

3. Principal Elements of the Draft SPG

Increase in Percentage of Affordable Housing

- 3.1 The draft SPG sets out an increase in the percentage of affordable housing required from suitable housing sites that trigger the current threshold (1.0 hectare and above, or developments of 25 units and over) from 25% to 40%. This will be calculated on 40% of the total number of habitable rooms, rather than 40% of the total number of units of the scheme. The SPG states that this will ensure that the proportion of affordable housing provided is 40% of the total development and avoids situations where a developer provides 60% of the market housing at one size, and 40% of the affordable housing of a reduced size.
- 3.2 If the level of affordable housing makes a development unviable, the Council will expect an open book approach to demonstrate this. The draft SPG clarifies that if a developer can substantiate a viability argument, all parties will need to work together to find a mutually acceptable compromise to deliver the appropriate level of affordable housing whilst also complying with the Local Plan.

Comment

Woking Borough's proposal to increase the percentage proportion of affordable housing on eligible housing sites to 40%, is appropriate for Woking in terms of assisting in achieving the Borough's affordable housing target, and should be supported. Increasing the percentage is consistent with Policy DN11 of the Deposit Draft Structure Plan, and with other Planning Authorities in Surrey that are already achieving higher percentages of affordable housing on suitable sites, such as Spelthorne (reported to Planning Committee on 13 August 2003).

However, caution needs to be observed in applying the 40% target to the total number of habitable rooms rather than the total number of units. The SPG is already quite clear in terms of the mix of unit types that it would expect to be provided, as well as a strict housing tenure requirement. Given that the Local Authority Social Housing Grant is now no longer available, negotiating a realistic and viable affordable housing element will be critical in terms of delivering sufficient homes to meet the identified need. It is acknowledged that the proposed changes to PPG3 emphasise that there should be a better match between the size and type of housing planned and the needs of the community but negotiations will need to be flexible and responsive in terms of balancing the need for affordable housing and achieving a viable housing development. Applying a 40% target on all habitable rooms, may place too much demand upon this delicate balance.

Site Threshold to Remain Unchanged

- 3.3 The draft SPG does not propose to change the Local Plan threshold of 1 hectare or 25 dwellings. However, Woking Borough has noted that the Government has recently published proposed changes to PPG3 – Housing, which includes a reduction in site thresholds to 0.5 of a hectare or 15 dwellings. Woking Borough suggests that this could allow the Council to reduce thresholds without the need to formally review the Local Plan.

Comment

It is unclear from this suggestion whether Woking Council would seek to introduce a change in site threshold as part of a proposed future amendment to the SPG on affordable housing, or to the Local Plan policy itself. Any significant change to Local Plan policy would be subject to formal consultation, and would have to follow current Local Plan Review procedures, until the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill next year. Perhaps a better course of

action would be to review the policy as part of the Local Development Framework process.

Exception Sites

- 3.4 The proportion of affordable housing on sites where residential development is to be permitted as an exception to Local Plan policy, will be 60%.
- 3.5 Evidence provided by the Woking Housing Needs Assessment, indicates that the Borough Council will not be able to deliver sufficient housing to meet identified needs through sites in accordance with Local Plan policy. The Borough Council will explore opportunities to deliver affordable housing from other potential sources, but on any future exception sites, the Borough Council will seek 60% affordable housing as the primary planning benefit to balance the policy objection.

Comment

It is not clear from the SPG whether the exception sites refer to rural areas or Green Belt. If exception sites are negotiated in rural areas, they should be released only to meet an identified local need for affordable housing. If a site within the Green Belt is to be released as an exception to policy, then it should provide 100% affordable housing, rather than provide the opportunity to release land for general market housing in the Green Belt. In addition, if exception sites are to be released, it would be advisable to request a sustainability appraisal as part of the proposal, in order to ensure that the development would not prejudice the aims and policies of the Local Plan.

Mix of Unit Types

- 3.6 The draft SPG outlines that any affordable housing provision proposed should be of a suitable type, meaning that developers will need to provide a mix of unit types to address the housing need, on the basis of 15% one bedroom; 30% two bedroom and 55% three bedroom and larger. All the 3+ bedroom units and 50% of the 2 bedroom units should be provided as houses with gardens.

Housing Tenure

- 3.7 Based on evidence provided by Woking Borough's latest housing needs assessment, the draft SPG sets out that 85% of new affordable housing to be provided should be in the form of social rented units. The remaining 15% should be provided for shared ownership, to meet the need for key worker housing in the Borough.
- 3.8 In accordance with Woking Borough's Key Worker Strategy, the SPG defines key workers as people who contribute to the economic stability of the Borough, but have income levels insufficient to purchase a property on the private market. Two groups are identified, 'traditional' key workers such as teachers, the police, nurses and public sector workers, and 'economic and environmental' key workers, identified as private sector care/health workers, shop workers, transport workers and other private sector essential services.

Comment

The ability to stipulate housing tenure is essential to the delivery of sufficient social rented housing, which dominates affordable housing need in Woking, and many other Boroughs in Surrey.

Delivery of Affordable Housing

- 3.9 The preferred location for affordable housing as set out in the draft SPG, will be on-site. Only if on-site provision of family housing is not appropriate will the alternatives of off-site provision or cash in lieu contributions be considered.
- 3.10 The draft SPG offers two options to achieve this:

- a) If the developer is able to identify an alternative site in their ownership, the family housing can be provided there. This will require planning applications for the two sites to be determined at the same time, with one Section 106 Agreement drawn up to achieve the total affordable housing requirement for the two sites.
- b) If the developer is unable to identify an alternative site, the developer will be expected to pay to the Council a sum equivalent to the costs the developer would have incurred had the affordable housing been provided on site. (A commuted sum formula is provided as part of the SPG, based on TCI at 100% and a grant rate of 56.6%. The formula will be updated annually).

Model Legal Agreement

- 3.11 Another key element of the draft SPG is the inclusion of a model Section 106 Agreement, in order to assist in the legal process of providing affordable housing in association with development proposals. The SPG requires that the identified RSL (Registered Social Landlord), be party to the Legal Agreement.

Comment

This is a useful feature of the draft SPG, which should assist the developer and simplify what can be a complex and time consuming legal process.

Tables 1-3 OPEN SPACE AND POPULATION AUDIT**SETTLEMENT Addlestone**

Table 1 Population Data (2001 Census - 10389 approx)

0-9 years	10-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-RA	RA +
1285	576	1215	3444	1936	1933

Table 2 – Open Space Audit

NPFA Standard	2.4 ha per 1000	Requirement	Provision
Addlestone Population	Children's play area 0.8ha per 1000 Outdoor sports playing fields 1.6ha per 1000	Children play area - 8.31ha Outdoor Sport's playing field - 16.62 = 24.93ha	The total area of both children's play area and formal sports fields significantly exceeds the requirement of 24.93 ha.

Table 3 – Open Space Provision

Name	Facility	Size (ha)	Comment
Abbey Fit/Jubilee High	3 Floodlit all weather courts for tennis, 5-a-side, 7-a-side football, hockey, netball and volleyball, gym and indoor sports hall, swimming pool (summer)	12.9	RBC/SCC Sub Borough Facility
St Paul's Infant School	Playground	0.29	SCC – concrete playground
Kingsthorpe Gardens	Amenity Area	0.52	RBC – park, well maintained, pathways, benches. Shrub-grass, trees located round area, landscaped
Between Birchfield & Church Close	Amenity Area	0.043	Private – grass verge. Separates house from the edge of road
Coronation Park	Park and Amenity Area	0.32	RBC – grass area with trees spread evenly throughout

			area, pathway that cuts through. Well maintained. Not much functional value but good amenity value
St Paul's Church	Grounds and Cemetery	0.34	CoE – well maintained
St Augustine's Green	Amenity Land	0.40	Private – shrub grasslands
St Augustine's Residential Home	Open Space and Amenity Area	1.76	Private – good open grounds. Seating area around open grass space.
Sumner Place	Equipped Play Area	0.10	RBC – play area - swings, slides, roundabout, benches. Fenced off. Well maintained, few trees, no litter
Oaklands Court	Amenity Land	2.60	Private – over grown – no access
Rickman Crescent	Amenity Land		SCC
Crouch Oak Green Open Spaces	Small Public Open Spaces	0.52	RBC – amenity land
Brackendene Open Space	BMX Track, Moto X Trials Motor Club (Juniors)	3.35	RBC
Coxes Lock/Mill Pond Open Space	Small Public Open Space	3.34	RBC/National Trust – river way. Path alongside river, grass verges, benches overlooking the water
Marnham Place	Equipped Play Area, Multi-Use Games Area	0.20	RBC – basketball, football. Very well used by kids
Victory Park	Staffed Recreation Ground, Bowling Green, Football Pitch, Cricket Square, Sport Changing Accommodation, Tennis Courts x2, Putting Green, Paddling Pool, Croquet area, Equipped play area, Car Park, Sensory Garden, Basketball Hoop, Half Pipe Skateboard Ramp, Ornamental Gardens, War Memorial	4.9	RBC – sub borough facility
St George's College	Running Track, Cricket Field, Large	28.81	Private – very well maintained – good quality.

	Open Space, Netball Courts, Hocey, Tennis		Public access for evening use
St Georges Road	Verge	0.09	SCC – shrub grassland
Burn Close	Car Park	2.2	Private – car park for residents, amenity grass area
Aviator Park	Junior sized football pitch	1.31	RBC – open shrub grassland behind. Not very accessible
Woburn Hill	Nursery	1.55	Private – open grass area
Woburn Hill Park/ House	Woods/Open Space/ Park	6.44	Private
Darley Dene Primary School	Play Ground	0.23	SCC – school area, grassed
Crockford Park	Wooded Area/Car Park	0.50	RBC – wooded area, path along river – well defined
Pitson Close	Communal/Residential Gardens	0.04	Private – very small area – gardens for flats – benches, bridge over canal to another small piece of grassed land
Millpond Court	Grass Verges - pathway	0.67	Private – car park for estate, grass on verge round river wey. Benches and bins. Amenity value for flat residents
Herondale	Playground	0.089	RBC – small playground – very well maintained, swings, slide, assault course, bins and benches. Grass well cut, tarmac round play equipment
Herondale	Verge/Open Space (access to Mill Pond)	0.22	RBC – overgrown grassland, footpath – well defined
River Wey	Tow Path (both sides)/Verge	3.17	National Trust – public access
Addlestone Road	River Walk/Verge	0.27	National Trust
Hamm Moor Open Space	Football kick about area/Equipped play area/Basketball Hoop	0.61	RBC
The Boathouse	Car Park	0.20	RBC
Weybridge Road	Grass verges	0.26	RBC
Caseldon Close Open Space	Small Play Area	0.28	RBC – small playground – fenced off, seesaws, slides, swings. Grassed area round edge – tall trees and bins – well maintained
Sandy Road Open Space	Small Open Space	0.060	RBC – very small open space – grass area surrounded by trees – maybe small amenity value
Sayes Woods	Woodland	2.42	RBC – woodland – footpath

			that goes a variety of ways through the woodland – well defined
Sayes Court Open Space	Equipped play area/Basketball Hoop/Football kick about area	4.24	RBC – large concrete playground, swings, roundabout, benches. Open space – football pitches, basketball ring. Very clean and open, lots of bins – well maintained.
Fernbank Road	Open Space	0.042	Private – amenity value
Ledger Drive	Amenity Land	0.028	RBC – grass area with trees round edge.
Sayes Court Junior School	Playground		Private

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Tables 1-3 OPEN SPACE AND POPULATION AUDIT

SETTLEMENT New Haw and Woodham

Table 1 Population Data 2001 Census - 9713

0-9 years	10-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-RA	RA +
1114	710	1121	2812	2203	1753

Table 2 – Open Space Audit

NPFA Standard	2.4 ha per 1000	Requirement	Provision
New Haw and Woodham Population 9731	Children's play area 0.8ha per 1000 Outdoor sports playing fields 1.6ha per 1000	7.78 ha 15.56 ha	The total area of both children's play area and formal sports fields exceeds the 23.34 ha requirement, although there is a shortage of playing fields.

Table 3 – Open Space Provision

Name	Facility	Size (ha)	Comment
Crockford Bridge	Meadows	26.22	Private – large open space. Football posts. Surrounded by trees. Very well maintained
Byfleet Road	Verges/Public Open Space	0.41	RBC – Grass / trees verges. Splits houses away from road. Very high amenity value
Marshall Place	Public Open Space	0.20	RBC – open space. Few trees around edge, grass cut. High amenity value especially for housing estate
The Church of All Saints New Haw	Church Grounds	0.29	CoE
Pinewood Avenue	Tennis Courts/ Footpath to Fields	1.29	RBC – lots of trees, situated by electrical station
Heathervale Recreation Ground	Tennis Courts/ Football pitches/ Paddling Pool/	4.93	RBC – Very large park, skate board ramp, football pitches, clubhouse, path

	Cricket Pitch/ Bowling Green/ Children's play area/ Multi - use games area/ Basketball hoop/ Putting/ Street Course Skate Facility		round edge for dog walking, tennis court, paddling pool, putting green
Manor Drive/Grange Road	Footpath to Fields	2.45	RBC – big open space, fenced off. No access. Public footpath around edge
The Grange County Infant School	Playing Fields	1.29	SCC – school playing field. Football pitches, well maintained
Fullbrook School	Sports Ground	4.56	SCC – playing field
Woodham Lodge	Playground/Park & Open Space	0.99	RBC – playground, assault course, swings, path along edge, very well maintained
Woodham Lock	Open Space	0.20	RBC – high amenity value. Footpaths
Basingstoke Canal	River/Amenity footpath	10.87	National Trust –pathway next to canal, very high amenity value
Fullbrook	Open Space	0.09	Private
New Haw Community Centre	Car Park	0.22	Community centre car park – has plans to re-tarmac and use as a play area

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Tables 1-3 OPEN SPACE AND POPULATION AUDIT

SETTLEMENT Hythe

Table 1 Population Data 2001 - approx 9927

0-9 years	10-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-RA	RA +
1266	563	1170	3314	1747	1867

Table 2 – Open Space Audit

NPFA Standard	2.4 ha per 1000	Requirement	Provision
Hythe Population 5940	Children's play area 0.8ha per 1000 Outdoor sports playing fields 1.6ha per 1000	4.75 ha 9.50 ha	The total area of both children's play area and formal sports fields exceeds the requirement of 14.25 ha.

Table 3 – Open Space Provision

Name	Facility	Size (ha)	Comment
Egham Sports Centre	4 Tennis courts 2 Five-a side courts 4 Football pitches 1 Cricket pitch	5.66	RBC
Magna Carta School	Playing fields	2.9	SCC
Hythe Social Centre Recreation Ground	1 Football pitch	0.89	RBC – well maintained. Very large open space, grass cut. Football posts provided, trees round edge, bins, benches
Hythe Junior School	Playground / recreational area	1.7	Playground
Bishops Way Recreation Ground	Children's play area Basketball hoop Football kick about area	2.41	RBC – Fenced off children's play area. Football pitch and basketball hoop, floodlights. Well maintained
Charta Road	Children's play	1.53	RBC

Recreation Ground	area Basketball hoop		
Pooley Green Recreation Ground	Children's play area Basketball hoop	1.73	RBC – large open space grass area – football pitch. Children's play area
Roundway Open Space	Amenity Land	0.52	Private – grass verge. High amenity value to surrounding housing estate. Grass well cut.
Wapshott Road Play Area	Children's play area	0.14	RBC – small open space. Very wild, overgrown. Rubbish lying across area. Very little amenity value.
Wendover Place Play Area	Children's play area	0.044	RBC – small children's play area on grass. Suitable for very small children. Well maintained.
Ayebridges open space	Open space	1.75	Private – couldn't gain access
Warwick Avenue	Playing field/Open Space/Lake & SSSI (Thorpe Lea Meadow)	21.08	Surrey Wildlife Trust/Private – path leading to open space. Large grass area. Football posts. Very well maintained, surrounded by trees. Children's playground fenced on the middle
Egham Cricket Club Ground	Club cricket pitch & pavilion	3.48	RBC – cricket pitch and clubhouse. Well maintained
Thorpe Lea Road	Open space/Lake	22.60	Private -
Egham Football Club	Football Pitch	0.81	RBC – well maintained football club. Lots of parking, stands, clubhouse.
Thorpe Lea Open Space	Open space	1.75	Private – Large open space, very flat. Trees and hedges round edge. Footpath leading

			round edge of park
Thorpe Lee School	School Grounds	2.09	Play area, children's play equipment, concrete playground at back
Vicarage Road	Allotments	0.87	RBC – allotment area
Lovett Road	Open space & Tennis courts	0.64	RBC – couldn't gain access to. Fenced in
Pooley Green Allotments	Allotments (including swan sanctuary)	4.6	Large allotments, partly overgrown. Some small sheds in each plot. Wire fencing.
Woodhaw Way	Woodland	1.14	Private – large grass verge in middle of housing estate. Very high amenity value. Trees planted round edge.

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Tables 1-3 OPEN SPACE AND POPULATION AUDIT

SETTLEMENT Virginia Water

Table 1 Population Data 2001 Census Data approx 5895

0-9 years	10-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-RA	RA +
756	501	436	1550	2155	497

Table 2 – Open Space Audit

NPFA Standard	2.4 ha per 1000	Requirement	Provision
Virginia Water Population 5895	Children's play area 0.8ha per 1000 Outdoor sports playing fields 1.6ha per 1000	4.71 ha 9.43 ha	The total area of both children's play area and formal sports fields significantly exceeds the 14.14 ha requirement.

Table 3 – Open Space Provision

Name	Facility	Size (ha)	Comment
Trumps Green Road	Woodland	1.68	Private -
Trumps Mill Lane	Amenity Area	3.39	Private – wooded area – path for access, lots of trees
Virginia Water Memorial Gardens	War Memorial	0.40	RBC – small open space / grass verge. Trees surrounding
Riverside Walk Cabrera Trust	Nature Conservation Area	21.44	RBC Trustee
King George V Playing Field	Football Pitch, Football Training Area, Car Park, Club House, 2 tennis Courts and Pavilion, Play Area, Multi-Use Games Area, Children's fenced play ground	5.82	RBC – Fenced in children's playground. Very well maintained, tennis court, football pitch, clubhouse, parking. Path running along edge of park
Edgell Close Play Area	Children's Play Area	0.40	RBC – concrete children's playground, swings,

			slides, etc. Area of grass surrounding play area.
Cabrera Ave Playing Field	Basketball Hoop, Children's Play Area	0.75	Cabrera Ave TRustee
Coronation Playing Field	Playing Field	1.01	Large open space, even ground surrounded by trees and hedges
St Ann's Heath Junior School	Playing Field	3.58	SCC – playing field for football, etc. Inside grounds concrete playground for school's use.
Wellington Ave	Woodland/Open Space	3.37	Private – wooded area – lots of amenity value.
Christchurch C of E School	Playing Fields	0.65	CoE – playing field – very open, well maintained, grass cut – concrete playground – benches. Spiney
Trumps Green County Infant School	Playing Fields	1.51	SCC – open space
Stroude Road Allotments	Allotments	2.46	RBC
Wentworth Golf Course	Golf course, footpath and fitness facilities	(266.87)	Private – Club house, Bar, Conference Centre, Tennis Courts, Spa, Pool, Gym
Virginia Water Community Centre	Community Hall and Play Area	0.1	Virginia Water Community Association
Virginia Water	The Lake and Windsor Great Park	346.05	Crown Estate and open to public
Virginia Park	Pool, gyms and private open space	17.2	Private for residents of new development