

Date: 09 July 2026
Our ref: 549618
Your ref: Local Plan Main Modifications



Local Plan Team
Surrey Heath Borough
Council

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir/Madam,

Consultation: Main Modifications to the Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 – 2038

Thank you for your consultation on the Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 – 2038.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Please see our comments below on the Proposed Main Modifications and Main Modifications Habitats Regulations Assessment (AECOM, May 2026). For issues outside of the scope of this consultation, please see our response (NE ref: 483422, 17 September 2024) to the Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019 – 2038) Regulation 19 consultation.

Proposed Main Modifications to Local Plan

MM44: Policy E1 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

We welcome the changes that bring the policy into alignment with national policy.

MM45: Policy E2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

We welcome the changes that bring the policy into alignment with national policy. We are supportive of the Council's commitment to contribute towards Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and that the Council will require mitigation if local, national or international sites will be impacted by development proposals.

MM46: Policy E3: Biodiversity Net Gain

We are pleased that the changes have not impacted E3's commitment to the delivery of on-site net gain provision before delivery off-site, in line with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy. On-site provision can help to provide biodiversity gains close to where a loss may have taken place or is proposed and can increase access to nature for local communities.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Natural England note that a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been prepared by AECOM for the Main Modifications to the Surrey Heath Local Plan (May 2026).

The assessment concludes that the proposed Main Modifications to the Surrey Heath Borough Local Plan will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat sites, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, and do not undermine the conclusions of the HRA of the Local Plan. On the basis of the information provided, Natural England concurs with this view.

For any queries relating to the above advice, please contact [REDACTED]
For any new consultations, please send your correspondence to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Lo
Higher Officer: Sustainable Development
Thames Solent Area Team