

# Compton Parish Council Local Plan Sub-Committee Report - September 2026

## Scoping Consultation

Guildford Borough Council (GBC) has launched the first public consultation for its updated Local Plan. The consultation began on September 2 and will run until October 14, 2026. It seeks to obtain views about:

- what the updated local plan should cover; and
- how the Council should engage with stakeholders in producing the plan.

A summary of the responses will be published.

The Guildford Local Plan will cover the existing borough boundaries, and although it won't be completed until early 2029, it will be carried over in this form into the new West Surrey Unitary Authority.

There will be at least two further consultations focusing on:

- the proposed local plan content and evidence (April 7 - May 19, 2027)
- the proposed local plan (march 1-April 26, 2028)

## Grey belt report

In July, GBC published its Grey Belt Report, which assessed areas that could be categorised as 'potential grey belt' and 'grey belt'. The report found that 73% of existing green belt in Guildford was 'potential grey belt' and 7% was 'grey belt', leaving just 20% of land assessed under the previous green belt designation. The report does not take into account other landscape designations, such as National Landscape (formerly AONB), but it does state that just because land has been evaluated as grey belt or potential grey belt does not necessarily mean that it is suitable for development.

Some of the Report's conclusions appear inconsistent; for example, Little Misley on the Hog's Back (part of the site of the University of Surrey's proposed solar farm) is assessed as 'grey belt', whereas the land surrounding it is 'potential grey belt'. Likewise, land at Field Place in Compton Village is assessed as not grey belt, whereas the land on either side is 'potential grey belt'.

Fiona Curtis has produced a summary table and maps of the Compton elements of the report, together with a table showing the findings of the Countryside and Green Belt study that informed the 2019 Local Plan. (See Annex A)

## Latest iteration of the NPPF

A New National Planning Policy Framework was published on August 16. This includes several key changes:

- A permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development.

- No exceptional circumstances are required for building homes around stations.
- Greater urban and suburban densification.
- Securing a diverse mix of homes.
- Greater support for small and medium sites.
- Stronger protection for protected landscapes and heritage assets, upgrading the importance of conserving both from 'great weight' to 'substantial weight'.

### **Housebuilding targets**

The latest NPPF raises the national housebuilding target from 300,000 to 370,000 pa, and local authorities must use a unified, mandatory standard method to calculate their requirements.

Guildford achieved 102% of its housing requirement over the rolling three-year evaluation period, averaging 745 new homes annually and successfully meeting its baseline delivery target. This will avoid punitive measures by the Government, such as the requirement to provide a 20% land supply buffer and a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Despite meeting this target, the updates to the standard method have drastically increased local obligations, and the mandatory annual target for Guildford has surged past 1,150 homes per year (nearly double previous local plan figures).

The NPPF has also introduced longer strategic horizons – shifting towards a 25-year strategic policy horizon for larger-scale developments (up from 15 years in 2024).