Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets the context for preparing a new Local Plan for Tandridge District. In this respect, paragraph 17 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to proactively drive and support economic development, making every effort to identify and meet housing, business and other development needs; to promote mixed-use developments; and to manage growth to make the fullest use of public transport, focusing development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

The Technical Paper ‘The Objectively Assessed Housing Needs of Tandridge’, commissioned by Tandridge District Council in September 2015, concludes that it would be reasonable to plan to meet an Objectively Assessed Need for 9,440 additional dwellings and 87.4ha of employment land over the Local Plan’s operative period of 2013-2033. In order to meet these requirements, the District Council has committed to a review of Green Belt boundaries, which we welcome and support.

Paragraph 54 of the NPPF confirms that to deliver sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, commenting that development in one village may support services in a village or network of villages nearby. In the context of reviewing the District’s Green Belt boundaries, the District Council has proposed the concept of an Expanded Settlement at South Godstone or Blindley Heath.

This document demonstrates how an Expanded Settlement at South Godstone would deliver a sustainable garden community of new housing and employment opportunities; retail and community facilities; new primary and secondary education provision; upgrades and enhancements to existing public transport infrastructure; and a comprehensive network of new landscape and green infrastructure, within new Green Belt boundaries that would endure for Local Plan period and beyond.
Our Vision

The development of a vibrant garden community which responds to its context within the ‘Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland Landscape Character Area’.

The creation of a social, commercial and community hub for the central part of the District, providing up to 4000 open market and affordable homes to meet local need within an attractive, safe and secure residential environment which people will aspire to live in.

Provision of a range of commercial and community facilities which are accessible to all and which contribute to the social, economic and environmental sustainability and vibrancy of South Godstone in the long term.

The development will bring associated improvements to public transport and the local highway infrastructure which will benefit the village and the wider community. Best practice and innovative design will be used to enable it to be an award winning example of place-making and the creation of new communities.

Delivery of an exemplar garden community with high quality design, appropriate infrastructure and accessible greenspace.
South Godstone village is set within a landscape character defined as ‘Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland’, characteristics of which include pockets of woodland, hedgerows, small watercourses and brooks, gently undulating arable fields, small farms and clusters of rural dwellings.

These elements together permit views to and from the wider surrounding high ground. However, views through the area surrounding South Godstone are often truncated by tree canopies and hedge-lined roads, offering only glimpses of the wider landscape. Often you may find yourself along a lane or farm track, unaware of the rural dwellings, a village or the activity of farming in the adjacent field. With that sense of place in mind, South Godstone has been identified by the District Council as offering an opportunity to expand its size.

This would provide dwellings and amenities to support an expanded village population and the existing local landscape character would be enhanced by the District Council’s commitment to ensuring an opportunity to expand the village.

It is important to consider first the concept of a connective green framework. This would include the necessary links, spaces, ecological corridors and habitats that would influence the form of development, together with landscapes and green infrastructure that would determine the future quality of life for new and existing residents of South Godstone.

The landscape character of South Godstone is unique and valuable, providing a distinct identity that should be preserved. The green framework would help to reinforce this identity and provide a backdrop for the development of the village.

Derwenthorpe, Osbaldwick, York
To deliver a green framework as part of the landscape strategy, three key ideas will be championed. Firstly an ecological strategy that delivers the structure to enhance what is already there, fostering bio-diversity and habitat creation. It will include the delivery of a new landscape grid knitted into the fabric of the development. Secondly, a social well-being strategy to allow all residents easy access to green spaces, footpaths, cycleways, and landscape features for play and quiet contemplation alongside a green travel plan, ensuring the population really can live without a car. Thirdly, a visual co-ordination strategy: here the process of planning the development will prioritise how buildings relate to the landscape, determining how the two elements will be entwined to form a place of character and cohesion aligned with the rural location of South Godstone.

In taking this approach to provide a structure for all landscape, public realm and recreational uses, we can confidently plan to deliver a future-thinking, twenty-first-century garden village, where the quality of landscape spaces contributes to fostering a stronger South Godstone community.

New Landscape Framework
In taking this approach to provide a structure for all landscape, public realm and recreational uses, we can confidently plan to deliver a future-thinking, twenty-first-century garden village, where the quality of landscape spaces contributes to fostering a stronger South Godstone community.
South Godstone railway station is located on the southern edge of the village and provides direct rail services to London Bridge (circa 46 minutes) and London Victoria (circa one hour); and to Tonbridge and Redhill. Bus services 409, 486 and 487 are accessed from bus stops situated along the A22 Eastbourne Road which runs centrally through the village and serve a range of destinations including Blindley Heath, Caterham, Chelsham, Godstone High Street, Oxted and Warlingham.

As such, whilst South Godstone already has excellent access to public transport facilities, a new garden community will be built on further enhancements, to include:

- Proposed new A22 western relief road
- Improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity north and south of the railway, through provision of a pedestrian/cycle underpass.
- Improved facilities at South Godstone railway station, to include more car and cycle parking, better waiting facilities and provision for better disabled access and real-time travel information.
- Enhanced bus services, focusing on service frequency and times of operation, new shelters and better waiting facilities and provision for disabled access (raised kerbs and suchlike) and real-time travel information.
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links through the garden community and across the A22 Eastbourne Road to South Godstone railway station.
- Improvements to the A22 Eastbourne Road, to enhance the environment for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst maintaining the free flow of through traffic.
- Local road junction improvements to enhance road safety and capacity.

A Transport Strategy for the new garden community will therefore maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel; minimise the need to travel beyond the new garden community; provide safe and suitable access for all within the garden community; and deliver cost effective improvements to local public transport infrastructure.
Expanding South Godstone provides a real opportunity to deliver a development that maximises the use of sustainable travel and minimises impacts on the highway network.
The extension of South Godstone will provide a new garden community at the heart of the District, enabling the delivery of services and facilities to surrounding settlements.

Historically, developments have grown up at the junction of transportation routes. South Godstone has grown up at a key location in the centre of the District where the A22 crosses the railway. This offers the opportunity for an extended settlement that is located to serve an extensive rural hinterland whilst maintaining a separation with Godstone and Oxted/Hurst Green to the north.

South Godstone is ideally positioned to provide a new hub servicing the settlements in Tandridge south of the M25.
The extension of South Godstone to provide a new garden community presents the opportunity to create a strong social and physical hub at the District’s geographical centre enabling delivery of services and facilities to surrounding settlements.

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Concept masterplan

The initial concept masterplan included in this document has considered how a sustainable extended community can be delivered to provide approximately 4000 new homes, community facilities including a new primary school, secondary school and community centre, commercial facilities including employment and retail space and associated landscape, open spaces and infrastructure.

The proposal will incorporate a number of character areas. The highest density development will be focussed around the Village centre straddling the A22 through the village and from there densities will reduce outwards to green edges where there would be a very soft interface with the wider countryside and Green Belt. The design of the extended village will ensure that the available spaces are established with infrastructure delivered to enable safe travel, prioritising walking and cycling and enhancing access to public transport. Any new developments in the Green Belt will need to contribute any necessary environmental mitigation measures.

Capacity study

An initial capacity study has been undertaken to ensure the deliverability of the required numbers of homes and associated facilities, open space and infrastructure.

The proposed site area measures 203 hectares (501 acres)

- Population: 4000 x 2.4 = 9600 people
- Open space provision: 2.4 hectares / 1000 population = 9.6 x 2.4 = 23.04 hectares (65.2 hectares provided)
- Infrastructure: main highway routes through development, enhancements and new junction with A22, village square, energy centre, SuDS attenuation basins, foul pumping station (if required), and electricity substations - 3 hectares
- Foodstore (2100 sqm net sales space) with employment space / apartments above and associated delivery yard and car parking - 2 hectares
- 8 small retail units (total 800 sqm) with employment space above and associated parking - 0.15 hectares
- 2 form entry primary school - 1.8 hectares
- 3 form entry primary school - 2.6 hectares
- 6 form entry secondary school - 7.2 hectares
- Primary Care Trust (Medical centre including doctors and dentists surgeries, pharmacy and associated parking) - 0.3 hectares
- Community building, parish office and library and associated parking and garden - 0.3 hectares
- Public house / family restaurant - 0.4 hectares
- 60-80 bed care home facility - 0.65 hectares
- Employment (B1 space) - 15 hectares
- Private housing scheme (1-5 storey) - 64 hectares
- Public realm (public open space) - 15 hectares
- Car parking - 46 hectares
- Employment (B1) - 15 hectares
Delivery

Masterplan concept options will be produced as a basis for engaging with the local community, Tandridge District Council, Surrey County Council and other key stakeholders to develop a

forward-looking local plan. The updated plan will be submitted to the planning authority with the local community.

Once South Godstone is selected as the preferred option for delivery of an expanded settlement, an Area Action Plan and Design Code would be prepared to set out the vision, key components and design approach for new and improved community infrastructure.

Our team has extensive experience in delivering large-scale masterplanning projects:

- The Design Code would draw on successful traditional towns and villages and good contemporary examples of new housing nationally and in Europe to ensure delivery of exemplar new homes and community and commercial facilities which meet the highest levels of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

We have delivered large-scale residential-led masterplanning projects for new and extended communities. We will use this experience to ensure that the new community:

- Adheres to the local plan
- Reflects the character of the area
- Provides a high-quality environment
- Is sustainable and energy efficient
- Is delivered in stages as part of a masterplan framework
- Is delivered within budget and to programme
- Adheres to the planning strategy

The local plan should be submitted to the planning authority with the local community.

Design principles include:

- A mix of housing types and densities
- Access to open space
- Access to local facilities
- Connectivity
- A safe and attractive environment
- Adherence to the local plan

South Godstone is selected as the preferred option for delivery of an expanded settlement.

Thorough examination of options will be produced as a basis for engaging with the local community.
Summary

Extension of South Godstone will benefit the village and district as follows:

- Deliver economies of scale which would not be possible with smaller piecemeal development
- Enable improved access to local employment
- Provide improved retail opportunities
- Deliver improvements to South Godstone railway station
- Deliver new and improved social, landscape and physical infrastructure
- Enhance the quality of life by improving the existing village environment
- Improve accessibility to services and facilities
- Provide improved local employment opportunities
- Ensure improved access to local employment
- Deliver economic benefits which would not be possible without greater planned development