck between maintaining a sufficient supply that addresses employment growth projections, whilst ensuring that there is a degree of flexibility when considering the future use of other employment sites. Core Strategy policy CS23 Employment Land Provision will ensure that sites will continue to be protected and redevelopment only supported where it can be shown that its employment use is redundant and that its change of use will benefit the community.

1.27 Given the above, it is proposed that the number of sites currently designated as Strategic Employment Land is reduced. Those that are proposed to retain a designation are considered to be significant to the delivery of economic growth, not only within the Borough, but also across the wider M3 Local Economic Partnership (LEP) area. Factors such as the current use, future demand, levels of employment, size and sub regional impact have been assessed in the consideration of strategic designation.

7

Gypsy and Traveller sites

1.28 Whilst the number of pitches to be provided for Gypsies and Travellers is significantly lower than the Borough’s overall housing need, suitable sites are often difficult to deliver. The ID Plans propose new sites to address the additional need, but this assumes that existing provision is not lost to alternative uses. As such existing, permanent and legal Gypsy and Traveller sites, as well as Travelling Showpeople sites, have been designated for continued protection.

Promoting the right development in the right places

1.29 Through ID Plans, the Council is encouraging the most effective use of land through promoting development on allocated sites and improvements to open spaces. Uses vary but include;

- Housing
- New Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
- Mixed use sites in town centres
- Community, social and education provision

- Major open space improvements to provide alternative visitor destinations for people who would otherwise visit the Thames Basin Heaths, an area protected for its high ecological value.

1.30 Local character, design and density are key factors that need to be taken into account when considering the acceptability of any new development, regardless of its use. The Council already has policies in place that aim to make the most effective use of land whilst delivering high quality design that takes account of the different roles and character of different areas across the Borough⁶.

How do we judge what is the best use of a site?

1.31 It's not easy and there are often competing uses for a site that we need to consider. The allocation process has been developed to ensure that only reasonable alternatives for development will go through to the consultation stage. Reasonable alternatives will be judged against the following criteria which essentially act as a 'sift'.

1.32 The assessment process has been divided into a number of stages (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Proposed Allocations – Assessment process

- **Stage A** – Initial Assessment – this eliminates sites that are not in line with the Council's Core Strategy or are considered too small for inclusion.
- **Stage B** – Deliverability Assessment – eliminates any sites that are not genuinely developable and available to be delivered.
- **Stage C** – Detailed Assessment – assesses the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed development (incorporating Sustainability Appraisal)

Further details can be found at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning

1.33 In addition, where a site has been discussed at the local workshops, the level of community support has been taken into account. In most cases this has influenced

6.[Policy CS17 - Local Character, Density and Design. Elmbridge Core Strategy, July 2011. Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document. Elmbridge Local Plan, April 2012. Core planning principles, paragraph 17, National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012]

whether a site has been put forward as an ‘opportunity site’ or an ‘other possible site’ for consultation purposes.

1.34 The intention is not to allocate all sites that could potentially be developed over the lifetime of the plan. This would be impossible and an approach riddled with uncertainty. Only key sites, of particular significance to the area will be allocated. The ID Plans present a range of site for consultation. The threshold for inclusion differs between areas, the minimum being 6 units.

1.35 It is inevitable that some sites will fall out, and others come forward during the lifetime of the plan. The Council’s Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment therefore continues to be an important document. Through rigorous monitoring and annual review of this land availability assessment, the Council will always have up to date evidence of potential future land supply in order to ensure the delivery of our overall housing target, and potential capacity for employment floorspace.

Do we really have room for more development?

1.36 Yes we do. The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment provides a key tool to assess potential capacity for all sites above 6 units. This is updated annually. It is designed to reflect, and take account of, the turnover and ‘churn’ of sites in the Borough and provide an up to date picture on potential capacity. Importantly, it does not allocate sites for development but acts as a guide to whether housing requirements are likely to be met. The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment will continue to play an important role in providing a flexible and up to date response to potential housing capacity but it does not represent Council policy nor does it reflect any views of the local community.

Is an allocation the same as planning permission?

1.37 No it’s not. An allocation in a Settlement ID Plan provides much greater certainty as to the future development of a site. These sites are all subject to public consultation, sustainability appraisal, viability assessment and ultimately, agreement by the Council. An allocation does not grant planning permission. However, it does show that the Council agrees with the general principle of development but all proposals will still be subject to detailed consideration against relevant planning policies should an application be submitted.

Investing in infrastructure

1.38 New development will inevitably put increasing pressure on existing infrastructure, so we have made sure that new development ‘pays its way’ through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

1.39 Investment in infrastructure will be dependent on;

- Existing commitments by service providers (such as Surrey County Council, Network Rail etc),
- The level of growth within an area and the consequent impact on infrastructure
- Priorities identified by the local community.

1.40 The Council has recently appointed an Infrastructure Delivery Officer who will be responsible for ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure and producing a transparent spending programme that prioritises the money that will be raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy. A key objective of the post is to work closely with other delivery agencies, co-ordinating spend with other spending programmes, including existing funds already collected from developments, and other available finance such as the New Homes Bonus⁷

1.41 Where improvements can be identified, such as the potential expansion of a school, then these have been included for consultation. However, in many cases it will not be possible to identify the specific improvement in infrastructure. In these cases, the matter to be dealt with has been identified generically eg. Improvements to tackle congestion, improvements to open spaces etc. Schemes will then be drawn up as and when sufficient finances become available. Local people will be asked to assist in setting spending priorities.

1.42 This Settlement ID Plan sets out a range of potential improvements that could be made within the area. Many of the infrastructure needs for the Borough have already been identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, prepared in support of the Core Strategy and subsequently updated for the preparation of the Community Infrastructure Levy. In addition suggestions put forward in the local workshops have also been included as appropriate.

Local Plans for local communities

1.43 Investment and Development Plans have been produced for the 8 individual settlements identified within the Core Strategy. They all follow a standard format for initial consultation with local communities and others that have interests within the Borough. They are based on information that the Council believes to be correct, but inevitably this will change as a consequence of consultation and, of course, the passage of time. If the information is wrong-please tell us! It is hoped that, through engaging local communities, each ID Plan will develop in a locally distinctive way that reflects the wishes of the community. As such, we encourage you to become involved in the development of these plans.

⁷.<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-homes-bonus-final-scheme-design--2>]

These Settlement ID Plans are exactly what they say they are-
Initial drafts for public consultation.

It is for you to tell us your views so that we can shape them into the documents that you would choose in order to plan and manage development within your local area.

No decisions have been made at this stage. Consider the options. Are there any others?

1.44 In doing so, choices must be made within the wider context set out in this introduction. They must accord with national planning policy and help to deliver the overall strategy for the Borough set out in the Core Strategy. Meeting our housing objectives is key to the Council maintaining local control over decision making. As such, the anticipated level of new housing to be provided within each settlement area is reproduced for convenience below.

Settlement	Anticipated housing distribution
Walton	675-725
Weybridge	625-675
Hersham	350-400
East and West Molesey	475-525
Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green	375-425
Esher	250-300
Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon and Downside	575-625
Claygate	50-100

1.45 Whilst delivery may be higher in some areas and lower in others, overall delivery must at least meet the minimum overall housing target of 3,375 set out in the Core Strategy. Given the market attractiveness of the Borough, coupled with the Council's commitment to retain local control and adopt a sensible approach to planning for sustainable growth, it is considered that this target will be achieved, and potentially exceeded, without resulting in unacceptable consequences on the local environment or the economic health of the Borough.

The following sections of this Settlement ID Plan sets out the initial draft plans for consultation for your local area.

We would like to hear your views.

2 Esher Investment and Development Plan

About the area

2.1 Esher is located in the centre of the Borough and is one of the smaller settlements, containing nearly 2,900 dwellings⁸ and having a population of just over 6,500⁹. The town is surrounded by open space with the south of the settlement area containing Esher Commons, the largest of the Borough's three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Claremont Landscape Gardens. To the north is the internationally renowned Sandown Park Racecourse. These local assets, alongside the relatively low density of the existing development, interspersed with the village greens at Esher, Hare Lane and West End, all contribute to the character and high quality environment of this area.

2.2 The town centre is relatively large considering the size of the population it supports. However, much of the floorspace is not in retail use with 21% of floorspace on shopping frontages being either cafés, restaurants, bars or pubs¹⁰. In addition to the cinema and library, the types of services offered indicate the centre's importance for leisure and social activities as well as the more typical retail uses. The town centre is also a popular location for businesses, with the increasing amount of office floorspace being developed emphasising the centre's importance to the local economy. Low levels of vacancy across all uses indicate the overall strength and vitality of the town centre.

2.3 The town centre is located at an intersection for two major routes through the Borough and suffers from significant levels of congestion at peak times. It is also designated an Air Quality Management Area, with emissions consistently higher than the national objective. Traffic and pollution impact on the quality of the town centre and improvements to the flows of traffic would benefit the area significantly. There is a frequent rail service to London from Esher station, which lies outside the town centre but is still readily accessible to the local population. The station is already able to accommodate longer trains which will increase capacity on the line to meet the expected increase in demand.

2.4 Whilst education services are good there is limited capacity within local state schools to expand. Esher Primary School, Esher High School and Cranmere School are either at or near capacity for each site to accommodate further growth.

2.5 The area is characterised by low density development. 70% of all dwellings are either detached or semi detached (54% and 16% respectively), only 4% of dwellings are flats. Between 2006 and 2011, 71% of all residential development in Esher has been in the form of flats with an average density of development sites being 44

8.[Dwelling Stock by Council Tax Band (VOA)]

9.[Resident Population Estimates 2010 (ONS)]

10.[Elmbridge Town and Village Centre Audits (2012)]

dwellings per hectare. The majority of development was either 2 bedrooms (40%) or 4 or more bedrooms (30%), with only 12% having 1 bedroom¹¹ .

The Core Strategy

2.6 The Core Strategy provides the overarching context for the future development of the Borough. Policy CS9 sets out a specific strategy for Esher to 2026 and the Settlement Investment and Development Schedules contained in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy provide an outline of the delivery of development and investment expected within the settlement area. In summary the Core Strategy sets out:

- An anticipated level of housing provision in the area to be between 250 and 300 units between 2011 and 2026.
- Increase hotel capacity.
- No identified need for additional retail floorspace.
- 1 form of entry at primary school level (dependent on provision at Claygate).
- Parking strategy to give consideration to the adoption of a local management plan.

2.7 The delivery of development and infrastructure will change over time. Up-to-date information will be included within the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Authority’s Monitoring Report and Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment¹²

2.8 The following table shows the settlement’s housing delivery ¹³

Housing delivery	Dwellings
Anticipated level of housing delivery in plan period (2011 to 2026)	250-300
Minus:	
Dwellings built in 2011/12	41
Dwellings under construction in 2011/12	46
Dwellings with permission not yet implemented in 2011/12	38
Estimated number of dwellings on small sites from 2015 to 2026	80
Estimated remaining housing to be delivered on larger sites from 2012 to 2026	45-95

Purpose of this ID plan

2.9 The purpose of this ID Plan is to support the delivery of the Council’s Core Strategy by:

11.[Authority’s Monitoring Report 2012]

12.[www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy/evidencebase.htm]

13.[Figures taken from the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2012]

- Allocating key sites with potential for development in the urban area in order to deliver the requirement set out within the Core Strategy and enable the continued protection of the Borough's Green Belt and urban open spaces. This includes employment land, housing, mixed use and Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
- Designating open space within the urban area for continued protection.
- Identifying priorities for future investment in infrastructure e.g. schools, transport, highways etc.

What does the Esher ID Plan propose?

2.10 The ID Plan for Esher includes the following proposals for consultation:

- 12 sites that may have potential to be allocated for development.
- 13 areas of open space in the urban area for designation.
- Priorities for investment in other forms of infrastructure including schools, transport and highways etc.

2.11 The map below gives an overview of the potential development sites to be allocated and open spaces to be designated. Sections 3-5 set out these in further detail.



Key	
	Opportunity Sites
	Other Possible Sites
	Sites with Planning Permission
	Settlement Boundary
	Green Belt
	Open Space
	Town, District, Local Centre
	Open Water

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What you have told us so far

2.12 In August 2012 we held a 'Managing Development' workshop at King George's Hall in Esher. This was a key part of our early engagement to inform the preparation of the ID Plan for Esher. The workshop was attended by a small range of organisations and individuals. This provided a forum for discussion and debate and highlighted areas of both agreement and disagreement between those attending.

2.13 This was the first stage of engagement in the preparation of the ID Plan and provides a snapshot of views from those people who attended the workshop. It does not represent views across the whole community but provides a starting point for the preparation of the Plan and future engagement.

2.14 The key issues discussed at this workshop included¹⁴ :

Sites to be protected

- Esher Common should continue to be protected from all forms of development.
- Need to protect green corridors.
- Consider giving Claremont Park and Clare Hill greater protection.
- Maintain the rural feel of A244, concerns that widening could impact on its current character.

Potential development sites

- Partial release of Esher Car Park.
- Former police station suggested as sustainable location for sheltered housing or affordable housing.
- Building containing Pizza Express on the High Street considered suitable for development (together with the car park to the rear), although any redevelopment would need to consider the sensitivities of the adjacent Conservation Area.
- River Mole and Sandown Industrial Areas have the potential to be redeveloped for housing, though flooding and access issues would need to be addressed.
- No suitable sites for Gypsy and Traveller pitches were identified.
- Need to identify smaller units for business start-ups in the area.

Priorities for investment

- Cycle lanes at Milbourne Lane and Lammas Lane.
- Environmental improvements to the quality of the High Street.
- Improvements to the local road network.
- Increase residents only parking.
- Promote more sustainable forms of travel.
- King George's Hall should be protected.

2.15 Further reference to issues raised at the workshop is made throughout the Plan.

14.[A detailed summary of the workshops can be found at - www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy/mdw.htm]

3 Sites to be protected

3.1 In order to deliver the overarching strategy for Esher as set out in the Core Strategy this section sets out those sites that could be designated for continued protection in their existing use.

3.2 Included within this section are those areas of open space that are considered important for the long-term sustainability of the settlement area and the Borough as a whole and which will be protected from development. Further details of proposed designations can be found below and are indicated on the map in [Esher - Appendix 1](#).

3.3 All sites have been through a rigorous assessment process incorporating the requirements of Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment in order to determine the appropriateness of their designation. Details can be found in the Site Assessment Methodology documents¹⁵

Open Space

3.4 Policy DM5 – Open Space and Views of the Development Management Plan sets out the policies for the management of open spaces. The current Strategic Open Urban Land designation in the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 is not considered to be required any longer given the high level of protection given to open space in the Government’s planning framework¹⁶ The Council has identified the following options for the designation of open space and selected a Preferred Option.

Option A – Designate all existing open space as ‘open space in the urban area’
Option B – Designate some existing open space as ‘open space in the urban area’ and designate those sites important to the local community as Local Green Space.

Preferred Option: Designate some existing open space as ‘open space in the urban area’ and designate those sites important to the local community as Local Green Space.

Commentary: The preferred option will ensure that areas of open space that are important to the local community are designated and receive a greater level of protection than other areas of urban open space.

3.5 The Council welcomes comments on the options and Preferred Option proposed which has been used in identifying the following open space designations:

15.[Site Assessment Methodology documents –www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning]

16.[National Planning Policy Framework – www.communities.gov.uk].

Open space in the urban area

3.6 All open spaces identified on the map in [Esher - Appendix 1](#) and noted below, will be considered as open space and the criteria in Policy DM5 of the Development Management Plan will apply. This policy provides a higher level of protection than the existing Strategic Open Urban Land designation and will apply to all those open spaces within the urban area shown below. It outlines that all existing open space should not be built on unless it can be shown that it is surplus to requirements; the loss would be replaced by open space of equivalent quality and quantity; or the development is for an alternative sports and recreation use, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss¹⁷

Open space in the urban area

Open space name	Size (ha)	Existing designation
Esher High Street Greens	0.09	SOUL
Drakes Close	0.12	NONE
Douglas Road	0.21	NONE
Hawkshill Close	0.44	NONE
Christ Church	0.49	NONE
Arbrook Lane Open Space	0.54	SOUL
Esher Church	0.94	NONE
Esher Green	1.09	SOUL
Hare Lane Green	1.27	SOUL
Claygate Primary School	1.52	NONE
Civic Centre Garden	1.72	NONE
Esher Cricket Ground	2.23	NONE
Clare Hill Golf Course	4.9	NONE

Core Strategy links	CS14-Green Infrastructure
Framework paragraphs	73-78
Development Management Plan	DM5-Open space and views
Other documents or guidance	Green Space, Sport & Recreation Study 2006

Local Green Space

3.7 There is the opportunity for some sites to be designated as Local Green Space. These sites must be of significant local importance and meet the criteria set out in the Government's planning framework¹⁸.

17.[Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework – www.communities.gov.uk].

18.[Paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework – www.communities.gov.uk]

3.8 It clearly states that a Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas and this will be an important consideration in the designation of such sites. No sites were put forward at the community workshop. Should you wish to suggest a site for designation as a Local Green Space it is important that you consider the criteria mentioned above and include reasons as to why it is important to the local community. Once designated these sites will have a level of protection equivalent to the Green Belt as set out in Policy DM5 – Open Space and Views of the Development Management Plan.

Core Strategy links	CS14-Green Infrastructure
Framework paragraphs	73-78
Development Management Plan	DM5-Open space and views
Other documents or guidance	Green Space, Sport & Recreation Study 2006

Strategic Employment Land

3.9 The Government’s planning framework highlights the importance of taking a flexible approach to the management of employment land including the need to avoid the long-term protection of sites where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose¹⁹. It also states that land allocations should be regularly reviewed. This section therefore seeks to review the Strategic Employment Land designation included within the Replacement Elmbridge Local Plan 2000 and the Core Strategy (Policy CS23 – Employment Land). Employment land not designated as strategic will continue be protected under Policy CS23 unless redevelopment for other purposes provides wider benefits to the community.

3.10 All sites outside of town centres and included in the Employment Land Review²⁰. were assessed for their potential to be designated as Strategic Employment Land. Full details of this assessment, including how we define ‘strategic’, are included within the Site Assessment Methodology documents. The Council has identified the following options for the designation of Strategic Employment Land and selected a Preferred Option

- Option A – Designate Strategic Employment Land based on the criteria set out in the Site Assessment Methodology documents
- Option B – Designate Strategic Employment Land based on alternative criteria

Preferred Option: Designate Strategic Employment Land based on the criteria set out in the Site Assessment Methodology documents

19.[Paragraphs 21 and 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework – www.communities.gov.uk]

20.[Employment Land Review & Addendums – www.elmbridge.gov.uk]

Commentary: The preferred option will ensure a flexible approach to the management of employment land protecting them where necessary but avoiding the long-term protection of sites where this can be justified and in the event that there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.

3.11 The Council welcomes comments on the options and Preferred Option proposed which has been used in identifying key areas to be designated as Strategic Employment Land.

3.12 The only employment area outside of the town centre in Esher is the River Mole Business Park/ Sandown Industrial Estate in the north of the settlement area. The site is relatively small and there is limited scope for improvement or intensification as a result of the constrained nature of the access due to low bridges and the residential nature the area. It is therefore not considered appropriate to place a Strategic Employment Land designation on this site.

Core Strategy links	CS23-Employment land provision
Framework paragraphs	18-22
Development Management Plan	DM10-Employment
Other documents or guidance	Employment Land Review, Town Centre Audit

4 Potential development sites

4.1 This section sets out those sites that could be potentially allocated for development.

4.2 All sites have been through a rigorous assessment process, incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal²¹. Details can be found in the Site Assessment Methodology documents. Reasonable alternatives for the development of sites have been considered where possible.

4.3 For some of the sites below we have outlined what we consider to be the preferred option based on our assessments of the options and taking into account community comments so far. However, for others we are seeking your opinion on the different options proposed. For these sites no preferred option has been selected. Potential development sites have been subdivided into 3 categories that reflect their current status:

- **Opportunity sites** – these sites have been promoted by their agents or owners for allocation within the ID Plan or where the Council considers there is reasonable certainty that the site will come forward for the nature of development proposed. Reasonable alternatives for the development of these sites have been considered where possible.
- **Other possible sites** – other sites that may have potential for development but where further work is being undertaken to determine whether there is support for these sites to be allocated. Whilst other sites contained in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment may come forward, some people favour the flexibility offered by the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment in the consideration of future development potential. Reasonable alternatives for the development of these sites have been considered where possible.
- **Sites with planning permission not yet implemented** - those sites with an existing unimplemented planning permission that will be allocated for development as set out in the approved application. This is factual information and therefore not subject to consultation. Reasonable alternatives for the development of these sites have therefore not been considered.

Opportunity sites

Car Park to the rear of 34 High Street
River Mole Business Park
Units A & B Sandown Industrial Estate

21.[Further detail of the assessment process is set out in Section X and the Site Assessment Methodology documents - www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy/IDPlans.htm]

Esher Police Station
85 High Street
Ditton Lea, Portsmouth Road
Esher Car Park

Other possible sites

7 Esher Park Avenue
17 Milbourne Lane
34 to 40 High Street

Sites with planning permission not yet implemented

Esher Lawn Tennis Club
Land between 5 and 7 High Street

4.4 Further details of the sites are included below within the detailed site schedules. They are also indicated on the map included in [Esher - Appendix 1](#).

Opportunity sites

Car park to rear of 34 to 40 High Street

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH3	Car Park to the rear of 34 to 40 High Street	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Service yard and car park at the rear.	0.07
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
District Centre; Adjacent to Conservation Area and Locally Listed Building; Area of High Archaeological Potential; Secondary/Primary Frontage; Tree Preservation Order	Private	1-5 years
Description		
<p>A site located on the south side of Esher Green (A244), between 34 High Street and No. 15 Esher Green. At present it is a car park with 30 parking spaces, which are all leased to local businesses. The adjacent 15 Esher Green and the attached Adult Education Centre (old school) are locally listed buildings.</p>		
Background		
<p>A planning application in 2008 (2008/1938) was submitted for a mixed use scheme including 8 flats. This was refused and the subsequent appeal dismissed due to the design, scale and siting of the side elevation and its impact on the neighbouring residential property.</p>		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 8 dwellings Option B – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		

Preferred option

Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 8 dwellings

Comments

A density of 114 dph was considered appropriate given the flattened nature of the scheme and the town centre location. The principle of a mixed use building comprising a commercial unit on the ground floor and residential above is deemed appropriate in this town centre location and was accepted by the Inspector at appeal. This location makes it a highly sustainable site with access to amenities, employment, retail and transport links. The site is adjacent to the Esher Conservation Area as well as being within an Area of High Archaeological Potential, both of which will need to be considered in any future redevelopment. There is also potential for a more comprehensive development with the retail/ office unit to the front of the site (see DEV/ESH14)

Development considerations

- Explore potential for comprehensive development alongside DEV/ESH14
- Ensure the design addresses the impact upon the neighbouring locally listed building
- An appropriate scale, bulk and mass to enhance the character of the adjoining Conservation Area and listed buildings
- Ensure the protection of the Tree Preservation Order to the rear of the site
- Creation of a suitable frontage to fill the existing gap in the street scene
- Take account of mixed use policy and guidance to provide a building that is suitable for commercial and residential use
- Consideration of access, parking and servicing arrangements
- Potential to deliver up to 2 affordable units, in accordance with policy CS21 and associated financial contribution

What you have told us so far

The site was considered at the community workshop as having potential to accommodate a residential development. There was also some discussion about extending the site to include the shops along the front of Esher High Street but no interest has been expressed by the owners and has therefore been identified as an other possible site ref: DEV/ESH14.

River Mole Business Park

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH10	River Mole Business Park	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Storage buildings and yard	
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
Adjacent to Green Belt	Public – Elmbridge Borough Council	6 to 10 years
Description		
<p>The River Mole Business Park is situated north of Mill Road, adjacent to Sandown Industrial Park to the southwest and the residential area of Joseph Locke Way to the southeast.</p>		
Background		
<p>This site is considered to have potential for development. Informal discussions have taken place regarding a potential affordable housing scheme and the site is included within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.</p>		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 30 dwellings Option B – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches Option C – Allocate for a mixed use development with the potential to deliver up to 15 dwellings and 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches Option D – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		
Preferred option		
<p>At this stage we have not identified a preferred option and would like your views on the most appropriate way to develop this site</p>		
Comments		
<p>Despite the site currently being in an employment use there is potential for the site to be redeveloped for housing. It is adjacent to a residential area and any redevelopment</p>		

should not compromise the neighbouring employment uses and should incorporate suitable access arrangements. Whilst the site has the potential to provide additional B8 floorspace there are on-going concerns regarding the access of this site for Heavy Goods Vehicles through the residential area that limits the market attractiveness of the existing use. Whilst the site is not ideal for employment uses that rely on lorry movement, genuine redundancy of employment use would have to be proven.

The Council's Traveller Accommodation Assessment²² indicates that there is a need for 37 pitches over the next 15 years. The potential to provide these through intensification on existing sites is extremely limited and new sites must be found. This is considered to be a suitable location for the provision of no more than 15 pitches. It is close to local amenities and infrastructure and the low level nature of development makes a Gypsy and Traveller site an ideal use to adjoin the Green Belt.

There is potential to create a more comprehensive phased development with site DEV/ESH11. Should the sites be delivered separately consideration should be given to ensuring adequate access is in place.

What you have told us so far

The site was considered at the community workshop as having potential to accommodate a residential development. It was not considered appropriate for Gypsy and Traveller pitches due to access constraints

22.[Elmbridge Traveller Accommodation Assessment – www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning]

Unit A and B Sandown Industrial Park

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH11	Unit A and B Sandown Industrial Park	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Light industrial and warehousing	1.29
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
Flood Zone 2 and 3b on parts of site	Private	1 to 5 years
Description		
<p>This site is located at the end of Mill Road on the most western side of Sandown Industrial Park. It is bounded by the River Mole to the west, industrial buildings to the east and residential development further beyond that. The site currently contains a long rectangular shaped industrial building, which is subdivided into two units. A very small part on the fringes of the site falls within Flood Zone 2 and Zone 3B (Functional Floodplain).</p>		
Background		
<p>A pre-application enquiry was submitted in February 2012 exploring the possibility of developing the land for alternative uses, including housing. The site is included within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.</p>		
		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 70 dwellings Option B – Allocate for a mixed use development of small commercial units suitable for business start-ups and live-work units Option C – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		
Preferred option		
<p>At this stage we have not identified a Preferred Option and would like your views on the most appropriate way to develop this site</p>		
Comments		

Whilst the site is currently in employment use the potential to expand and improve the site is limited by the site layout and the access restrictions to this area. However, any allocation for a residential development will need to address the potential flooding issues present on the site as well as ensuring there is no environmental impact on the adjacent Green Belt. There is potential to create a more comprehensive development with site DEV/ESH10. Should the sites be delivered separately consideration should be given to ensuring adequate access is in place.

What you have told us so far

The site was discussed at the community workshop as having potential for residential redevelopment. The need for smaller units and business start ups was also suggested.

Esher Police Station

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH5	113 High Street	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Police Station	0.21
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
District Centre; Opposite Conservation Area and adjacent to Locally Listed Building	Public – Surrey Police	1 to 5 years
Description		
<p>The site includes the two/three storey police station building and hardstanding for car parking. It is located within the Esher Town Centre boundary and opposite the Esher Conservation Area boundary. The existing access is onto High Street/Portsmouth Road (A307). The site slopes down towards the road, hence the existing building occupies a relatively elevated position.</p>		
Background		
<p>There is no relevant planning history relating to the development of this site. After reviewing the need for police stations across Elmbridge, Surrey Police indicated that Esher Police Station is surplus to requirements and is available for redevelopment. The Police have vacated the station and moved to the Civic Centre. The site is included within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment</p>		
		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 21 dwellings Option B – Allocate for mixed use development with the potential to deliver up to 15 dwellings with an appropriate town centre use on the ground floor Option C – Allocate for a mixed use development with the potential to deliver up to 15 dwellings with a community use on the ground floor Option D – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		
Preferred option		

Allocate for a mixed use development with the potential to deliver up to 15 dwellings with an appropriate town centre or community use on the ground floor, depending on whether any other public service provider comes forward with an interest in occupying the development.

Comments

The site is in a sustainable town centre location and offers the potential for a relatively high density development. There is clearly potential to provide a mix of uses (including sheltered accommodation for older people) and community or town centre uses on this site. It has been made clear that the property is surplus to the requirements of Surrey Police however any redevelopment to any alternative use would need to ensure there is no alternative social or community use required for the area that could be delivered on this site. The Police have already undertaken some marketing of this site for community uses.

Development considerations

- Design and layout to respect the adjoining Conservation Area and listed building
- Opportunity to site a new building further forward to align with neighbouring buildings
- Take account of the site levels in the design, including potential for undercroft/ basement parking
- Provision of suitable separation distances to residential properties beyond the rear and side boundaries
- Consideration of policies and guidance on mixed use development to ensure uses are compatible
- Potential for up to 6 affordable units, in accordance with policy CS21 in the Core Strategy.
- Suitable access and level of parking provision

What you have told us so far

Considered at workshop to have potential for residential development, in particular for either affordable housing or sheltered accommodation

Land to rear of 85 High Street

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH4	85 High Street	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Access and service yard for retail unit	0.06
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
Conservation Area; District Centre; Listed Building	Private	1 to 5 years
Description		
<p>The site is situated within the town centre and Conservation Area of Esher, located to the south of Esher High Street. The site currently contains a Listed Building and a flat roof single-storey extension to the rear. The area to the rear is used for staff parking. Access to the site is gained to the rear, through the public car park.</p>		
Background		
<p>In 2008 an outline application was submitted for a detached two-storey building with additional rooms in the roof space comprising 6 flats following demolition of existing single storey extension (2008/2551). This was refused on grounds that “the proposed development would be disproportionate in size to that of the Listed Building and would have a detrimental impact on its setting. Also due to the lack of information submitted with the application, is unable to make an informed judgement as to whether the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area”. The site is included within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.</p>		
		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 6 dwellings Option B – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		
Preferred option		
<p>Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 6 dwellings</p>		
Comments		

Whilst the initial application was refused this was not on the principle of residential development but on the impact of the proposed design on the Conservation Area and adjacent listed building. These reasons are not considered to be insurmountable or make the development unviable. Therefore it is considered appropriate to allocate this site for residential development given its sustainable town centre location

Development consideration

- Designed with an appropriate scale, bulk and mass to enhance the character of the Conservation Area and Listed Building
- Potential to deliver 1 affordable unit, in accordance with policy CS21 in the Core Strategy and associated financial contribution
- Suitable access, parking and servicing arrangements

What you have told us so far

The site was not mentioned at the community workshop.

Ditton Lea, Portsmouth Road

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH6	Ditton Lea, Portsmouth Road	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Residential	0.35
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
Small portion to the rear of the site is in Flood Zone 2; Adjacent to Green Belt and Grade II listed cottages	Private	1 to 5 years
Description		
<p>A two-storey Georgian style house on the northern side of Portsmouth Road, a classified A road. The character of the surrounding area is mainly residential with some neighbouring cottages with Grade II listed building status. Sandown Park racecourse is to the rear of the site and Littleworth Common on the opposite side of Portsmouth Road.</p>		
Background		
<p>A pre application enquiry was submitted in 2008 regarding possible redevelopment of the site. Proposals for 14 houses (2011/0843), and 13 houses and 1 flat (2011/6282) were refused and dismissed at appeal on design and layout grounds, and the need to make infrastructure and service contributions to meet needs generated by the development. An application for 13 houses (2011/6426) was also considered and refused by officers, prior to receipt of the above appeal decisions. The site is included within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.</p>		
		
Options		
<p>Option A – Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 10 dwellings Option B – Do not allocate (as existing)</p>		
Preferred option		
<p>Allocate for development with the potential to deliver up to 10 dwellings</p>		
Comments		

The site is in an existing residential area and being close to both the town centre and station makes it a sustainable location for housing. Whilst an application for 14 houses was refused, this was due to the design and layout and not the principle of residential development. In addition the impact of any proposed development on the neighbouring Grade II listed cottages would need to be taken into account.

Development consideration

- Address reasons for refusal and dismissal at appeal on design and layout grounds
- Take account of the potential areas of flood risk on the fringes of the site and adjacent Green Belt
- Consideration to be given to potential impact on neighbouring Grade II listed cottages
- Suitable access and parking
- Potential to deliver up to 3 affordable units, in accordance with policy CS21 in the Core Strategy

What you have told us so far

The site was not mentioned at the community workshop.

Esher Car Park

Site Ref	Address	
DEV/ESH15	Esher Car Park	
Settlement area	Existing use	Site area (ha)
Esher	Car park	0.23
Planning constraints	Ownership	Delivery
Adjacent to Conservation Area; Listed Building; District Centre	Public - Elmbridge Borough Council	5 to 10 years

Description

The site is located adjacent to the Civic Centre, to the rear of the High Street, library and citizens advice building. The development area is limited to the area including the library on the upper tier of the car park. To the west is the listed to the Grade I listed St George's Church and large detached properties some containing flats along Esher Park Avenue to the south. It is in a highly sustainable location within Esher District Centre and less than a mile to Esher train station with regular services to London. It lies just outside a Conservation Area boundary to the southwest

Background

This site is considered to have potential for development.



Options

Option A – Allocate for mixed use development of housing and an appropriate town centre use (including associated parking) with the on site re-provision of the library and citizens advice bureau.

Option B – Allocate for mixed use development of housing and an appropriate town centre use (including associated parking) with the off site re-provision of the library and citizens advice bureau.

Option C - Allocate for mixed use development of housing (including associated parking) and re-provision of the library and citizens advice bureau.

Option D – Do not allocate (as existing)

Preferred option

At this stage we have not identified a Preferred Option and would like your views on the most appropriate way to develop this site.

Comments

This site is located in a highly sustainable location and would be suitable for a housing or mixed-use development. There is significant potential to consider the development of the upper part of the car park including the library as part of a mixed-use scheme. The parking strategy identified the car park as being at maximum capacity for weekday parking. It will be necessary to maintain some level of parking on this site

What you have told us so far

Some considered this site to have potential for development.

Other possible sites

7 Esher Park Avenue

Ref	Size (ha)	Current use	Planning constraints
DEV/ESH8	0.5	Residential	None
<p>In 2006, pre application discussions took place regarding the development of this privately owned residential site. It is included in the 2012 Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment for 25 dwellings, with the expectation that a new development could be delivered between 6 and 10 years.</p>			
<p>Commentary The adjoining property has been redeveloped recently to form 10 flats at a density of 33 dph. There are other flatted developments in the road including Carrington Place, which achieves a density of 72 dph. Therefore a 25 unit residential development of this site could be a reasonable development and in keeping with the scale and form of development in the road.</p>			

17 Milbourne Lane

Ref	Size (ha)	Current use	Planning constraints
DEV/ESH9	0.14	Residential	None
<p>There have been two planning applications in 2007 for the possibility of 12 flats and 9 flats on site, both of which were refused. It is included in the 2012 Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment for 11 dwellings, with the expectation that a new development could be delivered between 6 and 10 years.</p>			
<p>Commentary Whilst both applications were refused on the development's impact on the character of the area and an absence of contributions to infrastructure, the principle of a high-density flatted development in this location was accepted. Located in a predominantly residential area, the site is considered suitable for housing. Although the site is located just over 800m from Esher Town Centre, there is a bus service passing on Milbourne Lane, which travels into Esher, Claygate, Surbiton and Kingston. Whilst any development would need to be appropriate for its location there are no other constraints on the site that could hinder development..</p>			

34 to 40 High Street

Ref	Size (ha)	Current use	Planning constraints
DEV/ESH14	0.08	Retail and offices	District Centre; Primary shopping frontage; Adjacent to Conservation Area and Locally Listed Building

This site has not been proposed for redevelopment and is not included in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment. However, it was suggested at the community workshop that the site and the surrounding area would benefit from its redevelopment. The redevelopment of the neighbouring building and proposals for the car park to the rear (DEV/ESH3) also indicate that there is clearly potential for the redevelopment of this site.

Commentary

The development of this site would provide an opportunity to ensure the comprehensive redevelopment of this site alongside DEV/ESH3 and deliver ongoing improvements to this part of the town centre that have been achieved through the redevelopment of two neighbouring sites. The site could potentially be redeveloped for a mixed use development with retail on the ground floor and either offices or flats above.

Sites with Planning Permission

4.5 The following sites have an existing planning permission and will be allocated for development as set out in the approved application. These can be viewed online at – www.elmbridge.gov.uk

Sites with planning permission not yet implemented

Ref	Application No.	Site address	Current use	Proposal
DEV/ESH12	2011/0496	Esher Lawn Tennis Club 9 Milbourne Lane Esher Surrey KT10 9OU	Sports Club	14 semi-detached two storey houses
DEV/ESH13	2011/6360	Land between 5 & 7 High Street Esher Surrey KT10 9QL	Vacant	Three storey infill extension comprising 6 flats with a walkway underneath.

5 Priorities for investment

5.1 Outlined below are the priorities for investment in infrastructure within the settlement area to address the increasing population resulting from further development. Whilst these were originally outlined in the Core Strategy (see Section 1) it was acknowledged that these will change over time and this section provides an update to this. Any improvements made will depend on the resources available to deliver these improvements. Set out below are the priorities for improvement that will provide a framework for allocating a range of funds aimed at addressing the impacts of new development such as the Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus. This information will continue to be reviewed and updated regularly through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to prioritise spend.

Education

5.2 It is expected that demand for school places in Esher will increase due to both new development and changing demographics in the area. Over the next ten years it is expected that at least one form of entry will be required in Esher to meet demand for primary places and five forms of entry at secondary level. Working with Surrey County Council, we have identified a number of options as to where investment could take place in schools in Esher in order to meet the growing need for school places.

5.3 Our preferred option is to identify those educational establishments where there is capacity for permanent expansion to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers as 'Education Opportunity Areas'. This will ensure that such sites are safeguarded to ensure that sufficient land is available to accommodate future need. Assessments of capacity are based on the findings of the Education Provision Assessment ²³ that was prepared in partnership with Surrey County Council or on additional evidence provided. **The aim of this Settlement ID Plan is to only identify where there is physical capacity for expansion. It is the responsibility of Surrey County Council and local schools to agree the nature of provision (such as the balance between infant, junior and primary schools) and whether that provision addresses other factors such the preferences expressed by parents and the geographic spread of demand across an area.**

Option A – Allocate existing school sites ²⁴ for potential expansion to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers

Option B – Do not allocate for expansion

23.[Education Provision Assessment – www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning]

24.[Includes sites formerly in education use]

Preferred Option: Allocate existing school sites for potential expansion to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers

Commentary: The preferred option will ensure that the schools identified are safeguarded for education expansion to ensure that sufficient land is available to accommodate future need.

5.4 Due to their proximity, education provision for Esher and Claygate is considered by Surrey County Council alongside Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green, with capacity of all the schools in these areas being assessed when deciding how additional demand can be accommodated. The potential for schools to deliver identified needs are outlined in the relevant ID Plan ²⁵. In Esher, there is no identified capacity within the existing schools to meet additional demand for primary places and although Esher High has capacity it is located within the Green Belt and therefore capacity for growth is limited.

5.5 Surrey County Council are currently considering the following proposals to increase the number of primary and secondary places in Esher and to help meet demand in adjoining areas

- The relocation and expansion of Cranmere Primary School to provide an extra two forms of entry (increasing overall pupil numbers from 210 to 630) and a nursery class of 26 places.²⁶
- The expansion of Esher High School providing an additional 2 forms of entry.²⁷

5.6 However, the proposed site for re-provision and expansion of Cranmere Primary School is in the Green Belt. This would be a departure from the Local Plan and permission to build a school would require the approval from the Secretary of State. It is proposed that the scheme would be completed by September 2014 should approval be granted. Whilst there is limited scope within Esher to meet growth, the proposed school would also help to meet demand from the Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green area. However, the Education Provision Assessment identifies a number of other schools in the urban area with capacity for expansion and therefore the Council proposes to allocate those schools instead.

5.7 A similar situation could also arise at Esher High School where the County have suggested a 2 form of entry expansion. However, as the school is wholly within the Green Belt such an expansion is not considered 'appropriate development' and exceptional circumstances would have to be identified.

25.[See Claygate and Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green ID Plans]

26.[Surrey County Council School Organisation Consultation On a proposal to enlarge Cranmere Primary School in Esher www.surreycc.gov.uk]

27.[Surrey County Council School Organisation Plan September 2012 www.surreycc.gov.uk]

Transport and Highways improvements

5.8 Transport studies have shown that there are a number of areas that should be the focus of future investment in order to manage congestion by offering sustainable alternatives, improvements to junctions and traffic/parking management. Options put forward by the County Council and the community as having potential to alleviate the impacts of congestion are:

- Support improvements in cycle lanes, in particular at Milbourne Lane and Hare Lane, to provide consistent and more user friendly provision.
- Alleviate congestion on the high street and surrounding roads through junction and signal improvements.
- Promotion of public transport and other forms of more sustainable transport.
- Improvements in frequency of bus services.
- Improved maintenance of roads.
- Improve planting and maintenance of Esher High Street

Other infrastructure

5.9 There are a number of other infrastructure priorities that were set out within the Core Strategy that are still relevant and these are set out below:

- Increase hotel capacity.
- Parking strategy to give consideration to the adoption of a local management plan

Workshop feedback

5.10 In addition to the above, discussions at the workshop raised a number of areas where it was considered important to focus future investment.

- Protect King George's Hall from redevelopment