



### **Summary of Current Context**

National policy requires local authorities to:

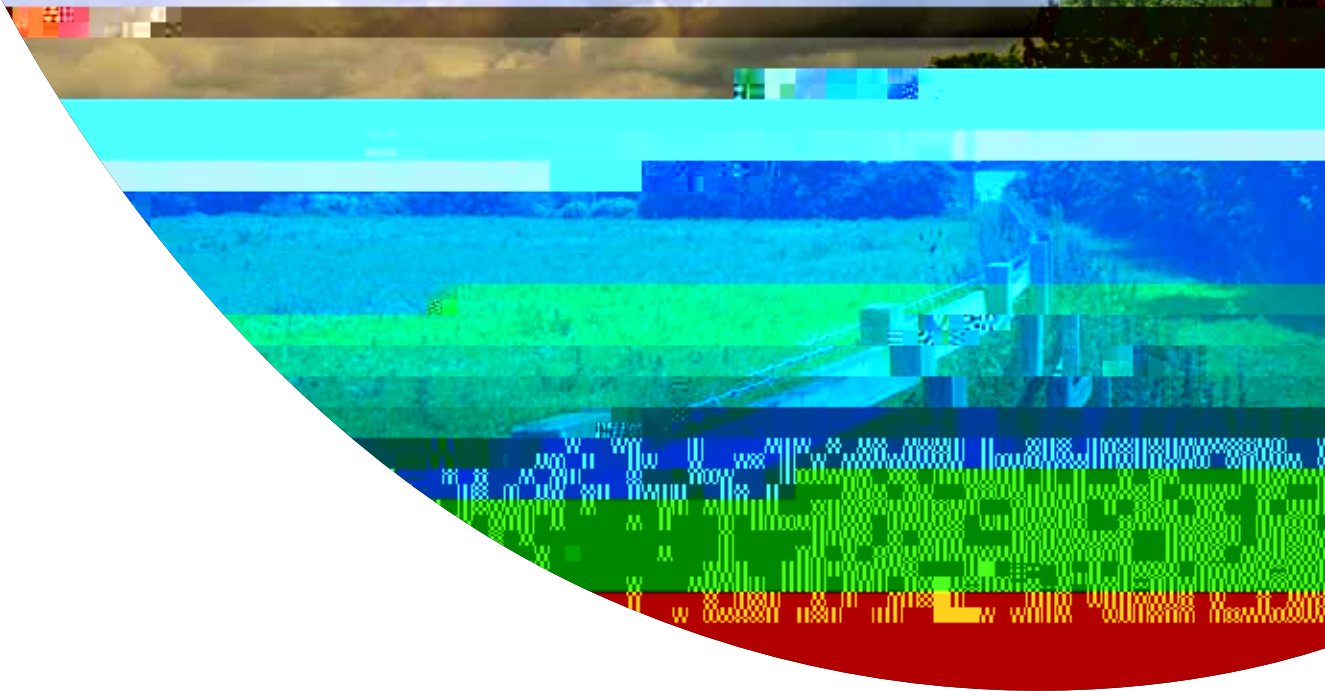
- protect and enhance the quality and character of the countryside;
- support traditional land based activities whilst making the most of new leisure and recreation opportunities that require a countryside location;
- provide access to the countryside, and;
- be aware of the specific circumstances, needs and priorities in the countryside,

The Crawley Borough Core Strategy designates strategic gaps to prevent settlements merging together. However, national and regional policy now discourages local landscape designations and advocates the use of criteria based policies to protect and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of the local landscape. This should be informed by a landscape character assessment.

### **Indication of the Key Issues Relating to the Countryside**

Crawley is a predominately urban borough, though the town is surrounded by a small area of countryside (within the Borough boundary), which has been protected for its

- Are there unique areas of Crawley's countryside which require locally specific



## Main Issues for Consultation

The main issues that representations are being sought on are:

- The types of development that should be encouraged in the countryside.
- The specific needs and priorities of Crawley's countryside that require further detailed policy development and expression.
- Whether you agree with the proposed policy approach and Built Up Area Boundary principles.
- Any other issues/options that should be explored and whether further evidence is required.

### South East Economic Development Strategy (2006-2016)

- One of the priorities is to invest in and promote the South East region's cultural, heritage, and landscape assets, and develop the visitor economy linked to the conservation of a high quality environment. This is to secure the benefits of increased visitor spend for rural communities while supporting the sustainable management of rural landscapes.

### Sustainable Community Strategy

- A strategic aim of this strategy is to protect and enhance the natural environment for the enjoyment of everyone. The associated objective is for residents and visitors to have easy access to parks and gardens.

### Crawley Borough Core Strategy

- The Crawley Borough Core Strategy brought forward the designation of strategic gaps from the Local Plan pending their review as part of the Development Control Policies

Development Plan Document. At that time, it was inappropriate for changes to be made to the strategic gaps as draft South East Plan guidance relating to this designation had not been clarified. The Crawley Borough Core Strategy policy is to prevent development within the strategic gaps in order to protect the separate identity of the named settlements and prevent their coalescence. These are: Charlwood, Crawley and Gatwick Airport/Horley; Crawley and Horsham; Crawley and Pease Pottage.

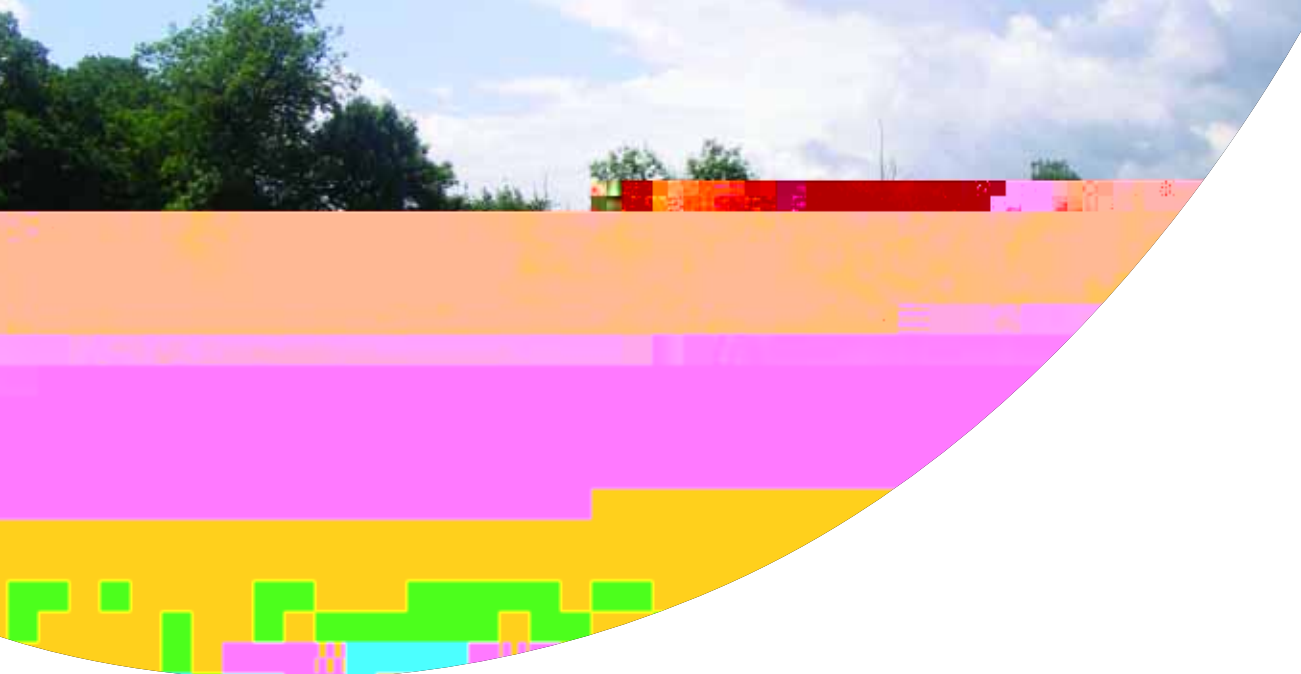
- The setting of the town is also protected through the countryside status of the area outside the Built-up Area and the status of the small area forming part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The Crawley Borough Core Strategy recognises that there is a limited amount of countryside within the Borough, but emphasises that it is an extremely valuable asset for the community which should be protected and enhanced

wherever possible. The countryside, particularly urban fringe, will be protected from development that does not need a countryside location, and where necessary the quality of the countryside should be enhanced, possibly through encouraging informal recreation.

- The Crawley Borough Core Strategy Proposals Map sets out the Built-up Area Boundary, which shows the distinction between the urban area, where certain forms of development are likely to be appropriate, and the countryside, where protection and enhancement are of most importance. This is seen as a logical way of applying Government advice and strategic policy at the local level. Planning permission for development beyond the Built-up Area Boundary will only be granted if it would be consistent with national policy, particularly PPS7.

### Evidence Base

Crawley Borough Council Built-up Area



Boundary Review (Feb 2009 ongoing)  
Recommends changes to the boundary to include:

- Areas adjacent to but outside the current Built-up Area Boundary that relate more to the urban environment than to the surrounding area.
- Sites adjacent to, but outside the Built-up Area Boundary that have been developed.
- Strategic Development Opportunity sites identified through the Core Strategy Review.