

Guildford Borough Council

Draft Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Initial Consultation Statement

February 2023

Prepared in accordance with Regulation 12 of the
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England)
Regulations 2012



GUILDFORD
B O R O U G H

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This initial consultation statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 Regulation 12(a) requires that before adopting a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a statement must be prepared setting out:
- the persons whom the authority consulted when preparing the SPD;
 - a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and
 - how those issues have been addressed in the SPD
- 1.3 The purpose of the draft Green Belt SPD ('the SPD') is to supplement Policy P2: Green Belt, contained in the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034 (LPSS). The SPD provides further guidance on how the exceptions listed in paragraphs 149 and 150 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will be interpreted in relation to whether a proposal can be considered to constitute 'not inappropriate' development.

2. Preparing the draft SPD

- 2.1 The commitment to prepare a Green Belt SPD is stated in paragraph 4.3.20 of the LPSS where it states that the SPD will be prepared to support Policy P2: Green Belt and provide greater clarity to applicants. Production of the document occurred concurrently with the production of Local Plan: Development Management Policies document.
- 2.2 In the meeting of the Council on 05 April 2022, motion CO113 APPROACH TO THE REVIEW AND POTENTIAL UPDATE TO THE LOCAL PLAN: STRATEGY AND SITES (2019) was resolved whereby section (4) stated "That priority be given to the production of a Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document alongside the emerging Local Plan: Development Management Policies".
- 2.3 The SPD was produced through close coordination with the Council's Development Management team. The iterative process allowed the SPD to comprehensively respond to specific issues arising from planning applications coming forward within the borough.
- 2.4 Furthermore, direct engagement was made with councillors through the cross-party Local Plan Panel. The councillors received and were invited to comment on a draft SPD at a meeting on 06 February 2023 prior to wider public consultation.
- 2.5 The main responses from the Panel which assisted in finalising the draft SPD are highlighted in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 1. Responses from councillors during review of draft SPD and resulting actions

Response	Action
Clarify what is meant by 'agriculture'	A definition for the purposes of the SPD has now been included
Include a reference to encourage pre-application advice to understand what scale of extension might be considered appropriate	A reference recommending pre-application advice is sought early on in the design process has now been included
Desire to include factors that would be considered to determine whether a site is in a village	A (not-exhaustive) list of factors has now been included
Request for further guidance on how it would be determined whether a site was in a 'built-up area'	Further guidance over whether an area would be considered in a 'built-up area' has now been included

3. Formal consultation on the draft SPD

- 3.1 A four-week consultation is being held between Wednesday 22 February 2023 (midday) and Wednesday 22 March 2023 (midday). We have advised those stakeholders (comprising organisations, members of the public, businesses and amenity groups) whose email addresses and postal addresses we hold on our consultation database.
- 3.2 During the consultation period, the consultation document is available on our website and paper copies of the consultation document are available in the borough's four libraries and in the main Council office at Millmead. These arrangements are in accordance with our [Statement of Community Involvement](#), May 2020.
- 3.3 The SPD has undergone a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening to determine whether it would have significant adverse effects upon the integrity of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, or Natura 2000 sites. The SPD has also undergone a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening to determine the impact on the environment and to integrate considerations of the environment into the preparation and adoption of the SPD.
- 3.4 The Council is required to consult with Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England on all SEA screening opinions, and with Natural England on all HRA screening opinions, before formally determining whether a strategic environmental assessment and/or HRA appropriate assessment is needed. The conclusions outlined in the HRA/SEA screening document will be sent to the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England for consideration in tandem with the consultation on the SPD document. The responses of the organisations will be included in the final SEA and HRA screening report.
- 3.5 Following the consultation on the SPD, the comments received will be considered and amendments will be made where necessary before the finalised document is brought before Executive for adoption.