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**Surrey Heath Borough Council. Examination of Surrey Heath Local Plan: 2019 - 2038**

**Inspector:** Louise Crosby MA MRTPI

**Programme Officer:** Ian Kemp

Tel: 07723009166, email: [ian@localplanservices.co.uk](mailto:ian@localplanservices.co.uk)

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Ms Reeves  
Planning Policy and Conservation Manager  
Planning Services  
Finance and Customer Service Directorate  
Surrey Heath Borough Council  
Surrey Heath House  
Knoll Road  
Camberley  
Surrey  
GU15 3HD

7 January 2025

Dear Ms Reeves

**Inspector's Initial Questions**

**Introduction**

1. Following the submission of the Surrey Heath Local (2019-2038) (the Plan) I have begun my initial preparation and identified a number of initial questions that would benefit from early clarification. These are intended to assist in my understanding of the Plan and the evidence base, to help in my assessment of soundness and legal compliance, and to provide clarity and potentially narrow down the focus of the examination.

**Evidence Base**

2. The Council explain in their letter dated 10 December, which accompanies the submitted Plan, that since the publication of the Pre-Submission Local Plan in the summer of 2024 the Council has at the request of the Environment Agency commissioned and substantiality completed an updated Strategic Flood Risk assessment and is also in the process of preparing an updated Water Cycle

Study. Can the Council please provide a realistic timescale for the completion of this work and whether it is considered that further consultation will be required with the Environment Agency and/or representors on its contents.

3. It seems the Council is also preparing an updated Strategic Land Availability Assessment and 5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement with an expected completion date of January 2025. Can a more detailed completion date be provided and information on whether the findings are likely to delay the examination.
4. The Council are working on an updated Indoor and Built Facilities Assessment with completion anticipated in February 2025. Again, what are the consequences of this likely to be for the examination.
5. PINS Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations (August 2024) advises that Councils must play their part in ensuring that Plans are taken through the examination as quickly and efficiently as possible by ensuring that when they submit their plan it is ready for examination and the evidence base is complete. Can the Council please also explain why the Plan has been submitted for examination with an incomplete evidence base and what it is doing to minimise the delay in the examination?

## **Housing**

6. Table 1 in the Council's Housing Topic Paper contains a row named Non-Allocated SLAA sites'. If these are sites identified in the SLAA, why are they not allocated in the Plan?
7. In terms of whether the Council will have a 5-year housing land supply (HLS) on adoption of the plan, I cannot find any detailed evidence in this regard. I have appended a form (Annex 1) to this letter to be completed for every site that the Council intend to rely on to demonstrate their 5-year HLS.
8. Also, a housing trajectory to demonstrate how the housing requirement will be delivered over the plan period should be provided. I have appended a proforma for you to complete with this information (Annex 2).

## **Conclusion**

9. I may have other questions as my preparation work continues, but I felt it prudent to set out the ones I have already to avoid delays in the examination. I

have not set a deadline as there are a number of matters for you to consider and I realise that some may take longer than others to deal with. I am particularly keen to have replies to my questions on the evidence base as soon as possible so I can think about when realistically hearings could take place. Can you please provide an indication of when you are likely to be able to reply to my various questions, by 17 January 2025.

10. If you have any queries regarding any of the above matters, then I can be contacted via the Programme Office. A copy of this note and the Council's response should be placed on the examination website as soon as possible. I am not inviting comments from anyone else other than the Council at this time.

*Louise Crosby*

Planning Inspector

## Annex 1

### Local plans: five-year housing land supply

The following information should be provided for every site that the Council assumes will contribute to current 5-year supply (from 1 April 2024).

#### A. All sites with detailed planning permission, and sites of <10 homes and <0.5ha that have outline planning permission

Site name					
Local plan ref					
Total capacity					
Plan period completions					
Five-year completions					
	2024/5	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8	2028/9
Completions					

These sites can be considered deliverable unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years.

#### B. Other sites (including those of at least 10 homes or at least 0.5ha with outline permission, with a grant or permission in principle, allocations, or identified on brownfield register)

Site name					
Local plan ref					
Total capacity					
Plan period completions					
Five-year completions					
	2024/25	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8	2028/9
Completions					

Clear evidence relating to:

<b>Developer's delivery intentions including anticipated start and build out rates</b>
<b>Current planning status and progress towards the submission of an application</b>
<b>Progress with site assessment work</b>
<b>Site viability</b>
<b>Availability: ownership, any existing uses, etc</b>
<b>Infrastructure provision</b>

## Annex 2

### Local plans: summary of overall housing land supply

Use the table below (extended to cover the whole plan period) to summarise the overall housing land supply identified in the Plan.

Ref	Name	Size Ha	Total capacity	Planning status*	Annual completions									
					24/25	25/6	26/7	27/8	28/9	29/30	30/1	31/2	32/3	33/4
Windfalls (if applicable)														
Total														

\* Planning status: completed, under development, detailed planning permission, outline planning permission, allocation without planning permission, etc