



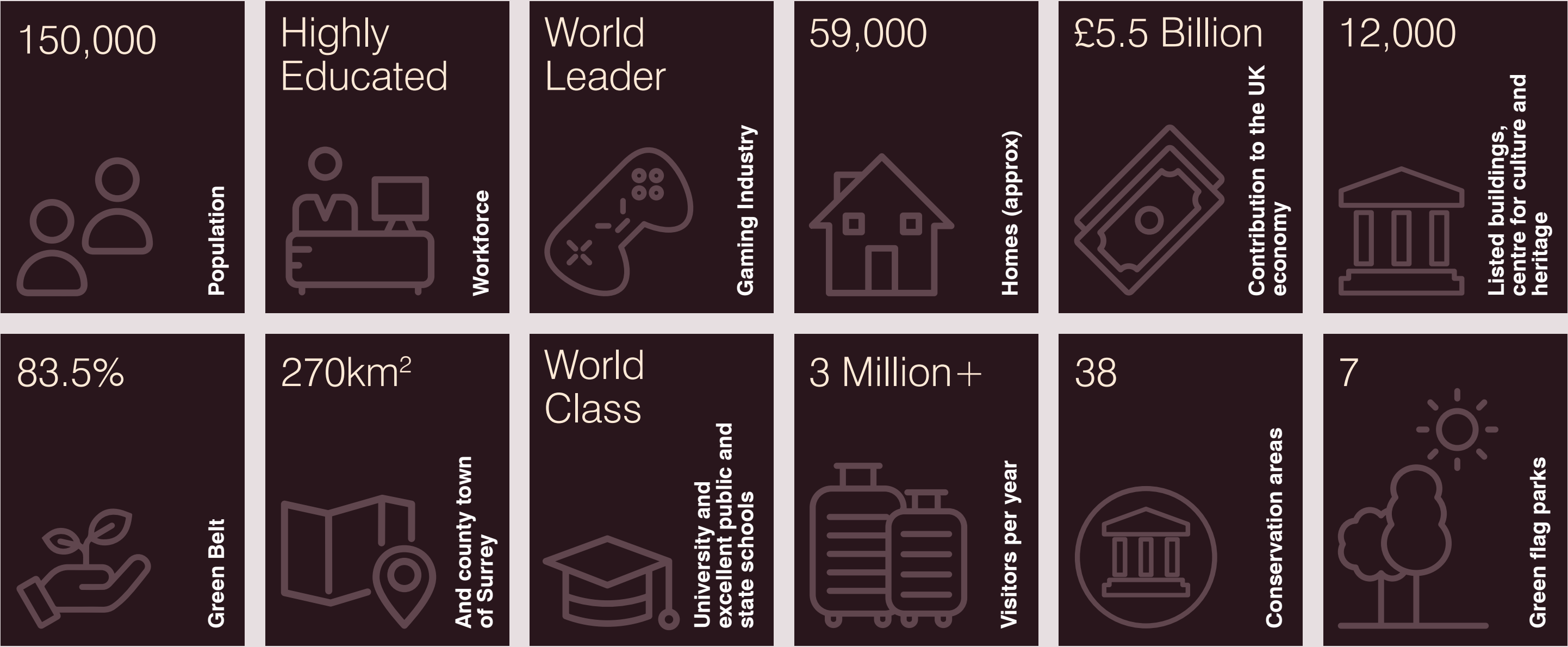
GUILDFORD  
BOROUGH

leonard design architects

# Guildford

Shaping Guildford's Future  
Guildford Masterplan - Stage 2 Report

# Introduction to Guildford



# Contents

## 00 Executive Summary

- 0.1 Executive Summary
- 0.2 Executive Summary - Stage 2
- 0.3 Executive Summary - The Zonal Approach
- 0.4 The Report
- 0.5 The Report's Methodology Structure and Themes
- 0.6 The Study Area

## 3.0 The Masterplan Principles

- 3.0 Masterplan Principles
- 3.1 Sustainable Movement
- 3.2 Public Spaces and Places
- 3.3 The Development Zones

## 1.0 Delivering Change

- 1.1 Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021-25
- 1.2 Guildford's Vision
- 1.3 Asking the public what they want
- 1.4 What did the residents say?
- 1.5 In Conclusion

## 4.0 The Development Zones

- 4.0 A Comprehensive Vision
- 4.1 Guildford's GreenWey
- 4.2 Millbrook and Millmead
- 4.3 Town Wharf
- 4.4 Bedford Wharf
- 4.5 Woodbridge Meadows
- 4.6 Outcomes

## 2.0 Creating A Sustainable Guildford

- 2.1 Sustainability Opportunities
- 2.2 Guildford's Flooding Issue
- 2.3 Guildford's Transportation Issue
- 2.4 Futureproofing the town's infrastructure
- 2.5 Planning and policy for sustainable development

## 5.0 Delivery Plan

- 5.0 Delivery Plan
- 5.1 Next Steps - Stage 3 Scope and Roadmap

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# 00 Executive Summary

# 0.1

## Executive Summary

Guildford is a town with great history, recognised as a highly desirable location for business and a place where people aspire to live. It has a thriving education, culture and retailing offer and has for many years been Surrey's County Town.

However, the town is at a cross-roads. In many ways Guildford is a fantastic place to live, boasting all the key ingredients to be a hugely successful town. Complacency regarding opportunities and innovation in the town, and more broadly across the County, have permitted and produced decline and contraction. Spurred on by various opportunities, from national and local governmental agendas to post-Brexit, post-Covid rebuilding, neighbouring towns and cities in and beyond Surrey are carving out new and ambitious visions. Guildford can and must compete.

The most recent vitality index from Lambert Smith Hampton (Feb 22) which assesses "the best places to live and do business, and have the strongest growth prospects" indicates that Guildford, which historically ranked as high as 6, remains outside of the top 10 list of towns in the UK. Woking currently tops this assessment chart.

The challenges of infrastructure and housing costs have been building over time creating this situation. A plan for growth, to facilitate regeneration and to resist decline and loss of economy is essential. This plan will need to be substantive and be able to attract significant investment to deliver transformation that is effective.

If transformation does not occur then there should be expectation that the town will suffer further decline with the consequential impact on all of its community.

In order to establish its own path, to invest and build sustainably, Guildford needs to swiftly address the key constraints that have historically hindered development, whilst grasping the clear opportunities that now present themselves.

The strategy to enable the town to grow its population is embodied within the Local Plan. The regeneration of Guildford Town Centre, although an aspiration of the Council for many years, does not benefit from a unified strategy that will enable change to be delivered solely by the private sector market, and at best will lead to piecemeal development.

Significant study of the potential for regeneration of the town has been undertaken over time to determine a vision and options for change to benefit the economy and community. These, however, have not been implemented because the essential work has not been undertaken on deliverability of strategic infrastructure as a priority.

Additionally over the last few years the change in retailing, accelerated by Covid 19, together with recognition of the needs to address community threats such as the climate crisis, the environment, well-being and loss of biodiversity have all been identified as needing to be addressed as National objectives. The urgent need for Guildford to take action is therefore significantly increased.

Place-based growth is a key part of the special, unique ways in which a location like Guildford becomes, and remains, home for its community of residents, businesses and institutions. From areas of significant strength that illustrate Guildford's current crop of opportunities, to the very real constraints that represent its challenges, considerations of this report highlight the concepts for change, and strategies for collaboration required, to transform Guildford's Riverside within the Town centre in the short, medium and long term.

### Prior to Stage 2

In July 2019 the Council made the following resolution;

"That the process for bringing forward, within the term of this Council, a sustainable Town Centre Master Plan Development Plan Document be commenced immediately, and the Director of Planning and Regeneration be authorised to engage external master-planning consultancy advice to assist in this process".

Stage 1 of the masterplan process presented to the executive in May 2021 gave an assessment of the challenges and opportunities for regeneration of the riverside sites in the town centre. It tabled concepts and options for addressing the challenges of infrastructure, and provided spatial indication of what regeneration may be able to deliver in terms of the capacity for employment, housing, retail and leisure space.

### Key themes from Stage 1:

The report, also embodied into the Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021 – 25, is to be further developed in Stage 2 by:

- Engaging with a wide base of stakeholders to establish their views on the town's future and its needs,
- Creating a sustainable strategic transport solution to provide a healthier town centre,
- Creating a deliverable solution for the town's Flood defences. This has been an historic obstacle to enabling better and more intensified development to benefit from the location along the River Wey,
- Focusing on environmental improvements to accommodate holistic developments, providing enhanced public spaces and high quality place-making to benefit the wider community,
- Developing parameters for development zones to address the real challenges of land ownership, and to address the needs of the infrastructure and environmental challenges,
- Delivering strategies to address climate change,
- Promoting health and well-being of the community.

# 0.2

## Executive Summary - Stage 2

### Stage 2 Summary Update

#### Building in robustness to the Masterplan.

In-depth studies have been commissioned, to provide a sound holistic assessment.

Further up-to-date knowledge for consideration on the key issues has been validated during Stage 2, including extensive studies to provide accurate information on:

- New current traffic data collection,
- Assessment of land title ownerships,
- Recalibration of the Environment Agency flood model for climate crisis forecasts,
- Land assembly and stakeholder partnership opportunities (eg. Constabulary, Court Services, Legal & General Investment Management).

The holistic Concept Masterplan presented in this report is also validated by infrastructure strategies and concepts relevant to this new current data.

There has also been extensive public and Councillor engagement regarding the objectives for the regeneration initiatives on the key aspects of the Masterplan, which takes in to account the various themes discussed throughout this process.

Finally there has been review of Council Local Plan objectives, National Plan Policy Framework aims and the constraints to achieving suitable planning approvals.

### Strategic Infrastructure

The Spatial Masterplan from Stage 1 has now developed into a number of potential development zones, supported by a range of strategic infrastructure initiatives to address the issue of defending against flood, and to achieve a people-orientated movement environment for the town centre.

#### Flood

Key to the enabling of most of the riverside development zones will be adoption of a solution that enables the defence against flooding. During Stage 2 the project has moved significantly forward in collaboration with the Environment Agency, and there is now an 'in-principle' agreed preferred option and a set of strategies relating to hard and soft landscaping to create the defence structures.

The Environment Agency has also undertaken studies to calculate the provision of the compensation storage capacity required to mitigate volumes of water taken out of the flood plain in the town centre. They have established that potential sites are available downstream from Guildford, of a suitable size, to perform this function. A legal agreement incorporating the collaboration and funding of the next stage of study work has been developed and entered into with the Environment Agency.

#### Traffic

The recent traffic data collection studies have enabled initial modelling solutions to be developed to support the planned range of modal shift and complimentary traffic reduction interventions, to collectively reduce the impact of the car on quality of the environment, to improve safety and to enable better pedestrian movement. These interventions, when implemented, will enable the down-grading of highway capacity requirements through the gyratory and allow pedestrian, cycle and buses to become the prominent movement mode.

Surrey County Council are currently the highway providers for the town, and extensive engagement sessions have been held with them, and National Highways, to promote this strategy for sustainable

transportation in Guildford. A strategy which is compatible and consistent with both organisation's plans for future transport.

#### Utilities

Identification of related utilities capacity and existing infrastructure issues has been undertaken, together with desktop assessments of land-based environmental issues. The work developing the understanding of utilities infrastructure during this stage includes engagement with UKPN (UK Power Networks), and has established that little capacity remains in the existing network for new development. Substantial grid reinforcement will be required to enable the majority of the current planned development in the town to be delivered. UKPN operate 'on a first come first served' basis, hence over the coming years the timing of developments already with, or seeking planning consent, are likely to suffer a high cost to enable a new primary grid installation in the town. Potable water will similarly require upgrading to suit new developments due to shortage of current capacity. The lack of utility capacity revealed is a very serious issue for Guildford.

#### Partnerships

To enable the Shaping Guildford's Future (SGF) programme to move to a stage of realisation it is necessary for Guildford Borough Council to take the lead role with its' public sector partners, including the Environment Agency (for flood defences), and Surrey County Council (for transportation and drainage), in order for the regeneration of the town to be progressed to a position where the private sector market can be engaged to fund and deliver the desired mix of uses in the development zones.

The proposed delivery model for regeneration is based on the realisation that grant support will be required to fund the required strategic infrastructure transformation. In addition to the receipts that would be fundable from the realisation of development zones on sites mostly owned by the council.

### Concept Masterplan

The demographic and demand-led economic statistics established at Stage 1 have been updated in Stage 2 to inform the range and extent of uses within the Concept Masterplan which, along with consideration of movement routes, greening, community space and placemaking principles, has enabled a Concept Masterplan to be developed into a series of public amenity areas and 4 development zones as summarised below.

#### Public Areas: Guildford's GreenWey

Running North to South on both sides of the River Wey from Millbrook to the A25, and connecting across the river with an additional bridge at Dapdune Wharf, the movement corridor will enable better integration into the Sustainable Movement Corridor and the potential for better walking and cycling access across the A3 to communities in the north-east. An additional study is required for providing walking and cycling to the North-West over the A3, A25 and trainlines for the communities of Westborough Ward.

#### Greening

New greening includes a new linear park running along the river in the Bedford Wharf area with connections into the town at Walnut Tree Bridge and Onslow Street. There are also green zones in conjunction with developments at Millbrook, Woodbridge Meadows and as part of new flood defences at Millmead.

#### Community Space

A major new public space spanning both sides of the river at Town Wharf creates a multi-purpose place that will integrate the river and the town and promotes a vibrant range of dining, commercial, leisure, residential, and cultural uses. A vibrant new square at Bedford Wharf links the east side of the River Wey to the new pedestrian bridge crossing to the station. Also transformation of much of what is now Guildford's gyratory into areas of pedestrianisation, public realm, placemaking and sustainable movement.

# 0.3

## Executive Summary - Zonal Approach

The development of the masterplan has a delivery focus which has led to the creation of independent but coordinated and linked Development Zones. This approach allows for flexibility in the phasing, and the timetable of delivery to be agile to the challenges of undertaking change and enables early regeneration to occur as soon as progress is made on relevant elements of strategic infrastructure.

### Guildford's GreenWey

Waterfront land will be joined up for active movement and, together with major new landscape provision, will provide places for recreation, activity, play, greening and biodiversity and public spaces to support well-being and health.

### The zones are:

#### Millbrook / Millmead

The attractive waterside area to the South of Town Bridge will be enhanced to provide improved pedestrian and cycling routes into the town centre. Millbrook Car Park would be redeveloped to provide key flood defences, new green space along the water's edge as well as an increased number of public parking spaces and waterfront homes. Concrete would be converted to lush green space at Millmead car park, with flood defences to protect existing homes and businesses. Millmead House would be converted into new homes and gardens, more in keeping with the locale.

#### Town Wharf

Includes regeneration of the existing Legal & General managed scheme on Friary street, and, for the first time in Guildford's history, the creation of two brand new Town Squares on Town Wharf East and West, with the River Wey running through the middle. These squares link Friary Street, High Street and North Street to the waterfront. There will be additional links to new public realm at the Electric Theatre site. As well as mixed use development including experiential retail, leisure, culture, arts, commercial and residential, with events in the squares and on the waterfront.

#### Bedford Wharf

Includes relocation of both courts into a new multi level facility along with better site utilisation for a cinema. Agreement with Surrey Police enables densification of these sites to deliver a mix of new employment space, leisure, hotel, community uses and homes to create a vibrant mixed use district. This retains existing uses and public car parking plus providing significant new public space. The principles of this transformation have been tabled with One Estate partners and is progressing into potential agreements.

#### Woodbridge Meadows

The regeneration of this zone is founded on the principle of re-providing the existing employment space on the site, with the provision of residential above the employment uses, better utilisation of land and significant amenity value alongside the river. Woodbridge Meadows will create a mixed use urban village of scale with good access to the town centre. The village would be self sufficient for local community needs providing amenity and a focal point for the community.

In addition to the main development zones, the masterplan promote additional development at:

#### Station West

To capture better bus and drop-off facilities, and better pedestrian links to the west side of the station, enabled by a project to deliver residential and ground floor retail on land currently under the ownership of Network Rail.

### Town Planning

Planning advice in support of the development of the Concept Masterplan has been provided and a draft Planning Strategy based on an Area Action Plan approach has been formulated, subject to an analysis of a new evidence base.

The work in Stage 2 has created a plan that is deliverable, but is just the start of the journey to bring transformation to Guildford.

### The Consultant Team

This summary report is supported by technical reports provided by specialist consultants including:

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Masterplanners          | Leonard Design        |
|                         | Architects            |
| Sustainability          | AECOM                 |
| Flooding Consultants    | Arup                  |
| Strategic Transport     | Markides              |
| Highways                | Arup                  |
| Development Consultancy | JLL                   |
| Infrastructure          | AECOM                 |
| Planning                | Carter Jonas          |
| Public Engagement       | Fortyshillings        |
| Cost Consultancy        | Gardiner and Theobold |
| Project Management      | Gleeds                |

## 0.4 The Report

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken to create a sustainable masterplan for Guildford, which is deliverable and can be used as a basis for the regeneration of the town.

It builds upon the objectives set out by Guildford Borough Council and has been widely engaged upon with the public and councillors.

It is to identify the issues and opportunities of the town, and presents the prize of a holistic masterplan.

This report is supported by individual assessments from a team of specialist consultants which are in addendum to this document.



A plan view of Guildford town centre

# 0.5

## The Report's Methodology Structure and Themes

We need to deliver a town fit for the 21st Century to deliver homes, jobs, a sense of place, and to focus on wellbeing. Sustainability and climate change must be central in our thinking, as well as providing the capacity to meet the town's needs and a commitment to deliver. This report extends the assessment of the regeneration of riverside zones within the town centre as part of the 'Shaping Guildford's Future' programme, and proposes a concept masterplan as the framework for delivering sustainable, economic and social improvement at the heart of Guildford.

The methodology of the masterplan has been developed through stages, and is informed by the learnings from Stage 1. Further analysis and assessment has been carried out, which has formed the principles of the masterplan. These are holistic, masterplan-wide strategies. Fitting within these principles, the development zones represent areas that Guildford Borough Council control and therefore represent the most deliverable zones for the sustainable development of the town. The steps are set out below:

### Analysis and Assessment

The vision and aims were identified through an assessment of existing Guildford Borough Council policy documents, including the Corporate Objectives 2021-25 and the Local Plan, as well as extensive engagement with residents and key stakeholders.

Specific strategies have been developed by the team of expert consultants to create a truly deliverable plan, which include sustainability, flood protection, sustainable urban transport, futureproofing infrastructure, utilities and planning policy.

Existing opportunities and constraints have been mapped, including: Freehold ownerships, leaseholds, topography, utilities, Local Plan sites, Local Plan viewing corridors, listed buildings, conservation areas, flood zones, highways modelling, building heights, pedestrian and cycle routes, parking and third party development proposals.

### The Masterplan Principles

By combining the policy aims with results from the engagement process a set of clear aims for the masterplan have been developed. These aims, along with the constraints and opportunities of Guildford and the consultant strategy reports form the fundamental masterplan principles. These principles include sustainable movement, public spaces and places, the development zones and the environment.

### The Development Zones

This framework is applied across the masterplan area, and results in a number of deliverable development zones. These are on Guildford Borough Council controlled freehold land and represent a series of deliverable zones, primed for redevelopment.

These three steps have created an ambitious, holistic and deliverable masterplan for Guildford Town Centre.

### Report Structure

This report follows on from the Stage 1 report produced in July 2021. It adopts the structure as outlined below:

#### Chapter 1. What are we trying to achieve?

The overall aims of the masterplan align with Guildford Borough Council's corporate objectives and the needs of the residents. The vision is to create a new heart of historic Guildford along its waterfront, and provide new homes, jobs and community facilities to support the sustainable development of Guildford.

#### Chapter 2. Creating a Sustainable Guildford.

This chapter illustrates a summary of the consultant team's reports to provide a holistic, deliverable vision for Guildford and begins with a sustainability statement illustrating the importance of a sustainable approach and the 'baked-in' sustainable methodology undertaken throughout the masterplan. The issues and strategies to address flooding follow, which shows the urgent need to protect both existing homes and offices and enables future development sites. Strategic transportation is covered next, highlighting the issues and explaining the overall strategies proposed to ensure a sustainable future for Guildford and solving the traffic blight to the town. There is finally a brief note on futureproofing infrastructure and utilities and ensuring compliance with planning policy.

#### Chapter 3. The Masterplan Principles

The masterplan principles represent the overall strategies for the masterplan. These include sustainable movement, which examines the town

centre as a whole and plots the key movement routes, where these can be improved, where new routes are required, and where there are areas that need separate study which reside outside of the study area. Connecting these movement routes are a series of public spaces which have been developed to provide places and spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy. These principles also set out the potential uses that the proposed development zones will provide, which align with the aspirations in the corporate plan as well as the economic research carried out by JLL and the University of Surrey.

#### Chapter 4. The Development Zones.

This chapter defines the key development zones and zooms in to examine each zone in further detail. Each of the zones follow the masterplan principles outlined in chapter 3 to set out a clear vision of what each location could become, what it could provide for Guildford, and how it would be connected to the rest of the town. These zones are:

- Millbrook and Millmead
- Town Wharf
- Bedford Wharf
- Woodbridge Meadows

#### Chapter 5. A phased delivery plan.

The final chapter sets out how and when these sites will be developed along a holistic timeline which includes flood defences, transportation upgrades, futureproofing infrastructure and alignment with planning policy.

## 0.6 The Study Area

We have chosen an area with the most need and most opportunity. We have chosen an area to transform and connect our town to benefit the whole community.

**The Masterplan Boundary is shown in red and the retail core in blue.**

The study area shown incorporates Guildford Town Centre which defines an area with a variety of characteristics and a number of opportunities and constraints.

### **The study area includes...**

The Wey Navigation from Millbrook car park and Millmead House in the South, Town Bridge, Friary Bridge, Onslow Bridge and the new Walnut Tree Bridge to the civic centre of the courts and Odeon, and across to the train station. It also includes the water's edge from North of the Courts to Dapdune Wharf and all the way up to the southern boundary of the A25 in the North.

### **The study area does not include...**

The historic retail core (the blue line) and the land to the East of it from York Road car park to London Road. It also does not include the proposed North Street Redevelopment, the Debenhams site (St Mary's Wharf) the Plaza site, or the Station Solum scheme (Railway Station Redevelopment), although these schemes are coordinated into the masterplan. It also does not include properties along Walnut Tree Close.





# 1.0 Delivering Change

## 1.1.1 The GBC Corporate Plan 2021-25

We are aiming to achieve something very special, something game changing, ambitious and important. These ambitions are driven by Guildford Borough Council, who's corporate plan states:

“A green, thriving town and villages where people have the homes they need, access to quality employment, with strong and safe communities that come together to support those needing help.”

Page 8, Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025.  
Listening - Acting- Delivering

These aims are reflected by Surrey County Council's Community Vision for Surrey by 2030:

“We want our county's economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on it's location and natural assets and where communities feel supported and people are able to support each other.”

Surrey County Council Community Vision for Surrey by 2030: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKV-jn5Tm0o&ab\\_channel=SurreyCountyCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKV-jn5Tm0o&ab_channel=SurreyCountyCouncil)

# 1.1.2

## The GBC Corporate Plan 2021-25 - Objectives

The objectives of the plan are clear: “A prosperous, green and caring Borough: home to heritage, education and world class technologies”.

**The masterplan responds to this clear and concise criteria through its aims and vision. It provides an ambitious, deliverable plan to both support the existing population of the town and provide new homes, jobs and community services.**

The Corporate Plan sets out Guildford Borough Council's priorities for an improved, more sustainable future for the borough post-Covid 19. It ensures that Guildford is a place where businesses can thrive, residents can find homes they can afford, the natural environment is protected and heritage assets are cherished. The focus is on land previously used for industrial or commercial purposes to avoid further encroachment into the green belt.

The town centre will be reinvigorated with a focus on place-making, housing and the needs of local businesses, improving flood risk, traffic congestion and air pollution. Economic and social activity will be encouraged to support the high street.

The Borough is to become net zero by 2030. Everyone has a responsibility to act on climate change and Guildford Borough Council will lead by facilitating positive change to support the borough to reduce its carbon footprint. Sustainable transport, cycle ways and footpaths are vital to this incremental change. New buildings will be required to have lower carbon emissions, and biodiversity will be enhanced and encouraged.

(Opposite: Pages 11, 13 and 15, Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025. Listening - Acting - Delivering)

| Homes and Jobs                                                                                                                         | Community                                                                                                                                              | Sustainability                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| For a sustainable future we need employment, for employment we need affordable homes.                                                  | Ultimately Guildford needs to be a nice place to live.                                                                                                 | Climate change and well-being must be addressed.                                                                                                     |
| Regeneration<br>Employment Opportunities<br>New Homes<br>Reviving The Town Centre<br>Upgrading Infrastructure<br>Attracting Investment | Support existing communities<br>Support the unemployed<br>Raise opportunities<br>Facilitate partnerships<br>Provide new amenities<br>Provide new homes | Sustainable travel<br>Reduce vehicle dominance<br>Modal shift<br>Enhance biodiversity<br>High quality new developments<br>Futureproof sustainability |

## 1.2 Guildford's Vision

The masterplan objectives align with these corporate objectives by providing a deliverable plan supporting the sustainable development of the town, with the aspiration to deliver a new Heart to the town along its waterfront.

**This is a plan that delivers a mix of uses that support economic opportunities and enables the towns resilience through the retention and attraction of people. It does this by providing high quality environment and affordable living.**

The long term sustainability of any regeneration initiatives within Guildford will be critical to its success in building resilience into the town. Addressing key issues of the climate crisis such as flood and net zero carbon targets, biodiversity net gain, air quality, sustainable transport and improved health and well-being are essential if the town is to stand equal to its competitors and provide a quality affordable location for its economy and communities.

### **The masterplan also delivers...**

A connected, accessible, inclusive town centre that is a beautiful place to live, work and visit.

A town that is protected from the growing issues that climate change poses, including flooding, pollution and utilities provision.

A truly sustainable town centre, where residents can walk and cycle to work, and essential amenities are on their doorstep.

A biodiverse environment which forms a green lung for the town, emanating from the Wey Navigation.

A town with a public square at its heart, and a series of smaller squares supporting a wide variety of uses.



Richmond Waterfront during the Summer is a great example of the space we are aiming to achieve.

# 1.3

## Asking the Public what they want from the Masterplan

A key element of Shaping Guildford's Future is engaging residents and stakeholders to find out their needs for the future of Guildford. By tailoring the plan to the council's objectives, resident's wants and desires, and key stakeholder's needs, this deliverable plan has robustness and support from the communities within Guildford who it aims to serve.

### A summary of the public engagement that has been conducted.

As well as the residents comments, questions and views, local stakeholders have also been engaged with. These include:

1. The Environment Agency on flooding issues
2. National Highways on transportation issues
3. Surrey County Council on highways, footpaths and cycleways
4. Guildford Borough Council on the full range of issues and opportunities for the masterplan
5. The Crown and Magistrates Courts,
6. National Rail,
7. Legal and General Investment Management
8. Surrey Police
9. The National Trust
10. The Academy of Contemporary Music
11. Experience Guildford
12. University of Surrey
13. Guildford Society
14. Guildford Vision Group

### In total we received...

4,000 total questions and comments. 14,000 website page views. 6,000 web sessions. More than 500 questionnaires completed. 480 comments from people visiting The Hive. 500 webinar registrations. 380 questions and comments. 100,000 impressions and 1,724 direct interactions on social media.

### How did we engage?

1. Opinion polling from a genuine representative sample of Guildford residents,
2. Online questionnaire on dedicated Shaping Guildford's Future website,
3. A series of four online debates covering themes relevant to Guildford's regeneration journey,
4. A community workshop for key stakeholders,
5. Campaign activity at The Hive (formerly Park Barn social centre),
6. By using @GuildfordBC social media channels,
7. Focus groups exploring housing and transport in the town centre,
8. Councillor workshops exploring infrastructure, the masterplan and delivery themes.

### How was it publicised?

1. Press and media coverage,
2. Posters and banners at 36 key sites across the town centre,
3. Distribution of printed feedback forms and flyers,
4. Extensive publicity through social media,
5. Town centre stalls.

# 1.4

## What did the Residents Say?

This huge response from a wide cross section of Guildford’s population gives an insight into the issues that really matter to the residents of Guildford.

From this extensive engagement a number of key points can be made:

- 1. Guildford residents are generally supportive of the council’s vision for a revitalised town centre.
- 2. They want to see the riverside area opened up and made more of an attraction.
- 3. They support more homes and more pedestrian friendly areas, but only when framed as part of a broader vision for the whole town centre.
- 4. Residents are looking for leadership and a clear plan for the town centre.

Shown on the right are a number of key quotes and statistics from the vast amount of data provided by the public.

For further detail on the program of public engagement please refer to the Engagement Report, produced by Fortyshillings.

“

94% would like to see the riverside opened up and made more of an attraction in the town centre.

“

76% of people asked want fewer cars in the town centre.

“

95% of people asked want to see the riverside opened up and made more of an attraction.

“

94% of people asked said the riverside area of Guildford should be improved.

“

85% of people were ‘very likely’ or ‘likely’ to support regenerating Guildford Town Centre.

“

The strongest feeling in the focus group was...a sense of a town centre in decline and a strong desire for a cohesive plan to save it.

“

Living in the town centre is popular and convenient, but that such things (new housing) only benefit new residents rather than existing ones.

“

‘A nicer riverside’ was the most popular reason given to make people visit the town centre regularly.

“

A strong criticism of ‘piecemeal’ development in the town centre, with the lack of a cohesive plan seen as being a strong contributory factor to the decline and neglect.

“

76% “Would you like to see more housing in the town centre to reduce development pressure in the green belt?”

“

I’ll do almost anything not to have to drive.

“

Guildford needs to attract people and money or it will die.

“

Things the public would most like to see improved...architecture and design, retail, active travel, public transport, congestion.

“

It’s got a slight sadness to it at the moment.

“

If only someone came up with a plan of where Guildford is going to be.

From Fortyshillings Summary Presentation to Councillors, July 2022

# 1.5

## In Conclusion

Bringing together Guildford Borough Council’s objectives with what residents say is most important to them provides the masterplan with a set of key aims.

These 12 aims provide clear direction for the masterplan and they inform and direct the masterplan in all aspects of its delivery.

The next chapter highlights the major issues present in Guildford which must be overcome in order to provide a deliverable plan.

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Revitalise and support the town centre economy.<br><br>01                                       | Make more of the riverside as an attraction.<br><br>02                                                                                | Protect the beautiful green spaces around Guildford by providing homes in the town centre on brownfield land.<br><br>03 | Have a clear plan for the sustainable future of the town centre.<br><br>04                      |
| For a sustainable future we need employment, for employment we need affordable homes.<br><br>05 | Ultimately Guildford needs to be a nice place to live, to support existing communities with the provision of new amenities.<br><br>06 | Climate change and well-being must be addressed.<br><br>07                                                              | Traffic dominance must be reduced through the town centre.<br><br>08                            |
| Sustainability must be futureproofed into the town’s plan.<br><br>09                            | Futureproof infrastructure and attract investment.<br><br>10                                                                          | Kick start the incremental modal shift from vehicular travel to active travel means into the town centre.<br><br>11     | New parks, civic squares and places for visitors and residents of Guildford to enjoy.<br><br>12 |



# 2.0 Creating a Sustainable Guildford

## 2.0

# Creating a Sustainable Guildford

On the 23rd July 2019 Guildford Borough Council unanimously passed a motion to declare a climate emergency. The masterplan will mitigate the impacts of climate change and set out a roadmap to a net zero economy as well as counteracting local biodiversity loss.

Guildford Borough Council are the principal party interested in Guildford and have taken a central role in identifying solutions for Guildford to produce a holistic approach.

The masterplan brings together a multidisciplinary team to ensure a sustainable proposal for the future of Guildford. This includes strategies for the prevention of flooding to both existing residences and workplaces, and to enable new development sites. It includes a transportation strategy to reduce car dependency, to free up Guildford's roads network and ensure a healthier town centre. As well as strategies for futureproofing the town's infrastructure and assessing the planning policy impacts.

This cannot be delivered by Guildford alone. There is a division of responsibility within government for the different aspects of the masterplan. National Highways deal with the principal roads and Surrey County Council deal with local highways, footpaths, cycleways and transportation services.

Ensuring a sustainable future for Guildford is so important because:

Guildford's long history of flooding and the considerable damage this causes,

The A3 is the worst road for air pollution outside of London,

Guildford is the 6th most congested large urban area in the UK, costing the economy £44 million (Inrix, 2016),

In the Local Plan there are 14,700 additional homes earmarked for the Borough.

61% of all trips to the town centre are by car. Only 2% of trips are by bicycle. (Census, 2011).

## 2.1 Sustainability Opportunities

The themes below have been identified as key for establishing sustainability objectives. The matrix below outlines summary of current best practice and emerging environmental policies and sets out a summary of how Shaping Guildford's Future programme can deliver to an exemplar standard.

| Issues (Theme)                                                                        | GBC / emerging policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Masterplan provision                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Exemplary approach examples                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Building energy efficiency and carbon emissions</b><br>(Climate Mitigation)        | Adopted Policy requires buildings to exceed Part L 2013 by 20% (superseded by Part L 2021). Emerging policy is in line with Part L 2021.                                                                                                                                                               | Opportunity to specify standards in excess of Building Regulations for new development.                                                                                                                              | LETI / RIBA / UKGBC Net zero carbon, including operational and embodied carbon<br>Passivhaus standards for GBC sites                                                                                                         |
| <b>Renewable energy</b><br>(Climate Mitigation)                                       | Adopted Policy promotes low carbon heat networks and renewable and low carbon energy technologies.                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Opportunity to develop a broad strategy on energy supply and renewables.                                                                                                                                             | Local Area Energy Planning (follow guidance by The Centre for Sustainable Energy).<br>Renewable Energy Resource Assessment.<br>Heat network zoning and power demand management.                                              |
| <b>Minimising Overheating risk</b><br>(Climate Adaption and Resilience)               | Emerging policy requires proposals to be designed with overheating and wildlife risk considerations.                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Green infrastructure and tree planting to contribute to urban cooling.<br>Opportunity to specify overheating assessment / standards in excess of Building Regulations for new development.                           | London Plan cooling hierarchy policy.<br>CIBSE TM59 overheating risk modelling (now included as Part O of Building Regs)<br>Good Homes Alliance checklist for early stages<br>Passivhaus standard addresses comfort          |
| <b>Operational Waste</b><br>(Resource Efficiency)                                     | Adopted Policy promotes waste minimisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Opportunity to develop innovative waste strategy.                                                                                                                                                                    | Underground Refuse Storage (URS)/ pneumatic waste collection<br>BREEAM waste targets                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Circular Economy</b><br>(Resource Efficiency)                                      | Requires energy and waste hierarchy to be followed, waste minimisation and re-using materials.<br>Requires developments to follow sustainable design and construction practices. County Council level policy on waste generated through construction, demolition and excavation phases of development. | Reusing existing infrastructure rather than demolishing and rebuilding, and re-using any excavation waste on site.<br>Opportunity to specify resource efficiency and waste minimisation standards.                   | London Plan Policy SI7 'Reducing waste and supporting the Circular Economy'.<br>Emerging Cornwall Council Climate Emergency SPD will include a One Planet Development Policy.                                                |
| <b>Urban Greening</b><br>(Climate Mitigation, Climate Adaption, Biodiversity, Health) | Planting and landscaping schemes, and measures on building structures that support nature are encouraged.                                                                                                                                                                                              | Opportunity to develop a comprehensive urban greening strategy and targets.                                                                                                                                          | Building with Nature Standards.<br>GLA guidance on the Urban Greening Factor.<br>Cornwall Council Green Points System.<br>Essex County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy (Essex Green Permits).                          |
| <b>Biodiversity</b><br>(Climate Mitigation, Climate Adaption, Biodiversity, Health)   | Emerging policy requires Biodiversity Net Gain of 20%.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Promoting biodiversity through introduction of connected green corridor and landscaping, particularly along river.<br>Opportunity to specify higher biodiversity net gain. Consider what is achievable for the site. | Biodiversity net gain of 20% (Greater Cambridge adopted Biodiversity SPD)<br>BNG of 25% in the emerging Salt Cross AAP.<br>Re-wilding or creation of habitat banks or levy.<br>Building with Nature Standards.               |
| <b>Healthy Living and Active Transport</b><br>(Climate Mitigation Health)             | Promote high quality design, safe streets, efficient access and inclusion. Emerging policy sets out an air quality avoidance and mitigation hierarchy.                                                                                                                                                 | Humanising the town centre, by reducing traffic and increasing active transport.<br>Siting homes to reduce air quality impact on residents.                                                                          | WELL Building Standard.<br>NHS Healthy Towns Programme.<br>Emerging Salt Cross AAP sets out 10 healthy place shaping key principals.<br>The adopted Leeds Aire Valley Action Plan Policy AVL8 aims to improve public health. |

## 2.1.1

# The Key Issues - Flooding and Transportation

Two key elements to create a sustainable future for Guildford are flooding and transportation. Here we highlight the issues and set out a clear strategy to vastly improve the centre of town for current and future generations.

**Also covered in this section is a summary of the utilities and infrastructure provision (2.4) for the town, as well as planning policy (2.5).**

### Flooding

Guildford has a history of flooding. The worst flood in living memory was in 1968 where significant parts of the town were flooded. This affected people, houses, major roads, railway lines and businesses. Other serious floods occurred in the winter of 2013 to 2014, in 2000 and as recently as August 2018 when a heavy downpour overwhelmed the surface water drains. The Environment Agency expect a 74% increase in rainfall within the catchment impacting the River Wey.

Resolving flooding has been a significant consideration in developing Local Plan policy within the town centre and a deliverable solution is needed to both defend the existing town centre and to create key opportunities for regeneration.

### Transportation

Guildford, like so many other towns around the world, is at a crossroads. It wants (and has the potential) to grow and continue to be a successful place, but traffic congestion continues to thwart its efforts to do so. The gyratory, in particular, imposes itself on the character and environment of the town and it crucially separates the town centre from both the river and the railway station.

The town centre has problems caused by the convergence of several busy radial routes approaching the centre, and particularly on the central gyratory system. This has resulted in a focus on the greatest provision of highway capacity and traffic volumes right in the heart of the town centre, where they conflict the most with pedestrian and cycle movements. Congestion, traffic accidents and traffic pollution (both air and noise) contribute to the detrimental affect this has on the town centre environment. In 2019, Guildford was the 6th most congested town/city in the UK, which cost the economy £44 million (Inrix, 2019), and last mile, inner town average speeds are as low as 14 mph.



## 2.2 Guildford's Flooding Issue

The first of these major issues is flooding. The masterplan provides the opportunity to put a deliverable plan forwards for the comprehensive protection of the town to ensure its future.

**This plan has been developed with the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council as flood authority. It protects existing homes and businesses, and enables new development sites. Thus providing the opportunity to provide significant numbers of new homes and jobs in the town centre.**

Most of the potential development area alongside the river falls in Flood Zone 3, 'functional floodplain,' and current national and local policy would suggest development in this zone is difficult but achievable. However, a comprehensive flood alleviation scheme that provides a defensive line against flood and can address the issues of flood resilience and safety for occupiers, will provide an opportunity to protect

existing properties, enable development along the river to be undertaken, and to provide the defence of existing vulnerable properties to be achieved.

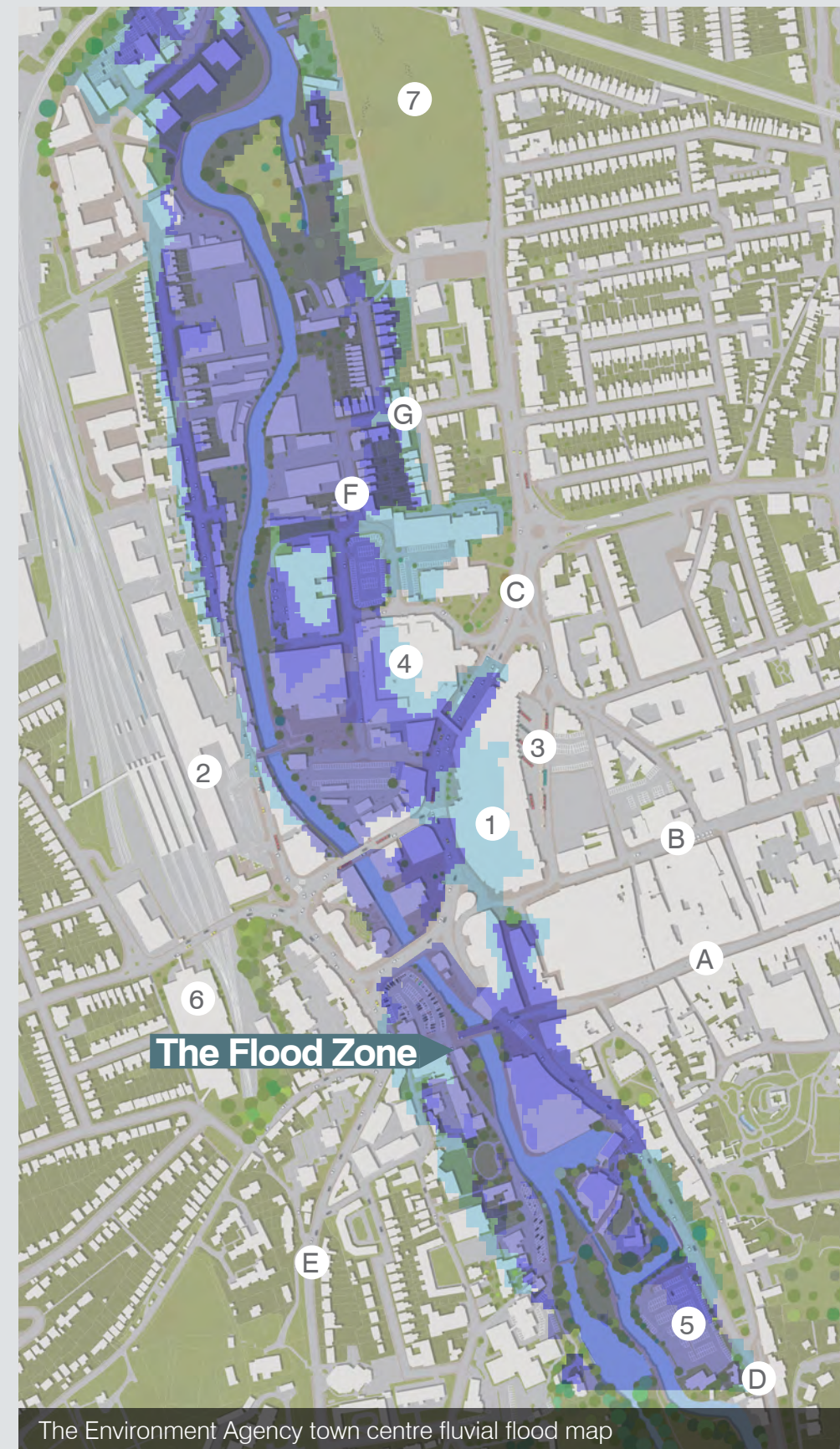
In collaboration with the Environment Agency, Guildford Borough Council, advised by Arup, have developed options for flood defences within the town centre with the aim that, when implemented, the town centre's flood zone will be altered to enable development to be permitted more easily.

Shown on the right is the current fluvial flood zone map covering Guildford Town Centre. This shows a large number of existing properties to be vulnerable to flood. As well as key strategic locations in the town centre that are currently precluded from redevelopment due to their risk of flood.

Climate change is causing irreparable damage to our climate. In real terms these effects will mean:

- The UK's average temperature has increased by 0.8 degrees since 1961-1990.
- By 2050 there could be a 65% chance of a summer as hot as 2018.
- The UK has seen a 16cm sea level rise since 1900.
- Summer temperatures could be up to 7.4°C hotter by 2050, while winters could be up to 4.4°C hotter in the same time period.
- By 2100, summer rainfall could decrease by up to 62%.
- There could be up to 59% more precipitation in winters by 2050.
- In 2020 there are 5.2 million homes and businesses at risk of flooding.
- There could be an up to 1.15m sea level rise by 2100.

(Data sourced from: EA, 2019 & Met office 2018, UKCP18 Headline Findings).



1. The Friary
2. Train Station
3. Bus Station
4. Bedford Wharf multi-storey car park
5. Millbrook car park
6. Farnham Road car park
7. Guildford cricket club

- A. High Street
- B. North Street
- C. Onslow Street
- D. Shalford Road meeting Millbrook
- E. Portsmouth Road
- F. Mary Road
- G. Leas Road

### Key

- Flood Zone 3B
- Flood Zone 3A
- Flood Zone 2

## 2.2.1 Protecting the Town from Flood

Our aim has been to find a solution. This has been achieved in principle with the Environment Agency.

Two strategies work together to ensure protection of the town. The first is a defensive line to prevent the river from destroying homes and businesses throughout the town centre. The second is providing surface water drainage to prevent issues occurring during periods of extreme rainfall.

### Preferred Flood Defence Alignment (shown in red on the right)

The flood defensive line within the town centre will take multiple forms to ensure it can be integrated within the proposed spatial masterplan, delivering benefits not only in the form of built development, but enhanced biodiversity, sustainability and carbon sequestration.

By raising the level of development onto podium above the flood zone, solutions that enable safe escape for occupiers can be created thereby enabling development at scale above the designated flood zone. The principle of this alignment and the strategic solutions has, during Stage 2, been agreed with the Environment Agency.

### SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

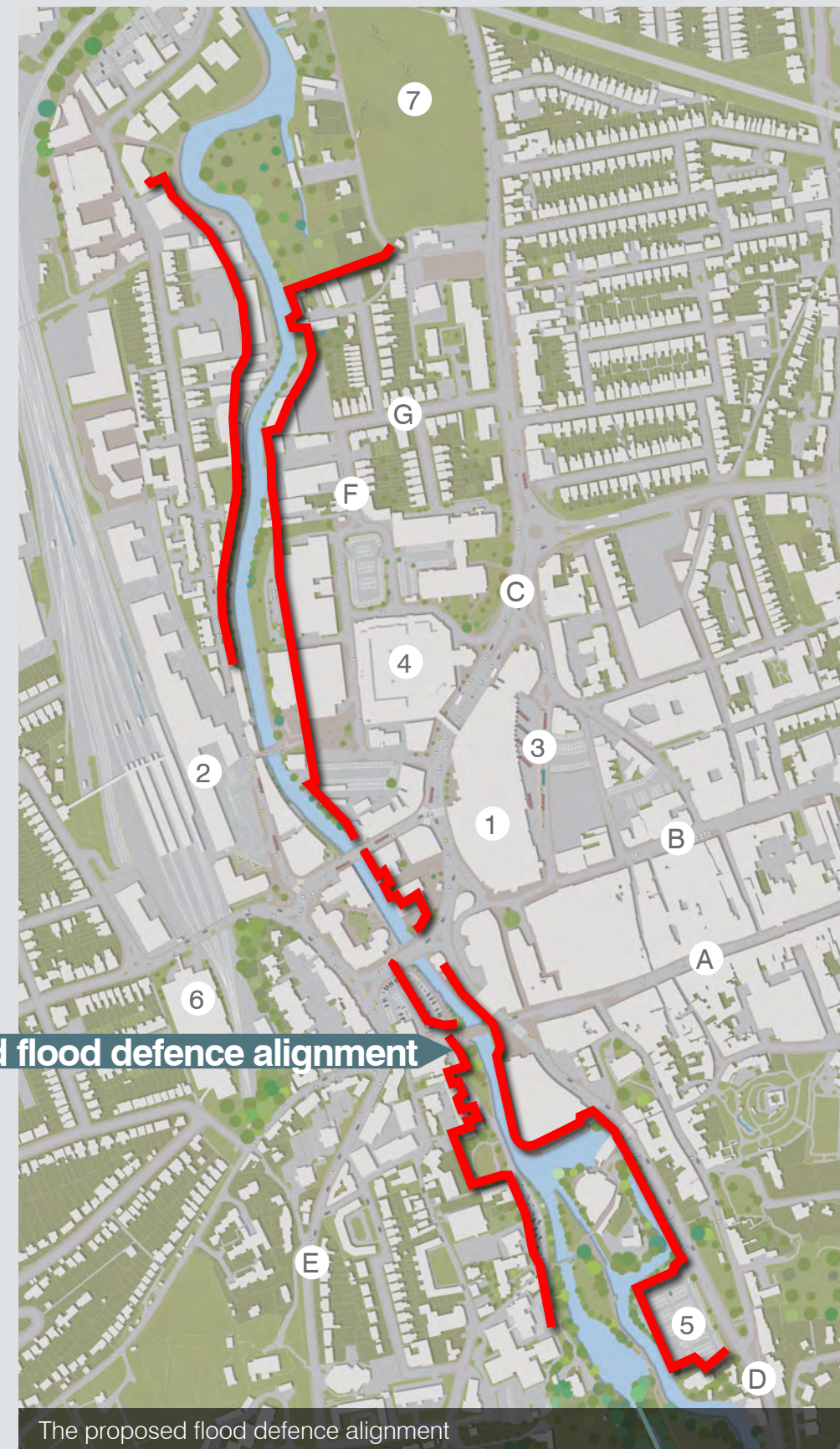
Surface water drainage infrastructure provided within new developments will be designed to control the peak rate of discharge to reduce the pressure on the existing drainage infrastructure.

New development will incorporate SuDS features to reduce the risk of surface water flooding. The types of SuDS should be based upon the SuDS hierarchy, but will also need to consider the site conditions. Ground based SuDS shall be located outside of areas with a high risk of fluvial flooding.

These SuDS strategies include:

- Green/Living walls and roofs,
- Infiltration trenches & basins,
- Soakaways,
- Filter strips and swales,
- Wetlands,
- Ponds - balancing, detention/retention basins,
- Conveyance swales,
- Porus paving & gravelled areas,
- Crated attenuation tanks,
- Oversized pipes.

### Preferred flood defence alignment



1. The Friary
2. Train Station
3. Bus Station
4. Bedford Wharf multi-storey car park
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7. Guildford cricket club

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- F. Mary Road
- G. Leas Road

### Key

Flood defence line 

## 2.2.2 Flood Defence as Part of the Landscape

The flood defensive line shown on the previous page provides protection from flood, creates the opportunity for green waterfront landscape, and helps to reconnect the town with its waterfront.

**The concepts developed for flood defence within the town are based on utilisation of hard and soft landscape that can flood in the case of extreme flood conditions. When not flooded these landscape zones form important new amenity spaces in the town centre and enable the desired access to the river.**

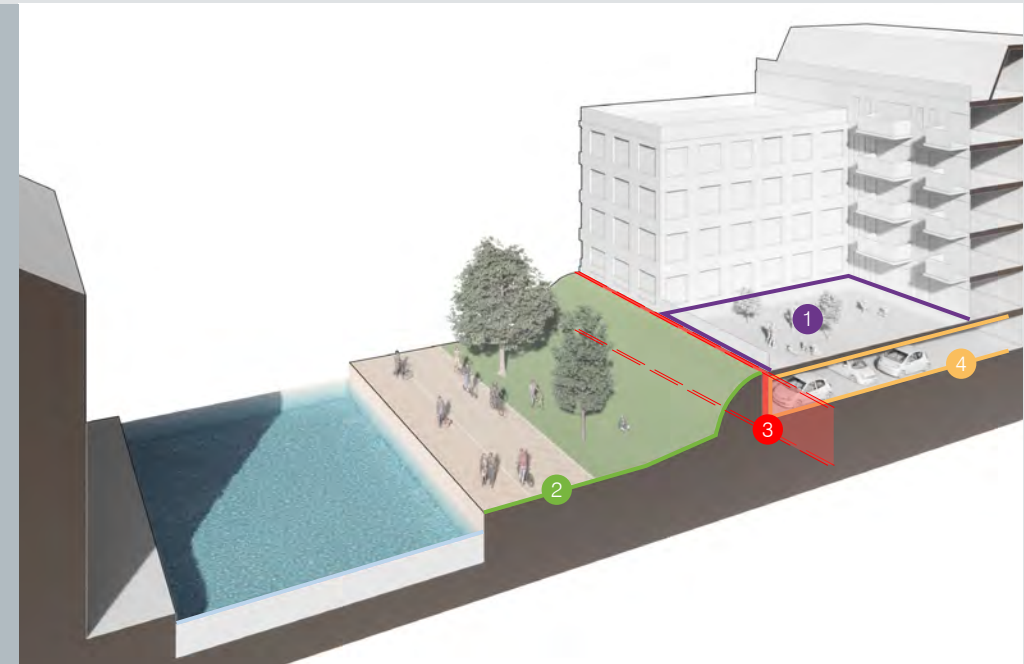
These floodable areas will take the form of linear green parks (with soft landscaping concealing the flood defences) to transition from the countryside to the edge of the town centre, and will take the form of hard landscaping, new public spaces and the new Town Square within the town centre (with terracing concealing the flood defences).

The defence solutions are proposed to be designed for a worst case 1 in 100 year plus climate change level of flood based off of the latest level of Environment Agency forecasts.

- 1 Development Podium
- 2 Floodable Landscaping
- 3 Flood Defence Wall Concealed Behind Landscaping
- 4 Car Park Under Podium

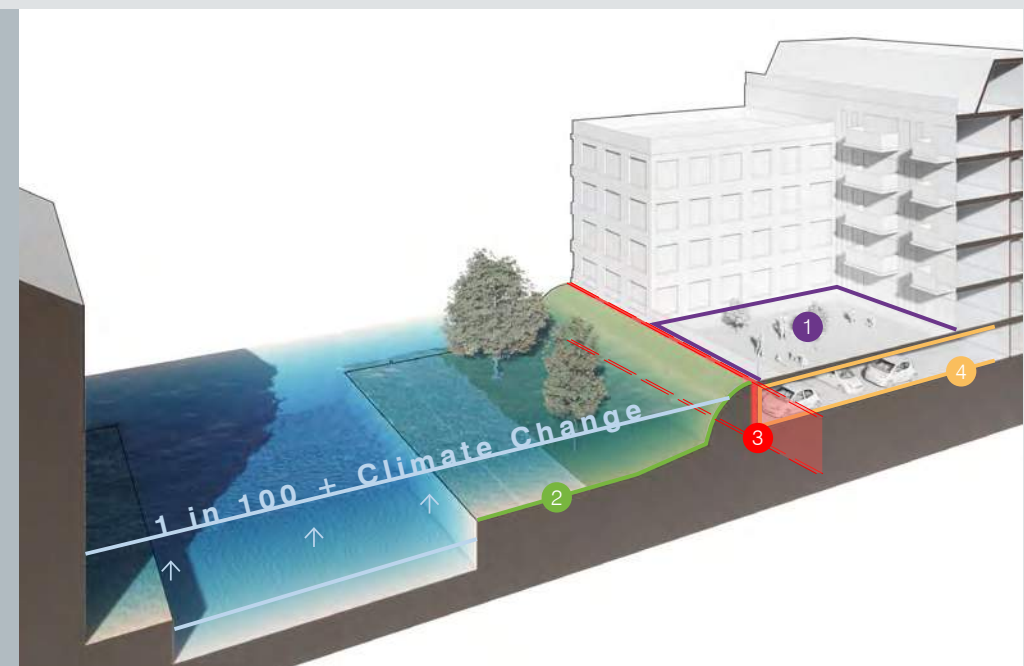
Bedford Wharf park showing the river in normal conditions.

The riverside is a green landscaped zone with abundant biodiversity and opportunities for communities to come together in the beautiful surroundings of the River Wey, providing North to South walking and cycling connections and a park on the East side of the river, providing a 'front garden' for the town of Guildford.



Bedford Wharf park showing the river in the worst case scenario when a 1 in 100 year flood occurs.

Existing homes, businesses and new development are all protected from flood in the green landscaped zone.



## 2.3

# Guildford's Transportation Issue

Our strategy for the town is to adapt its existing infrastructure to encourage modal shift onto more sustainable means, and not to build major new infrastructure to increase road capacity.

The doctrine of 'the more roads you build the more traffic is created' has not only gained more acceptance but has also been repeatedly shown to be true. For Guildford a completely different approach, founded on the principle of sustainable movement, is proposed. There is some cynicism towards such an approach but many other places in the UK and particularly in northern Europe, have shown that, with patience, leadership and commitment, such an approach bears fruit.

The sustainable transport strategy for Guildford has been developed with Surrey County Council, prioritising the following:

- Climate change,
- Healthier citizens,
- Placemaking,
- Managing ('taming') the car.

### Why such an approach?

Climate change is no longer a distant threat but very much a present danger recognised by the government and by Guildford Borough Council who have formally declared a climate emergency and set a goal for the Borough to reach net zero emissions by 2030.

Evidence shows that transport has a key role to play in the health of citizens, including encouraging active travel, reducing stress (congestion and commute times), air and noise pollution and increasing the land available for nature and green spaces which affect well-being.

Conventional wisdom was that creating a strong economy came first and that a higher quality of life would follow. The reverse is now true: creating a better place and a higher quality of life is the first step to attracting new residents and jobs (and thereby growing the economy).

As for managing or taming the car, this does not mean ignoring the requirements for car movement, because many of us will still need a car for a number of journeys. It simply means not giving the car the number one priority and allowing it to subjugate all other considerations.

In order to strike the right balance between these different priorities it was important to establish evidence which would allow the correct measures for the town to be delivered, and to provide a baseline for very emotive subject that people have their own different views based on their own experiences.

Armed with this data, we have developed a comprehensive set of measures whose aim is to achieve as high a shift from the car to sustainable travel as possible, whilst at the same time "managing/taming" the remaining traffic in order to ensure safety and enhance the physical environment.

Car reduction strategies could, in time, each achieve a modal shift of anything between 10-40%. The list of measures recommended for congestion could deliver a 12-33% reduction in car use.

The effects of the proposed measures have been modelled and the ways to improve the core town

centre environment have been studied. The existing gyratory is a major barrier to this and has been studied with the dual objective of providing an upgraded physical environment together with meeting the goals of the 'Shaping Guildford's Future' masterplan (i.e. opening up the riverfront, more bus and cycleways, wider footpaths and more greenery) whilst maintaining traffic circulation.

An option that best achieves all the objectives has been selected and is referred to as 'Option Y' (shown on page 28).

It is advised that this suggested strategy will lead to a much higher-quality environment in the town which will, in turn, lead to higher levels of economic growth, less carbon emissions, greater road safety and fundamentally healthier citizens.

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In 2020 Guildford was the 6th most congested urban area in the UK. (Source: Inrix)

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Guildford Tops Surrey's Pedestrian Casualties Table. (Source: Inrix)

# 2.3.1

## Freeing up the Transport Network to Support Growth

Guildford is constricted by its roads layout. The masterplan aims to adopt a sustainable transport strategy to support the growth of the town.

By creating a better transport system, the town centre can be designed to be a beautiful place to live, work and visit.

National and local policies support the strategic objectives of the masterplan. The options for the town are to either do nothing and let the problem get worse over time, or to do something to create a future Guildford that we can be proud of. The population of Guildford is to increase over time, with 14,700 new homes in the Local Plan alone and further developments in the pipeline, so the problem is only going to get worse.

The masterplan proposes a 3 part strategy to establish a suite of measures to address these challenges and create a future Guildford that we can be proud of:

1

Primary Objective: To facilitate Town Centre Growth

- Retain and improve accessibility
- Reduce dominance of traffic

2

Wider, strategic objective 1: Reduce Carbon

- Reduce travel demand by car
- Encourage sustainable travel choices

3

Wider strategic objective 2: Improve Health

- Reduce particle emissions
- Encourage active travel
- Reduce the number of traffic accidents

To achieve these transformational changes to the town, a toolkit has been developed, and includes:

**Active Travel**

- Reallocated road space for walking and cycling,
- High-quality cycle provision,
- Dealing with barriers to active travel.

**Buses**

- Improved frequency and access to bus stops,
- Improved service reliability,
- Real Time Passenger Information.

**Park and Walk**

- Improved walking routes from the key car parks to the town centre,
- Redevelopment or re-purposing of the remaining car parks,
- Improved VMS guidance system.

**Park and Ride (P&R)**

- Increased P&R capacity,
- Improved access to Onslow P&R,
- Improved bus connections to the town centre,
- Revised pricing strategy to make P&R use more attractive.

**Traffic Diversion**

- Potential closure of Millbrook to private vehicles,
- Reduced number of through town centre journeys,
- Encourages peak traffic spreading and modal shift.

**Workplace Parking Levy**

- Scheme to include the whole urban area,
- Revenue stream to fund sustainable transport.

**Road User Charging**

- Reduced traffic volumes and journey times,
- Potential funding stream,
- Possible cross-river charge.

This methodology is supported by national and local policies:

“

Net Zero Carbon 2050.

(The Climate Change Act, 2019)

“

Climate Emergency.  
Net Zero Carbon 2030.

(Guildford Council climate emergency declaration, 2019)

“

Avoid, Shift, Improve.

(Surrey LTP4 2022-2032)

## 2.3.2

# The Highways issue in the town centre

The transportation network represents the biggest challenge for the town centre, and is only going to get worse. Action is long overdue to provide the foundation for a sustainable Guildford town centre.

**Encouraging modal shift to active travel means is a key aspect of the masterplan. This will encourage the development of a healthier and happier society, which clearly supports the aims of the masterplan and the economy of the town.**

**There are two parts to the strategy. The first is encouraging modal shift to active travel or public transport means as the primary mode of transport to the centre of town. The second is improving the environment of the town centre by reducing the dominance of the car.**

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Through traffic\* is a mere 10% of all vehicles.

\*the traffic that has no business in the town and simply uses its roads to go elsewhere

(Data collection surveys, Markides Associates Transport Stage 2 Report, 2022)

### The active travel network within the town centre

The design of the active travel network in the town centre needs to:

- Provide safe and convenient provisions for east-west and north-south movements.
- Identify locations for secure cycle parking, including long-term covered facilities.
- Seek to enhance the pedestrian environment through the reduction of traffic dominance and the creation of pedestrian-priority streets and spaces.

These objectives are strongly interlinked with other elements of the Shaping Guildford's Future Plan, particularly the options for the re-designed gyratory and a review of vehicular access arrangements throughout the town centre.

### The Gyratory

The gyratory, in the centre of Guildford, is the only river crossing for many miles to the South so becomes a pinch point at the centre of Guildford.

It also cuts off the town centre from the riverside and train station. Reducing the detrimental impact of the roads system, and putting the health, well-being and safety of the pedestrian first is a key part of providing Guildford with a better town centre.



Onslow Street from the pedestrian crossing from Bridge Street to The Friary



Farnham Road meeting Bridge Street



Onslow Street in the centre of town

## 2.3.3 Gyratory Options

Alongside modal shift, it is imperative to find a solution to the outdated road layout in the centre of town which is a major polluter, is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists, and cuts the riverside off from the centre of town.

**In order to bring to life the masterplan, open up the riverside to the town and deliver the transformative vision to people's travel and livelihoods, revolutionary changes to the town centre gyratory system are necessary.**

The design optioneering exercise for the future town centre road arrangement has focused on which option best meets the masterplan objectives, rather than purely being a traditional traffic capacity-led decision. The focus of this project after all, is delivering new homes, improving the health and well-being of Guildford's residents, and creating a better town centre environment for people to enjoy and spend time in.

Nevertheless, the capacity of the future town centre road network and the replacement of the existing gyratory needs to take into account the levels of traffic reduction required in order for the network to operate optimally, and without significant congestion preventing the town from operating effectively. This reduction will likely be achieved through a combination of significant measures to promote walking, cycling and bus use, as well as changes to existing car parks, and possible road charging mechanisms, as highlighted by the toolkit.

Six preliminary design options have been considered to replace the existing Guildford gyratory system. A number of options have been subsequently dropped, as they failed to achieve the core masterplan objective of connecting the town to the riverfront via a traffic free route. Two of the options are presented here.

Other solutions have been studied historically by others which were dependent on some form of new infrastructure to divert and enhance traffic movement in the town. We do not believe that this would be fundable or the answer for a sustainable future of Guildford

**Reviewing each of the options against the core criteria of the masterplan (illustrate in chapter 1), option Y meets more of the requirements than any other arrangement. It offers a traffic free section of the riverfront, the pedestrianisation of Bridge Street, requires no structural changes or land take, and can deliver improvements for both pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.**

Further detail can be found in the Stage 2 Transport Report.



**'Y' Option**

A much better connection between the railway station and the town centre is created by widening the footpaths and pedestrianising Bridge Street, thereby removing traffic from what should be a key corridor between the town centre and the station.

**The 'Y' Option also provides:**

1. One-way looping traffic movement is converted to two-way traffic. All vehicle movements crossing the river are concentrated onto Friary Bridge, thereby simplifying all traffic movements.
2. Pedestrianising Town Wharf East, thus facilitating a new Town Square for Guildford and enabling High Street and North Street to connect to the river.
3. Eliminating the severance between the town centre and the river, particularly around the Millbrook area, and creating the opportunity for redevelopment.
4. Maintaining Town Bridge in its current form, an important and attractive walk/cycle connection and feature of the local townscape, and would be used by buses.
5. Helping encourage the use of park and walk into the town centre (particularly at Millbrook), and thus helping to reduce town centre traffic.
6. An enhanced bridge crossing near Shalford would potentially be required, and through traffic would use Portsmouth Road.



**Alternative 'Little C' Option**

1. Bridge Street is used by pedestrians and cyclists.
2. Surface pedestrian crossings and wider footways at all junctions.
3. No traffic on Millbrook between Onslow Street and High Street.
4. Allows for the town centre to be connected to the river.
5. A new road bridge replaces the existing Town Bridge.
6. A new realigned junction with High Street on Portsmouth Road.
7. Will require additional land take.

## 2.4 Futureproofing the Town's Infrastructure

The capacity of Guildford's utilities and infrastructure is another major challenge in supporting sustainable development in the town centre. Society and our community relies on infrastructure. Our capacity to meet our needs cannot be taken for granted. These are the major elements of our study.

**The proposed redevelopment of Guildford Town Centre creates an opportunity to provide new homes and employment whilst helping to address the impact of climate change through the reduction in greenhouse gases and management of surface water runoff. This approach will increase the demand on some public utilities and will require that space is safeguarded within the masterplan to accommodate the infrastructure requirements. In some cases, the infrastructure can be integrated with features such as soft landscaping, to reduce the spatial requirements, increase bio-diversity and improve the sustainability of the development.**

AECOM, on behalf of Guildford Borough Council, has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the utility demands for the proposed development zones based on the emerging masterplan and has engaged with Statutory Undertakers to understand the upgrades that are likely to be required to supply this increased demand and any spatial requirements for the new infrastructure.

A key focus of the Stage 2 Assessments has been the provision of electricity and potable water to the new development zones, as the Stage 1 assessment identified these services as having limited spare capacity.

An assessment of the surface water runoff has also been undertaken, to identify the attenuation capacity required for each of the proposed development sites, to limit runoff to the pre-development (greenfield) rates, the form of this attenuation based upon the SuDS hierarchy and the available space.

**Electricity.** UKPN has advised there is minimal spare electricity capacity in the Guildford Primary substation with approximately 5MVA available in the 33kV network. Extensive reinforcement of the electricity network is likely to be required to provide additional capacity, which may have a long lead-in time and may need to be forward funded by the developer/landowner of each individual site.

**Potable Water.** Shortage of potable water is a concern, Thames Water are unable to confirm whether their network has sufficient capacity to supply the proposed development without undertaking further modelling work. This modelling is expected to take approximately 6 months to complete. If reinforcement works are required, it is anticipated these will take 12 months to design and deliver.

**Foul Sewage.** It is anticipated that Thames Water will need to undertake modelling of their network to confirm the available sewage capacity. If necessary, foul sewage can be attenuated on-plot and discharged at a time and rate to align with the available network capacity.

**Surface Water Drainage.** A preliminary assessment has identified that significant areas of roof-based attenuation will be necessary in each development plot to limit the peak rate of discharge to the pre-development levels. This attenuation can be combined with vegetation to provide a green roof, which is at the top of the SuDS hierarchy. Attenuation will also need to be provided on podium decks and in some cases below ground outside of the fluvial flood extents, which will require coordination with the proposed development levels.

**Data and Telecommunications.** Assessments and discussions have identified that telecommunications operators will work with Guildford Borough Council and developers to ensure that Fibre to the Premises is provided to new developments, which will support data transmission speeds up to 1Gbps.

**Gas.** It is anticipated that heating for future developments will not be supplied by fossil fuel to reduce the carbon emissions, therefore no increase in the gas demand is anticipated.

## 2.5

# Planning and Policy for Sustainable Development

Guildford Borough Council's preferred town planning strategy is to collect the evidence base and studies to inform the progression of an Action Area Plan (AAP) for the central area of Guildford. The AAP would be an adopted development plan document for use in decision-making on individual applications within the various development zones/parcels.

### The Strategy

A separate planning application(s) would be submitted for the flood defences in the centre of Guildford and the necessary changes to the upstream catchment area of the River Wey. These must be approved and completed before residential development can take place.

The second part of the strategy is that with the benefit of the completed flood defences in the centre of Guildford and changes to the upstream catchment area, the centre of Guildford would benefit from flood defences, thus allowing the Environment Agency to be in a position that it would not object to a planning application (s) for suitably designed proposal within one of the zones/parcels. Thus the objectives of the Masterplan could be realised.

### Alignment with Local Plan Policies

However starting with the AAP, it has to be consistent with the policies of the development plan, which in this case is the Guildford Local Plan: 2019 (GLP 2019). In respect of development in some of the zones/parcels, existing policies such as S3 allow for "a mix of uses and include residential development" (Policy S3).

The employment policies which affect Masterplan areas such as Woodbridge Meadows within which land is designated as a Strategic Employment Site do not support residential use (Policy E3). Outside of the designated employment sites, flexibility exists to allow residential to be included within mixed-use development which result in no loss of employment. This aligns with Policy S3.

Policy P4 explains that development in the developed flood zone 3b will only be approved where the proposed footprint is not greater than the existing. The undeveloped flood zone 3b will be safeguarded for flood management purposes except for essential infrastructure. The flood modelling completed by Arup and with the agreement of the Environment Agency demonstrates the extent of the protected flood zone within the centre of Guildford, and thus the zones/parcels within which residential uses could be permitted. This underpins the Masterplan.

An important consideration in the justification of this approach is GBC's intention that there should be no net loss in employment floorspace within the area of the AAP.

### The Area Action Plan

Subject to the collection of the evidence base documents it is proposed that the AAP will be drafted over a 15 month period, with the first stage of public consultation scheduled for the autumn of 2023.

The crucial point is that the Reg 18 version must set out the limited updates of Policies P4, E3 and S3 in order to allow for mixed-use development within the strategic employment areas, and specifically residential.

The spatial approach to the AAP is informed by the overarching themes of sustainability in national policy objectives and the Guildford Local Plan. It will also be informed by a range of evidence and emerging trends in the aftermath of the pandemic which has changed resident's day to day lives and travel movements.

In 2021 the Government published the National Design Guide. The Guide was introduced to illustrate what good design means in practice. The NPPF makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The Guildford Town Centre AAP seeks to deliver long-standing, durable placemaking which identifies its end users and the challenges we are facing.

In addition, the '15-minute city' concept is an emerging principle with the aim of enabling residents to access all of their needs within a 15 minute walk

from their home. It is a way of reducing car use and encouraging active travel' both increasingly important as the pandemic has changed the way people use their neighbourhoods and town centre high streets. We believe that this concept should form one of the pillars of the AAP to enable every resident in Guildford town centre to live in an accessible and inclusive neighbourhood which will provide for their social and economic needs.

Since declaring a climate emergency, this concept within the AAP will also assist the Council to bring forward a range of measures addressing climate change, poor air quality and waste in line with the Local Plan policy objectives. Fundamentally, to address climate change the AAP needs to focus growth in locations that are easily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.

An aerial photograph of Guildford, Surrey, showing a dense urban area with a mix of residential and commercial buildings, green spaces, and a railway line running through the center. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange color.

# 3.0 The Masterplan Principles

The prize is improved health and well-being for the communities of Guildford which is delivered with new public realm, homes and business space, creating a better town.

By aligning the aims of the masterplan with Guildford Borough Council's corporate objectives, engaging with the residents of Guildford and bringing together the expert strategies on sustainability, flooding, strategic transport, infrastructure, utilities and planning, as well as economic analysis and a delivery programme, the masterplan is a holistic, deliverable plan for the town. This plan is underpinned by an overall set of principles.

This section sets out these principles, before focusing in on the development zones.

# 3.0

## The Masterplan Principles

The masterplan principles are a set of strategies that underpin the masterplan and provide a holistic vision as to how Guildford can be sustainably developed for future generations. This is the cornerstone of the masterplan and ensures piecemeal development no longer divides the town. A coordinated set of developments can therefore be brought forward, providing maximum benefit for the town.

**We have established the aims of the masterplan from policy and by speaking to the residents and stakeholders of Guildford. The previous chapter illustrated the strategies for sustainability, flooding, transportation, utilities, infrastructure and planning policy to enable development. This section ties these strategies together into a deliverable plan to provide maximum benefit for the town.**

### Sustainable Movement

Looking beyond the ‘red line’ of the study area, it is vital to better connect the town centre to the surrounding communities of Guildford via active travel means to ensure a climate resilient, healthy and happy community.

Only 2% of people cycle to the town centre, while 61% use private cars (Markides modelling data, 2022). The movement strategy examines the town as a whole and creates paths and cycleways to help encourage the modal shift away from car dependency.

As illustrated in chapter 2, vehicles restrict the town centre, cause significant air pollution issues and are detrimental to the environment and atmosphere in the centre of town. The Joint Committee of Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council agreed that to meet legislative requirements it is necessary to declare an ‘air quality management area’ (AQMA) in the centre of Guildford, which includes Millbrook, Farnham Road, Portsmouth Road, Onslow Street, Park Street, North Street, Commercial Road, Guildford Park Road and Woodbridge Road. The holistic strategy provides solutions to these issues to allow for sustainable growth of the town.

### Public Spaces and Places

At key locations throughout the movement routes public spaces are located to provide amenities for visitors and residents. These include parks, gardens and civic squares of a variety of different scales, including a vibrant new Town Square on the waterfront at the heart of Guildford.

### Development Zones

A number of sites are then identified, connected by these movement routes and anchored by the public spaces and places. These sites provide homes, jobs, community spaces and services.

### Sustainability

The strategy has the sustainable future of Guildford at its heart. Climate mitigation, resilience, resource efficiency, biodiversity net gain and health and well-being are all baked-in to the design of the strategy.

On the right is a summary of the Corporate Objectives, and the 12 masterplan aims resulting from the residents engagement. These are the key building blocks for the masterplan principles.

Sustainable movement principles link a series of public spaces and places, which anchor a number of deliverable development zones, which provide residents of Guildford *“the homes they need, access to quality employment, with strong and safe communities that come together to support those needing help.”*

‘Homes & Jobs, Community and Sustainability’ from the Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025. Listening - Acting - Delivering.

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Revitalise and support the town centre economy.<br><br>01                                       | Make more of the riverside as an attraction.<br><br>02                                                                                | Protect the beautiful green spaces around Guildford by providing homes in the town centre on brownfield land.<br><br>03 | Have a clear plan for the sustainable future of the town centre.<br><br>04                      |
| For a sustainable future we need employment, for employment we need affordable homes.<br><br>05 | Ultimately Guildford needs to be a nice place to live, to support existing communities with the provision of new amenities.<br><br>06 | Climate change and well-being must be addressed.<br><br>07                                                              | Traffic dominance must be reduced through the town centre.<br><br>08                            |
| Sustainability must be futureproofed into the town’s plan.<br><br>09                            | Futureproof infrastructure and attract investment.<br><br>10                                                                          | Kick start the incremental modal shift from vehicular travel to active travel means into the tow centre.<br><br>11      | New parks, civic squares and places for visitors and residents of Guildford to enjoy.<br><br>12 |

Referencing the 12 Masterplan Aims (from page 17).

## 3.1.1 Sustainable Movement - The Vision

One of the most significant challenges to realising the Council's ambition is to address the current dominance of traffic between the historic centre and the River Wey. Since the closure of its wharves, the town has turned its back to the river and a four-lane gyratory was built straddling the river to accommodate increasing levels of traffic.

Blank walls, service yards and car parks dominate the street scene as buildings were designed to face away from these busy roads and from the noise and air pollution the traffic generates. This has created a barrier that prevents Guildford from developing its riverfront as a vibrant quarter and leisure destination.

Conditions for pedestrians and cyclists along these roads are very poor. This prevents people from making healthier and cheaper choices to walk or cycle for shorter journeys to or through the town centre thus further adding to the problems of road safety, congestion and pollution.

A major transformation of the gyratory and its approach roads is essential for Guildford to realise its full potential and to reposition itself as a vibrant, people-focused place to live, work and visit.

It is not a new idea; over the years several attempts have been made to tackle the town's traffic and safety issues. Some ideas involved the construction of new roads, tunnels and bridges to accommodate existing and expected growing levels of traffic. These have all proved undeliverable and are not supported in new policy which encourages the reuse of existing infrastructure.

### **An Alternative Approach**

An alternative approach is required. The strategy that lies at the heart of the 'Shaping Guildford's Future' Plan is primarily to provide an upgraded physical environment whilst simultaneously 'taming' the traffic.

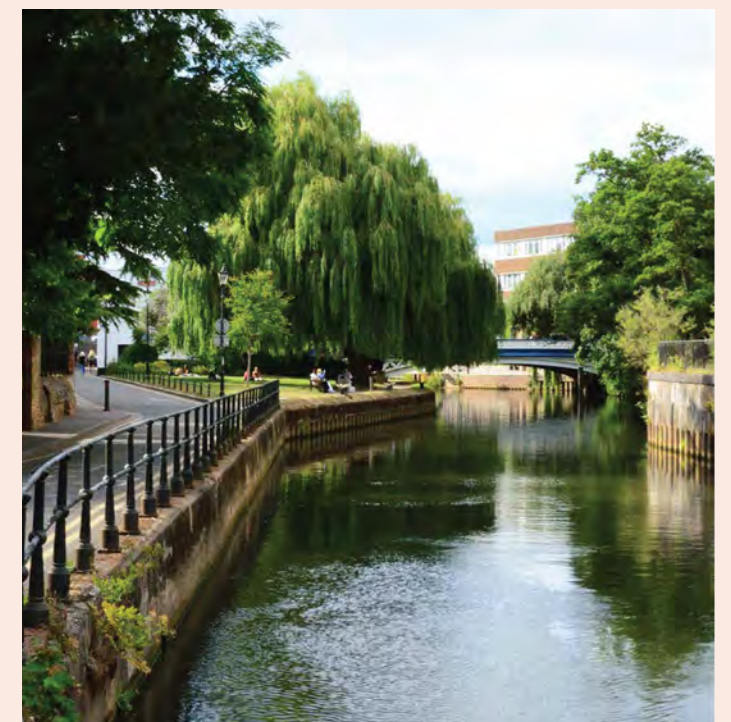
Such an approach would allow for dramatic changes to the road network, open opportunities to remove traffic lanes along some streets and fully exclude vehicles from others. Footways could be widened, bus priority measures would be implemented and new crossings, cycle paths and greenery introduced to create a safer, healthier and more attractive environment for cyclists and pedestrians. This would set the scene for new development to come forward that positively addresses and engages with the street, thus further enhancing the quality of the place.

This alternative approach is supported by national and local policies that seek to promote sustainable modes of travel as a means to reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants and promote a more healthy and active lifestyle. Critical to the success of this alternative approach is that the accessibility of the town centre as a place to live, work and visit is not compromised. Credible alternative means of travel that are convenient and affordable need to be available. This requires a thorough understanding of when and why people currently travel to and through the town centre so that appropriate alternatives can be put in place, and to ensure that sufficient space is set aside to accommodate those journeys where the use of the car is the only reasonable alternative.

Without adopting this new approach, it would become increasingly challenging for the town centre to handle the 14,700 plus new homes which are planned to be delivered through the Local Plan. Any further town centre redevelopment of the likes proposed in this study could not be achieved by following the old approach of catering for car dependency. This growth can only be realised through the adoption of a sustainable-led transport strategy, that puts improving the health and well-being of its citizens, reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable transport at its heart.



On town bridge, looking towards St Nicholas Parish Church, Markides Stage 2 Transport Report



Millmead looking towards Town Bridge, Markides Stage 2 Transport Report

## 3.1.2 Sustainable Movement - Walking and Cycling

To encourage more people to cycle and walk into the town centre, improved paths and cycleways are required to connect the town from all angles of the compass. By improving these routes we can encourage modal shift, with the aim of creating a healthier society for the future of the town.

There are 3 primary overall strategies defining the movement through the town centre.

01

**The first is an uninterrupted North to South pathway for pedestrians and cyclists on both sides of the River Wey.** From Shalford in the South to Ladymead and beyond to the North, the River Wey defines the Town of Guildford. It provides an opportunity to utilise the beautiful natural features of the riverside to better connect the residents of Guildford to the town centre. Indeed, its natural crossing point was the reason Guildford exists in this location.

The towpath on the western bank is upgraded to provide paths and cycleways, while on the eastern bank the convoluted route via streets and paths is simplified by creating a new path and cycleway on the water's edge, which passes underneath the railway viaduct north of Dapdune Wharf, to Ladymead and beyond to the communities of Stoke Ward.

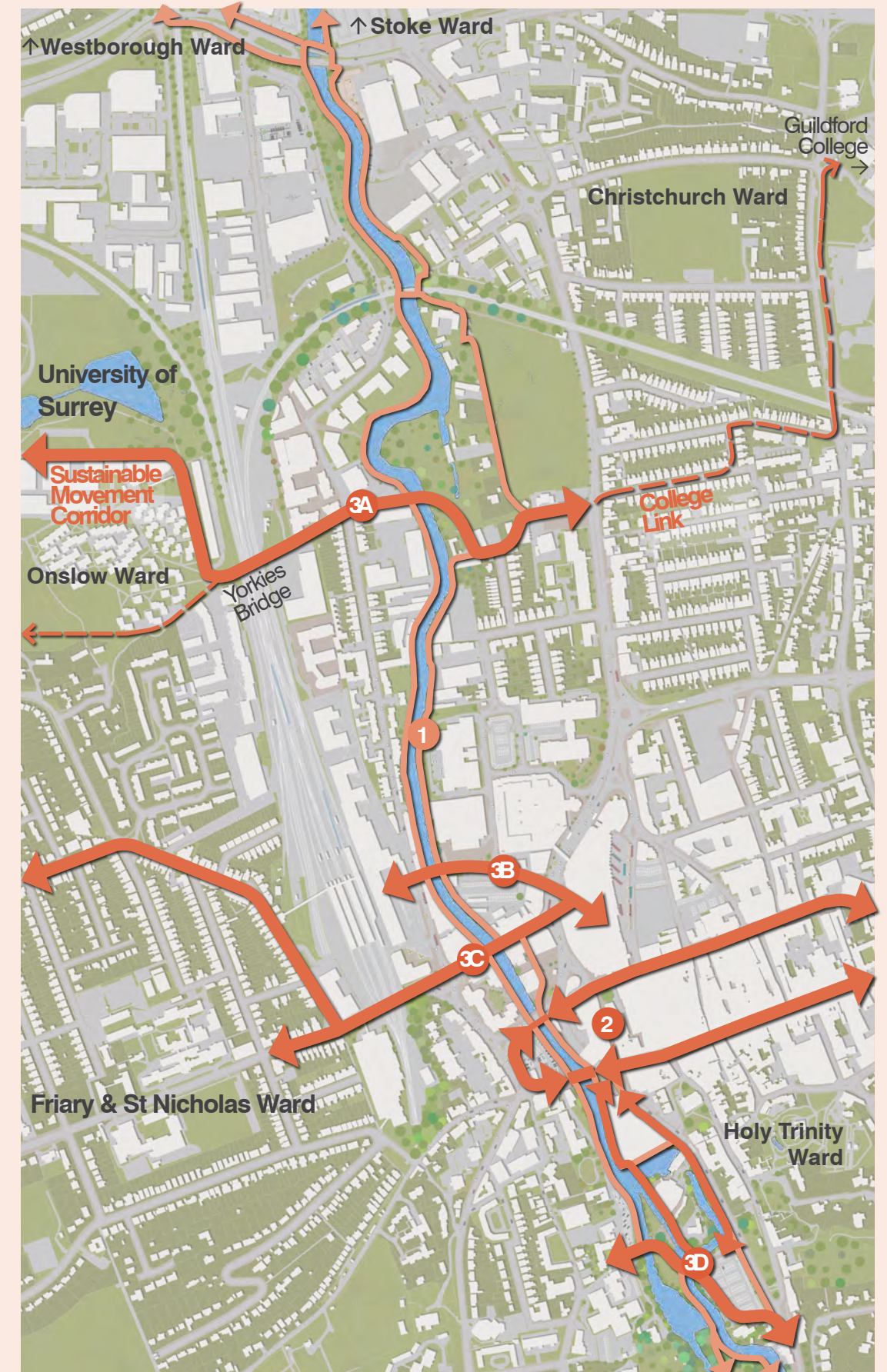
02

**The second is connecting the historic core to the waterfront and, with the creation of a brand new Town Square on the waterfront, to support the vibrancy and future of the town centre.** North Street and High Street are cut off from the waterfront by the four lanes of traffic along Onslow Street and Millbrook. By reconnecting North Street and High Street to the river, and to the new North to South towpath route, accessibility to, and the environment of, the retail core is vastly improved.

03

**The third strategy connects from East to West across the geographical barriers of the train lines and River Wey.**

- Extending the sustainable movement corridor from the university across the Yorkie's bridge and the train tracks, and over the river to connect with College Link with a new pedestrian and cycle bridge.
- Seamlessly linking the train station to the town centre via the new Walnut Tree Bridge.
- Connecting the train station and Farnham Road Car Park to North Street and the retail core via the pedestrianised Bridge Street and redesigned public realm along Farnham Road bridge.
- Encouraging park and walk from Millbrook car park into the town centre and across the river to Millmead, via a new pedestrian bridge and a pedestrian and bicycle friendly Millbrook.



An aerial plan view of Guildford with the strategy to improve walking and cycling

### 3.1.3 Sustainable Vehicle Movement

Guildford is currently one of the few opportunities to cross the river for many miles to the North and South.

**The geographical location of Guildford creates a pinch point in the centre of the town at the gyratory. A number of issues are therefore created:**

1. Traffic is captured and held in the town centre,
2. Dangerous conditions are created for pedestrians and cyclists due to the volume of traffic and the gyratory system,
3. The centre of town is a hotspot of pollution,
4. Consequently the pedestrian public realm is poor,
5. The train station is cut off from the town centre,
6. The most used car park is at Bedford Road, meaning traffic has to loop the gyratory to get to it, making unnecessary additional journeys over the river,
7. Farnham Road car park is not as well used as it should be to capture traffic from the west of the town,
8. The gyratory creates a dangerous place for fatal and serious accidents.

**In response, the masterplan strategy is to simplify the roads network by:**

1. Implementing 2 way, 2 lane roads to replace the existing gyratory using Friary Bridge as the only crossing point for the private vehicle,
2. Providing space for cycle lanes and much wider footpaths with green buffer zones to mitigate the negative impact of the traffic,
3. The 6 sets of traffic lights will be halved to allow traffic to flow through the town centre more freely,
4. Millbrook is bus and access only north of Millbrook car park, with buses able to cross Town Bridge.

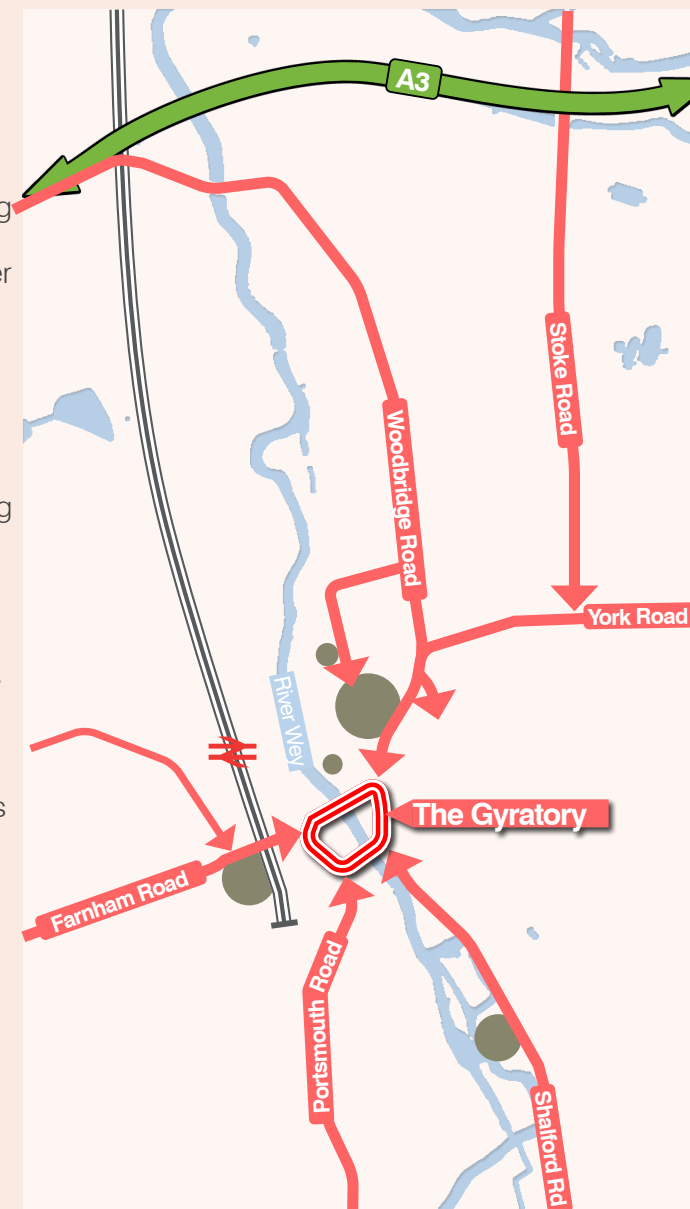
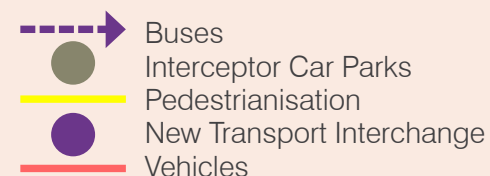
Traffic from Shalford on the East of the River Wey would cross at Broadford Bridge and drive north via Portsmouth Road.

This means fewer cars are stationary in the town centre and green buffer zones are created. Unravelling the gyratory in this way allows priority to be placed on creating a high quality, town centre public realm. Other strategies include:

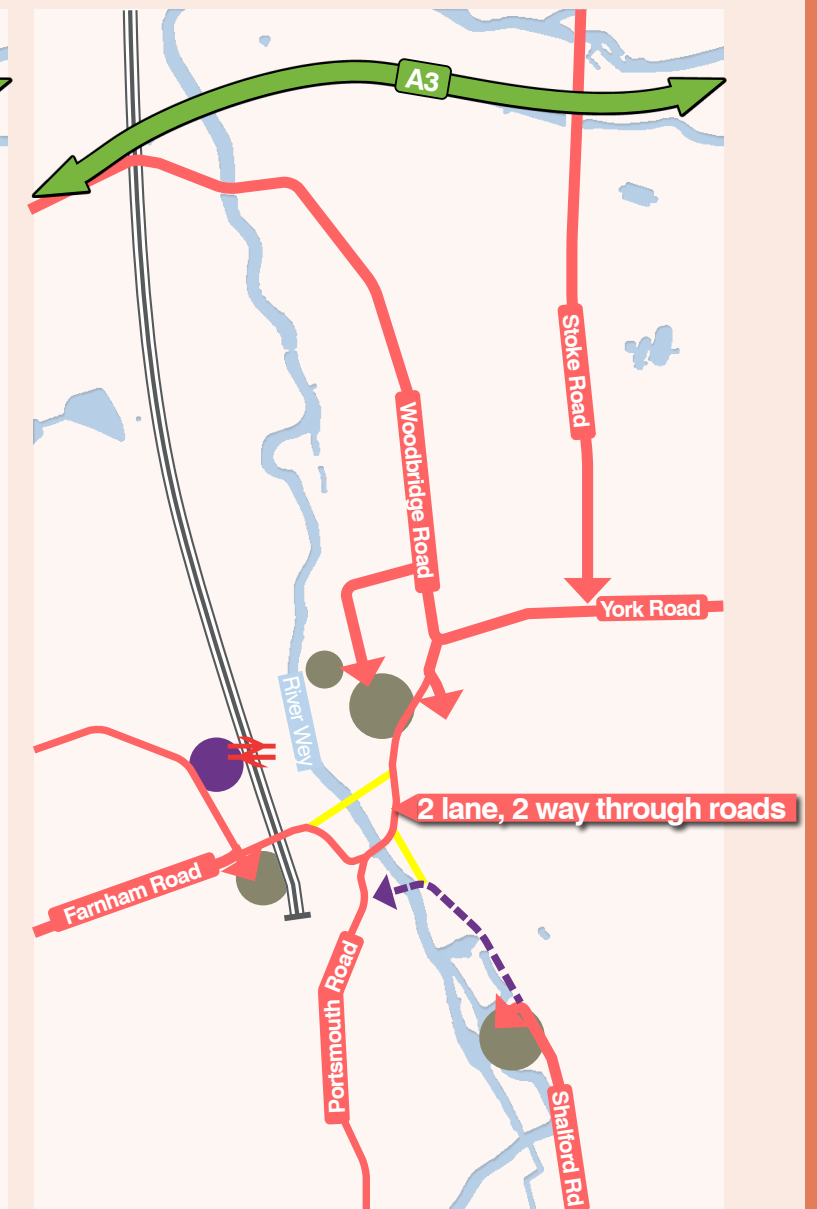
5. Town centre car parks at Millbrook car park (from the South), Farnham Road car park (from the West) and Bedford Road Multi storey car park (from the North and East) will be designated as interceptor car parks to discourage traffic travelling through the centre of Guildford.

Encouraging the use of these car parks means less traffic needing to cross the river, declogging the roads, and providing a better pedestrian public realm. Additionally:

1. Bridge Street is pedestrianised with a 2 way cycle path, greatly improving the journey for pedestrians and cyclists from the train station and Farnham Road,
2. Town Bridge is retained for buses, bicycles and pedestrians.



The existing roads network



The proposed roads network

## 3.2 Public Spaces and Places

A network of new public spaces link the movement routes together, creating a beautiful environment in which to walk, cycle and dwell along Guildford's Waterfront.

**From the green spaces in the South at Millmead via Guildford's new Town Square next to the river with cascading terraces down to the water's edge, to the green linear park North of Bridge Street and to the green meadows at North of the railway viaduct, a varied network of considered spaces will provide a sense of place, beauty, biodiversity, function and amenity for the residents of Guildford.**

01

### Millmead riverside and the car parks

The natural, green public realm is supported with a new park, planting, biodiversity and paths for pedestrians and cyclists. These paths link the town centre to Millmead, Millbrook, St Mary's Wharf and the green spaces towards Shalford to the South. Beyond the Millbrook car park becomes bus and access only so the roadway can be significantly greened, cycle paths can extend to High Street and the footpaths widened.

02

### Straddling the river, Town Wharf East and West

become the new heart of the town at the river. Two new civic squares provide beautiful new civic spaces for residents to enjoy, and will be a focus for festivals, culture, art and events, as well as dining, socialising and shopping.

03

### From Bedford Road surface car park to Mary Road car park and the Courts

A new Bedford Wharf Square is located along the axis of the train station, Walnut Tree Bridge and The Friary. A green waterfront park runs along the riverside and cuts east to Woodbridge Road forming a series of green spaces through the site, providing amenity for the residents and visitors to enjoy within a 5 minute walk of North Street.

04

### Dapdune Wharf

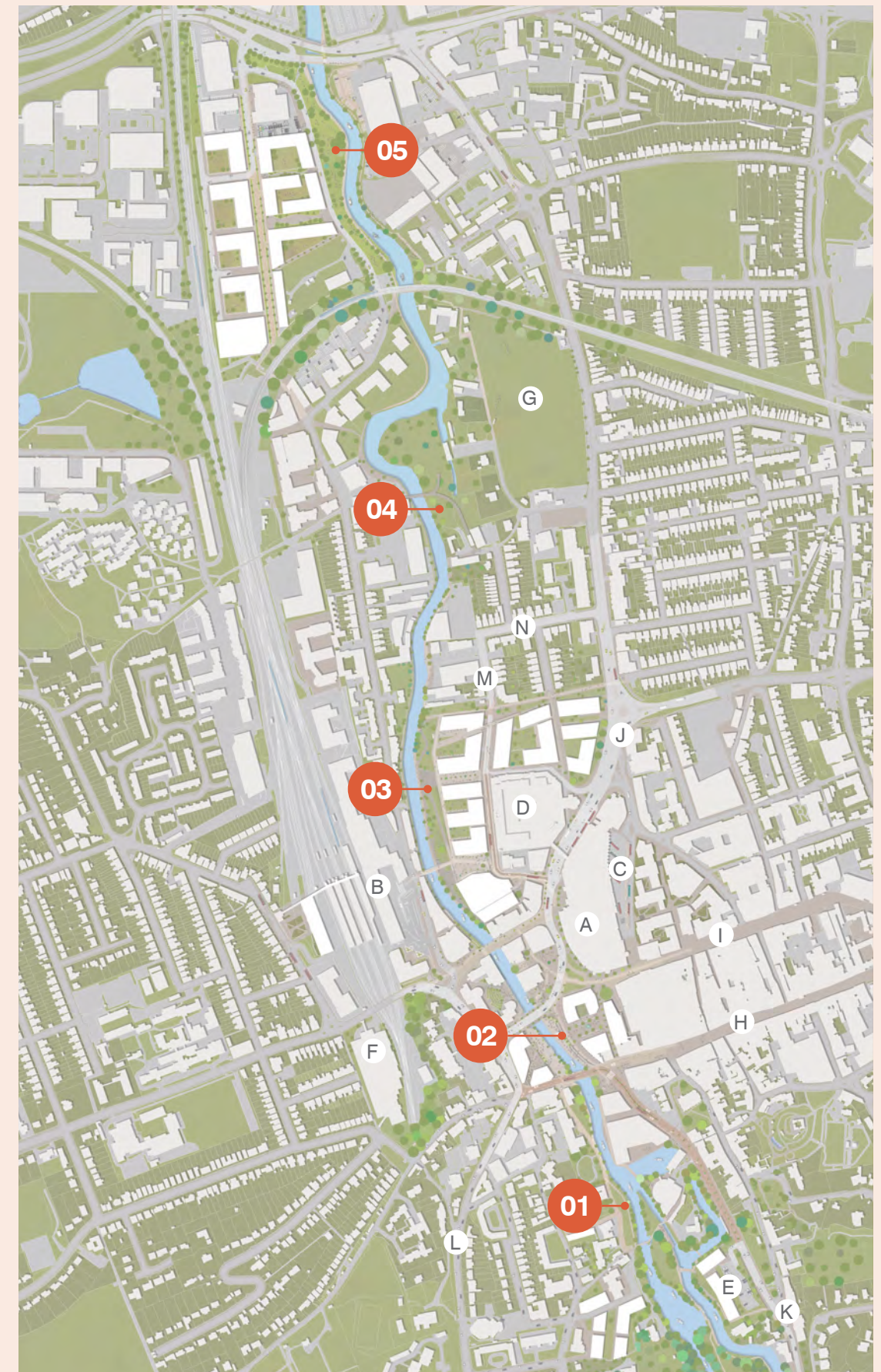
New and improved paths link pedestrian and cycle routes, and a new cycle and foot bridge connects the sustainable movement corridor across the River Wey to the university, and further north past the National Trust land to the railway viaduct crossing.

05

### Woodbridge Meadows river frontage

The light industrial site is transformed into a eco-employment and residential village with a reinvigorated waterfront park running between the railway viaduct and Woodbridge Road, up to the A25.

- A. The Friary
- B. Train Station
- C. Bus Station
- D. Bedford Wharf multi-storey car park
- E. Millbrook car park
- F. Farnham Road car park
- G. Guildford cricket club
- H. High Street
- I. North Street
- J. Onslow Street
- K. Shalford Road meeting Millbrook
- L. Portsmouth Road
- M. Mary Road
- N. Leas Road



The new and improved public spaces, parks, squares and paths along the River Wey

## 3.3 The Development Zones

Four development zones are connected by The GreenWey and anchored by new public spaces and places. These zones provide the space for placemaking, providing homes, jobs, community spaces and services for Guildford's residents and visitors.

**Each zone embraces the concept of the 15-minute-neighbourhood, where residents can access all of their daily needs within a 15 minute walk of their home in accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods.**

### The GreenWey

The four development zones are illustrated on the plan (right). These are zones which Guildford Borough Council own the majority freehold over and form the spine of future development in the town centre. Within these zones stakeholders and partners have been engaged on the developing masterplan to ensure its deliverability.

Creating zones allows sites to be developed independently in a coordinated, holistic manner to ensure the sustainable development of the town centre within an overall plan, avoiding the pitfalls of piecemeal development.

### The development zones are:

- 01** Millbrook car park, Millmead house and car park
- 02** Town Wharf East and West
- 03** Bedford Wharf
- 04** Woodbridge Meadows

### The development zones align to Guildford Borough Council's objectives and provide:

#### Community spaces & services

Places are created in which to congregate, play, relax, shop, eat and work. The principles of the 15-minute city concept are applied, enabling residents to access all of their needs within a 15 minute walk from their home.

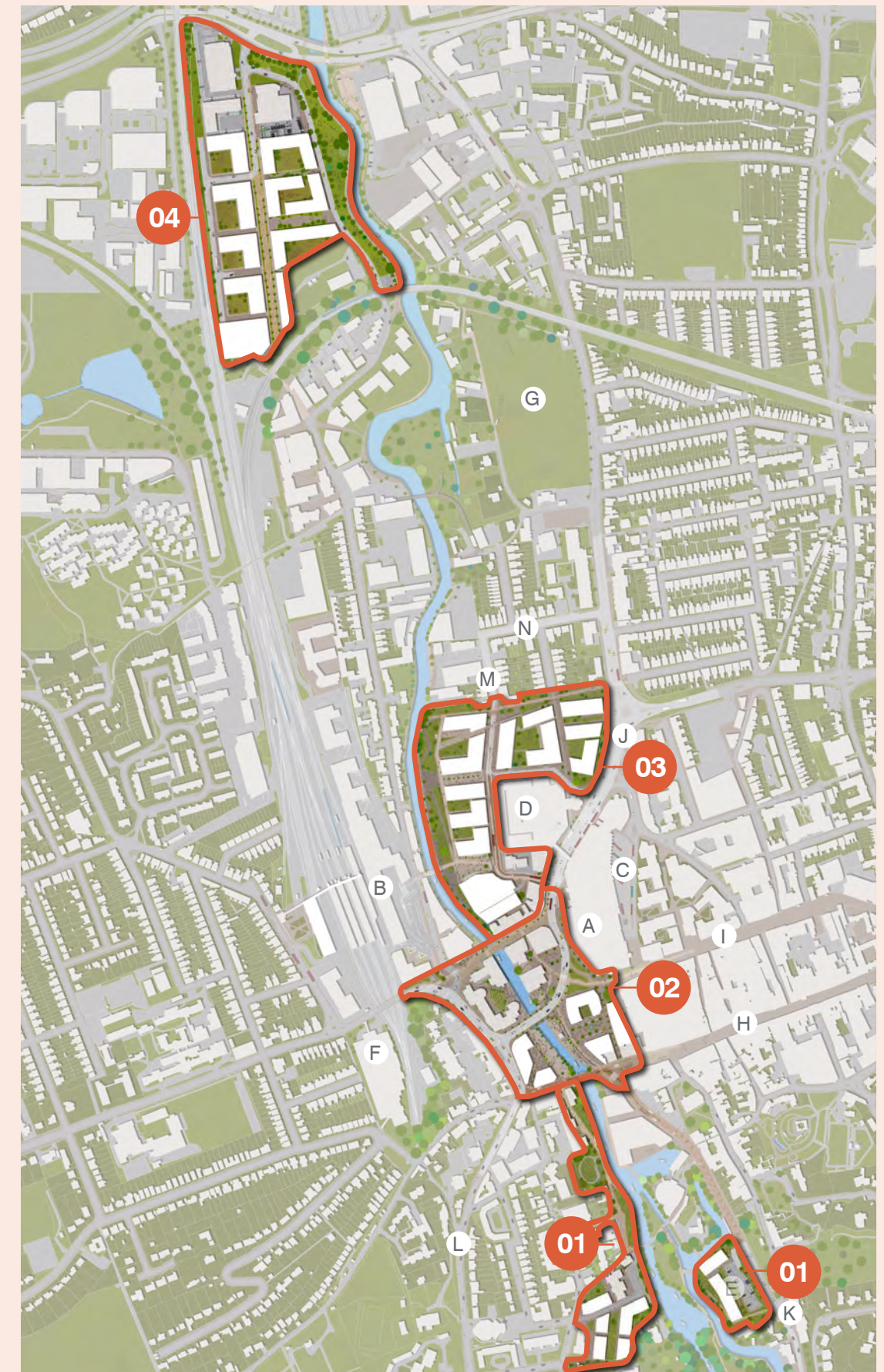
#### Jobs

In collaboration with JLL and the University of Surrey, economic development analysis has been carried out to establish the right mix of jobs required for Guildford's sustainable growth. These have been applied across the masterplan, providing space for sole traders and makers up to large multi-national companies.

#### Homes

A range of homes can be provided, the majority having a view of the waterfront, supporting the ambitions of the Council and the aspirations of the Local Plan.

- A. The Friary
- B. Train Station
- C. Bus Station
- D. Bedford Wharf multi-storey car park
- E. Millbrook car park
- F. Farnham Road car park
- G. Guildford cricket club
- H. High Street
- I. North Street
- J. Onslow Street
- K. Shalford Road meeting Millbrook
- L. Portsmouth Road
- M. Mary Road
- N. Leas Road



The development Zones



# 4.0 The Development Zones

We have introduced a four key development zones which have distinct characteristics, opportunities and constraints that can support the sustainable development of Guildford town centre.

These zones are connected by The GreenWey, placemaking and townscape principles as set out in the previous section. They also incorporate flooding, strategic transport, utilities, infrastructure and planning policy strategies which can be found in supporting consultant reports.

Here we run through each development zone in more detail.

# 4.0 A Comprehensive Vision

Four development zones occupy key strategic sites along Guildford's GreenWey. These sites represent an opportunity for Guildford to revitalise the town centre, futureproof the town's infrastructure, protect the town from the significant and ever increasing threat of flood, relieve the dominance of the car, and put in place a holistic plan for the future of the town.

**Guildford's GreenWey will link the four development zones along the River Wey Navigation, connecting the town from north to south and east to west.**

01

**Millbrook and Millmead represent two zones with a unique and beautiful natural setting. The aim here is to nurture the natural environment while providing amenity for the town.**

The zone runs South along the riverfront from Town Bridge, and includes Millmead car park, Millbrook car park and Millmead house.

02

**Town Wharf defines the heart of Guildford. It connects the retail core of North Street and High Street to the river.**

The area includes the gyratory, the three bridges (Onslow Bridge, Friary Bridge and Town Bridge), Friary Court and Portsmouth Road car park. It is bounded by Bridge Street in the North, includes the buildings along Friary Street on the East, up to St Mary's Wharf and Town Bridge to the South and up to Portsmouth Road in the West.

03

**Bedford Wharf represents a huge opportunity to create vital new amenities for Guildford town centre. It forms the connection between train station and retail core, and has a long stretch of underutilised waterfront.**

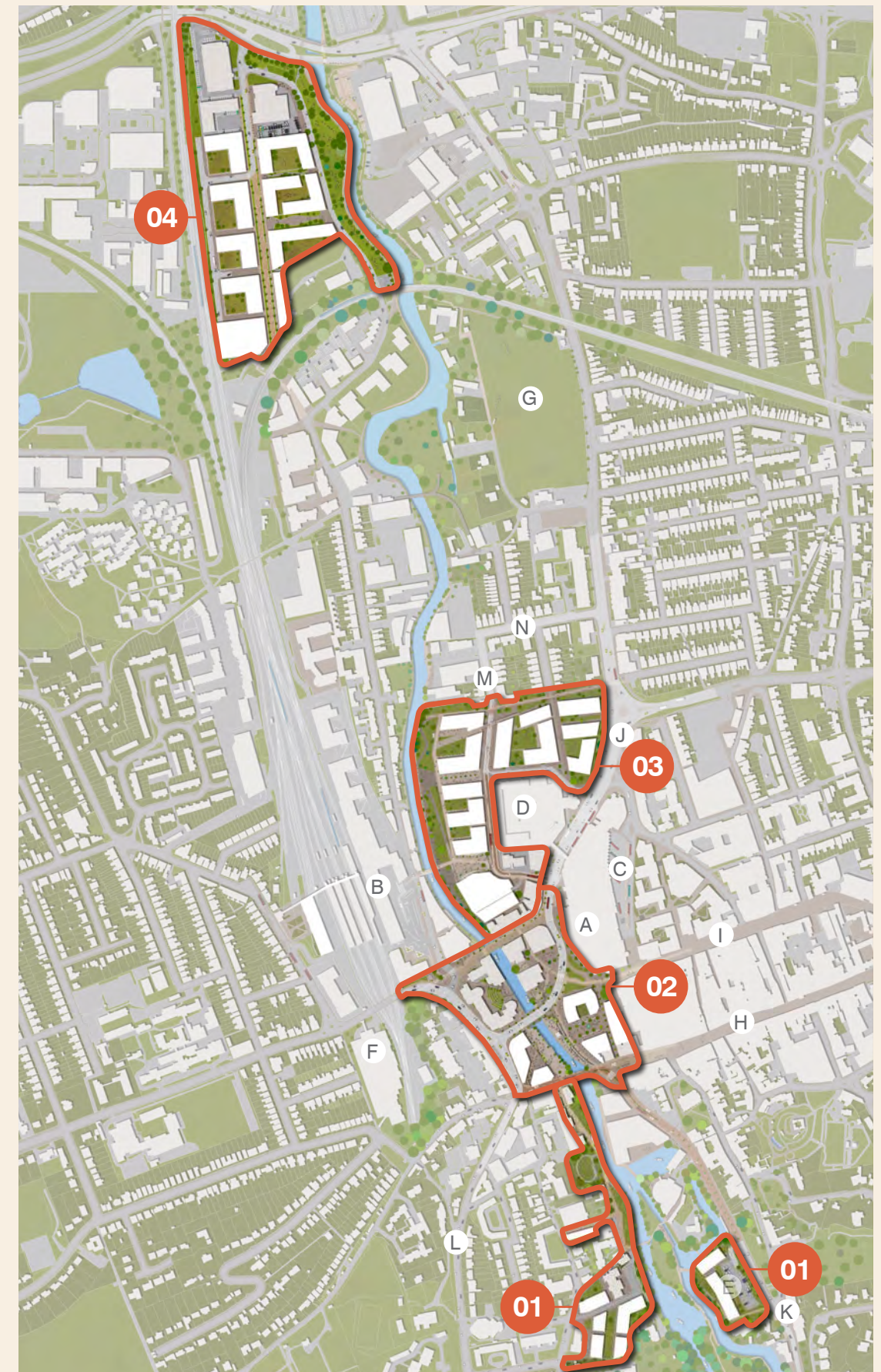
The area includes Bedford Road and Mary Road surface car parks, the Odeon, Courts and the Constabulary headquarters. It is bounded by the residential blocks on Mary and Margaret Roads to the North, Onslow Street and Bedford Road Multi-Storey car park to the East, the rear of the commercial units on Bridge Street to the South and the river to the West.

04

**Woodbridge Meadows is characterised by a series of light industrial warehouses, of various states of repair, with a variety of different tenancies and functions.**

The site is bounded by the A25 to the North, river to the East and railway viaduct to the South and West. There is also a Thames Water borehole site to the South.

- A. The Friary
- B. Train Station
- C. Bus Station
- D. Bedford Wharf multi-storey car park
- E. Millbrook car park
- F. Farnham Road car park
- G. Guildford cricket club
- H. High Street
- I. North Street
- J. Onslow Street
- K. Shalford Road meeting Millbrook
- L. Portsmouth Road
- M. Mary Road
- N. Leas Road



The Development Zones

## 4.1 Guildford's GreenWey

At the heart of the regeneration vision, Guildford's GreenWey will be a green linear oasis alongside the River Wey offering peace and tranquillity away from the hustle and bustle of the busy streets.

Connecting the four development zones, the River Wey is the heart of Guildford town centre. It has been valuable for trade and has supported a network of industries, whilst the gold sands of its banks gave the town its name. However, the river has been obscured and undervalued for many years, but will become the focus of Guildford's GreenWey linking a thriving,

dynamic series of public spaces connecting the town from North to South. It will be designed as a "living system" supporting biodiversity and will link existing communities to new green parks, civic squares, gardens, play spaces, pocket parks, picnic areas, recreational activities and provide protection from the ever increasing threat of flood.

Urban riverside 'Greenways' have been created as part of regeneration programmes in many towns and cities in the UK and overseas:



Rewilding towns and cities



Lea Valley, London, UK



Philosophers Walk, Kyoto, Japan



The Highline, New York, USA



A birds-eye view of the proposed Guildford GreenWey

## 4.2.1 Millmead and Millbrook - Existing

The existing environment is characterised by the river and beautiful green space. But there are opportunities to significantly improve the area for the benefit of the whole community.

Acting as the link between the retail core and the green spaces to the South, the development zone has the potential to pull greenery, biodiversity and nature all the way into Guildford's centre. Converting asphalt to lush greenery at the water's edge, while facilitating flood defences forms the cornerstone of the strategy on the Western bank.

### The development zone includes:

- 1 Millmead House
- 2 Millmead car park
- 3 Millbrook car park

### Aims for this area include:

- New pedestrian & cycle routes, connecting the town centre to the green spaces towards Shalford and beyond,
- Biodiversity and green space with a new town centre park,
- Waterfront public realm,
- Additional public parking at Millbrook,
- High quality waterfront homes.

### Opportunities

- Improve the pedestrian route along the river,
- Ensure the quality of the public realm is improved to enhance and support the existing context of the area,
- Improve connections with the existing residential streets for walking, cycling and driving,
- Improve the pedestrian connections from this area to the High Street and North Street,
- Improve the consistency of the quality of the public realm along the rivers edge,
- A suitable location, subject to flood risk

considerations, for new waterfront homes in an existing residential area,

- Consider the case for the relocation of existing civic functions at Millmead House,
- Consider the expansion of Millbrook car park with an additional deck to support the aims of creating a healthier environment in the town centre.

### Constraints

- Millbrook car park is in Flood Zone 3,
- Buildings lack a clear relationship with streets and spaces, with a variety of orientations which produces an inconsistent and ill-defined public realm,
- Listed buildings must be protected and their setting enhanced,
- The topography of the area presents some attractive views along the riverfront, especially looking South from Town Bridge,
- Protecting views to and from the riverside.

**Millmead plot area 1.05 hectares**  
**Millbrook plot area 0.76 hectares**



The existing plan of Millmead and Millbrook, from Millmead house in the South to Town Bridge in the North

## 4.2.2

# Millmead and Millbrook - Proposed Movement & Public Space

As a part of Guildford's GreenWey, connections into High Street can be vastly improved on both sides of the river. North of the car park, Millbrook is bus and access only, allowing wide pavements and a cycleway all the way to the High Street, with buses crossing Town Bridge.

**Millmead car park becomes a green park, pulling the natural environment into the centre of Guildford. New and upgraded paths and cycleways connect into Town Wharf via a number of potential new bridges. Millbrook has an additional deck of parking with rooftop gardens to improve the view from Quarry Street. Millbrook becomes calmed, with a 'park and walk' strategy used to capture Northbound traffic via Shalford Road in Millbrook car park.**

Through traffic from the South is proposed to cross the River Wey at Broadford Bridge and drive North via Portsmouth Road. It therefore does not get stuck in the gyratory system which currently blights the centre of town. It also allows the dual carriageway to be removed north of Town Bridge connecting the historic core to the riverside.

### Specific strategies include:

#### For pedestrian movement:

- ① A Shared pedestrian and bike path from Town Bridge to the river crossing.
- ①A A potential riverside walking and cycling connection all the way to Godalming.
- ①B Restoring pedestrian access across the Weir.
- ② Options for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge to Millbrook from Millmead Lock.
- ③ A potential pedestrian bridge connection to St Mary's Wharf from the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre.

#### Pedestrianisation of existing roadways:

- ④ North of Millbrook car park, Millbrook is converted to bus and access only road leading to High Street.
- ⑤ Millmead is pedestrianised, while maintaining service access to The White House pub in the North.

### New and improved green spaces:

- ⑥ Millmead car park is converted to a new green park, with seating, biodiversity, moorings and landing spots for activities on the river. This edges the pedestrianised Millmead providing a cycle route into the town centre and an improved path along the waterfront. Flood defences are incorporated into the landscape.
- ⑦ A new path and cycleway runs along a landscaped bund concealing the flood defences at Millbrook, with all existing trees maintained.

### Public transport links:

- ⑧ Bus access is maintained to and from the town centre via Millbrook and over Town Bridge turning right onto Portsmouth Road and onto the bus station.

### Vehicle movement and roads:

- ⑨ A new road passes through the existing Millmead House site, providing access to the new development and the private residence to the South, and connecting with Dagley Lane to Shalford.
- ⑩ Shalford. A new link is created to Bury Fields, allowing Millmead to be pedestrianised to maximise the potential of its waterfront setting.

In collaboration with Guildford Borough Council, Millmead house is proposed to be converted to homes and gardens, of appropriate scale and proportions with the stunning locale.

Millbrook car park is an integral part of the transport network to capture town centre traffic. Therefore up to 40% additional spaces are provided and the pedestrian route to High Street is vastly improved. There is potential for another P&R towards Shalford.



The proposed plan of Millmead and Millbrook, from Millmead house in the South to Town Bridge in the North

## 4.2.3

# Millmead and Millbrook - Proposed Uses and Character

Paths and cycleways meander through new and revitalised parks between the High Street and the green spaces of Shalford to the South, with new homes and supporting infrastructure for the town.

**At Millbrook, the car park can provide up to approximately 40% more spaces to support visitors from the South of the town and up to 90 new homes, along with landscape and paths along the GreenWey. New bridges link Millbrook to Town Wharf via the Yvonne Arnaud theatre and St Mary's Wharf.**

There are quality green spaces within this area, leading South along Dagley Lane, a traffic-free green route from Guildford Rowing Club leading all the way to Shalford. Significant numbers of trees also exist along the river. The existing environment will be supported and enhanced by converting the riverside boundary of Millbrook car park will into a green park for pedestrian and cycle movement. The top of the car park will be heavily planted and replace the existing car park with a lush green space when viewed from Quarry Street.

**At Millmead there are new green parks along the waterfront, providing shared paths, cycleways, seating, play space and access to the River Wey. The new flood defences protect existing homes and are concealed in the landscaping of the parks. Up to 150 waterfront homes can also potentially be provided.**

There are buildings of real character in the area and its surroundings, including historic buildings along Bury Fields, Bellairs Playhouse, the old town mill, as well as more modern public structures such as Yvonne Arnaud theatre. The homes along Quarry Street overlook Millbrook car park and the new St Mary's Wharf residential development (pending planning)

will be a key component of the area. Proposed new buildings respect the local scale and character, and have been developed in line with the policy protected views, ensuring they fit in with the existing historic urban grain.

A set of buildings would replace the Millmead House offices (whilst retaining the listed building) and are broken up by green spaces to provide a more appropriate scale of development that reflects the character of the Southern edge of Millmead.

**Overleaf is a concept vision, informed by the studies as to what Bedford Wharf could look like.**

**To the right** is a view from within Millmead car park currently. Millmead house lies beyond the existing homes on the right hand side, while the car park dominates the foreground next to the river. The footbridge over to Millmead Lock lies to the left of the image.



The current view from Millmead car park looking South.



#### The view from Millmead car park.

The car park is transformed into a lush green space, befitting the natural environment of the river and lock. Paths meander through biodiverse green spaces, which conceal the flood defences. The existing roads are pedestrianised, providing cycleways into the town. Millmead House is transformed into a contextually appropriate series of homes and gardens. Over the bridge to Millmead Lock and beyond, the paths and cycleways lead to Millbrook car park, where new homes sit behind the existing mature trees. Here flood defences are also concealed into green landscaping.

## 4.3.1 Town Wharf - Existing

Characterised by the concrete collar of the gyratory, Town Wharf represents the key opportunity to create the new Heart of Guildford.

The train station is separated from the retail core of the town by the concrete collar of the gyratory. There is the opportunity to unshackle the road network to enable High Street and North street to engage with the river, create new public spaces and to protect the centre of town from the devastating impact of flood.

### The development zone includes:

- 1 Friary Court
- 2 Friary Street East
- 3 Portsmouth Road Car Park

### Aims for this area include:

- A new town square on both sides of the river forming a new focal point and Heart for Guildford,
- Connecting North Street and High Street to the river,
- Facilitating a highways solution which creates a healthier town centre,
- A transformed pedestrian public realm,
- Bring arts and culture venues into the centre of town,
- Create vibrant waterfront cafés and restaurants,
- Revitalise the retail offer and support existing businesses,
- Provide high quality, town centre homes above.

### Opportunities

- Redevelopment of the North Street site & the bus station provides the potential for a pedestrianised North Street,
- Guildford High Street is of national historic importance, with 10 grade I and grade II\* Listed Buildings,
- There is scope for a comprehensive public realm

project to help lift the quality along North Street, Friary Street and connecting to the river,

- Enhance and look for ways to signpost the connections to the High Street, supporting the businesses along these connections,
- Transform the quality of the public realm at the waterfront,
- Improve the relationship of the high street with the river,
- Unshackle the gyratory to create a healthier town centre,
- Improve walking and cycling to and from the town centre.

### Constraints

- Onslow Street and the gyratory system form a barrier to the river and create a negative setting and poor quality public realm,
- The topography of High Street and North Street presents attractive views of the landscape beyond the town which should be protected,
- Listed buildings should be protected and their setting enhanced,
- Areas of the site are in flood zone 3,
- Friary Court and Millbrook are a major blockage to waterfront access from High Street and North Street,
- Friary Court is owned by a third party so a partnership arrangement would have to be pursued,
- Utilities running under the roads network restrict available area for development.

**Plot area: 2.36 hectares**



The existing plan of Town Wharf, from Town Bridge in the South to Bridge Street in the North

## 4.3.2

# Town Wharf - Proposed Movement and Public Spaces

The town centre is transformed from a concrete collar restricting Guildford, to the exemplar historic, waterfront town centre it deserves. With seamless access to the GreenWey from North Street and High Street, the loop is complete, providing places and spaces for residents and visitors to rest, recuperate, activate and enjoy.

**The concrete collar of the gyratory is unshackled allowing the historic core to seamlessly engage with the waterfront. Flood defences, incorporated into terraced civic space protects the centre of town from the devastating impact of flood on both sides of the river.**

### Movement Pedestrian

- 1 The existing Millbrook dual carriageway is transformed into a pedestrianised waterfront square. This creates a loop with High Street and North Street on the waterfront, as well as connecting under Friary Bridge to the Electric Theatre and marketplace forecourt.
- 2 Portsmouth Road Car Park is transformed into a public square with an improved path and cycleway along the River, linking under Friary Bridge on the waterfront.
- 3 A new large crossing over Onslow Street connects the Electric Theatre forecourt to the pedestrianised North Street.

### Pedestrianisation

- 4 Bridge Street is pedestrianised with a cycle lane up to the Walnut Tree Close turning, connecting the train station into the town centre more seamlessly.
- 5 The Eastern end of North street is decluttered and pedestrianised and has gardens as a buffer next to Onslow Street as well as a large pedestrian crossing over to the Electric Theatre forecourt.
- 6 Millbrook is bus and access-only shared space North of the St Mary's Wharf access road.

### Public Space

- 7 A new, three sided Guildford Town Square is formed providing the central square that a town with the history of Guildford deserves. Terracing down to the waterfront provides places to sit, with green zones and conceals the flood defences protecting the centre of town. West facing waterfront dining and socialising space activates the square.
- 8 Portsmouth Road car park becomes a new town centre garden space, with green landscaping that conceals the flood defences, and terrace up to the Portsmouth Road development zone, housing new arts and cultural offers.
- 9 The Electric Theatre forecourt is transformed into an outdoor marketplace.

### Public Transport

- 10 Bus access only over Town Bridge.

### Vehicle

- 11 The town is liberated from traffic blight by forming a two way road across the river, segregated from the pedestrian public realm with new planting and trees.



The concept masterplan of Town Wharf

## 4.3.3

# Town Wharf - Proposed Uses and Character

Forming the natural heart to Guildford, Town Wharf represents the new civic town square historic Guildford has always deserved.

**On Town Wharf East is Guildford's brand new Town Square, providing a focus for public functions, celebrations and gatherings, which terraces down to the waterfront where people can sit and watch the activities on the river. Active frontages provide up to 110,000 square foot of retail, dining and leisure opportunities facing West to the waterfront and on to the square, as well as a revitalised retail offer along Friary Street. Experiential retail also provides a new offer in the centre of Guildford. Above this active ground floor plane, the development envisages green rooftops and up to 280 new town centre homes.**

On Town Wharf West another square incorporating natural planting provides lush public gardens with places to dwell in the centre of town. Arts and culture venues face on to the square giving Guildford a place for local heritage and the arts, as well as a new view to the castle. Flood defences protecting the centre of town are incorporated into the public realm and terracing.

The road system is transformed and reduced to promote a healthy and connected town centre environment and provide direct, uninterrupted pedestrian links to the River Wey from High Street and North Street. A new cycle hub at Portsmouth Road connects into the national cycle network to encourage active travel into the town centre.

A new open market area is created on the Electric Theatre forecourt, connected to North Street via a large pedestrian crossing over the reduced width of

Onslow Street.

Town Wharf integrates public space, flood protection and sustainable transport benefits using the existing roadways and structures, futureproofs infrastructure, complies with existing planning policy, and is supported by economic development analysis, bringing together all the thinking from the project team.

The major stakeholders involved in the area have been engaged, namely Surrey County Council on the highways issues, as well as private stakeholders.

**Overleaf is a concept vision, informed by the studies as to what Town Wharf could look like.**

**To the right** is a birds-eye view of Town Wharf currently, taken from over Friary Street and looking West. Friary Court is in the foreground, with Portsmouth Road Car Park beyond the River Wey. St Nicolas Parish Church is to the left, and Friary Bridge to the right.





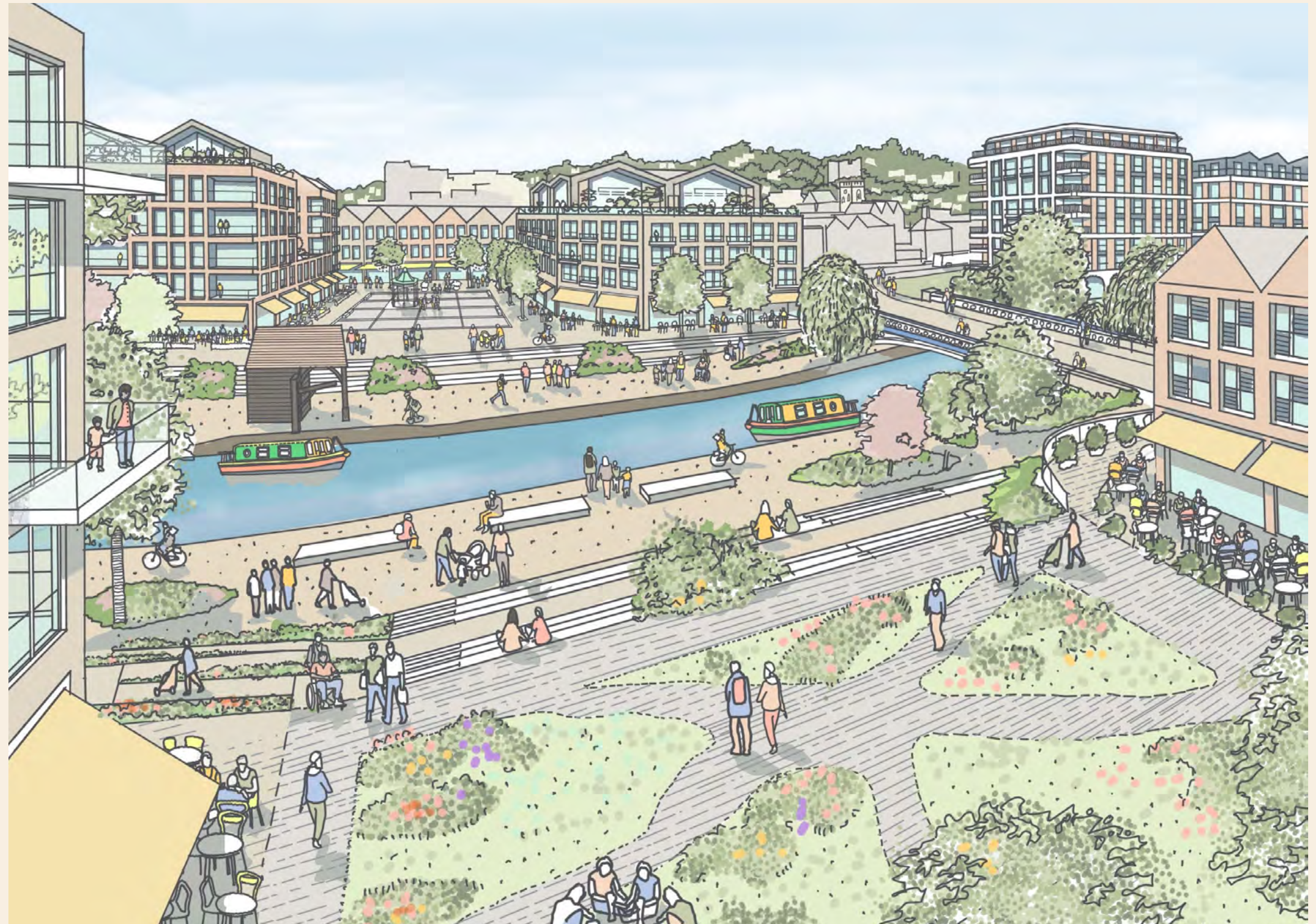
**The view from Friary Street looking west.** Here, you are looking down onto Guildford's new Town Square, which would become the town's focal point for events and gatherings. Behind you is Friary Street which links to High Street and North Street. The Square has a vibrant ground floor with places for performance, trees and seating. A terrace of steps, seating and landscape conceals flood defences and leads you down to the riverfront where the listed structure is retained. Homes overlook the square and river. Opposite is the transformation of the Portsmouth Road car park, and you can see St Nicolas Parish Church, new housing and public spaces.

## 4.3.4 Town Wharf - Proposed Uses and Character

### **The view from above Town Wharf West.**

Here, you are looking down onto the new landscaped square at Town Wharf West with the Town Bridge to your right. A terrace of stairs, seating and landscape, concealing the flood defences lead you down to the riverside walkway. On the ground floor are cultural, commercial and catering venues, with residential above looking towards the castle and town centre. Across the river is the new Town Square and bandstand, with a variety of ground floor uses and overlooked by homes. Behind Town Bridge is the proposed St Mary's Wharf residential development.

**Below** is the existing view of Town Wharf currently, taken from over Portsmouth Road and looking East. There is Portsmouth Road Car Park in the foreground, the River Wey running from left to right underneath Town Bridge. The Friary Court office block juts out over the 4-lane Millbrook highway, with their service yards concealed behind a high brick wall.



Town Wharf West looking towards Town Wharf East.

## 4.4.1 Bedford Wharf - Existing

A disjointed sense of place characterises the existing Bedford Wharf area. It has huge potential to both support the retail core and interact with the beautiful natural environment of the River Wey for the benefit of the entire town.

**These spaces accommodate paths and cycleways from Bridge Street leading to the north, as well as from the train station to the retail core across the new Walnut Tree Bridge.**

### The development zone includes:

- 1 Bedford Road surface car park,
- 2 Odeon,
- 3 The Crown Court,
- 4 Mary Road car park,
- 5 The Magistrates Court,
- 6 Constabulary headquarters.

### Aims for this area include:

- A new waterfront park, connecting to the improved towpath route from North to South,
- A redefined, accessible, waterfront public realm,
- Community facilities & services, including doctors, dentists and nursery,
- An arrival square from the train station via Walnut Tree Bridge,
- Significant new areas for biodiversity,
- A relocated cinema with a new waterfront hotel,
- A relocated, modern combined courts building,
- Office and innovation campus,
- High quality, town centre homes.

### Opportunities

- Improve the pedestrian route over the river towards the train station from the town centre,
- Plan for the gradual redevelopment of the zone through a co-ordinated and incremental strategy to intensify the area with a mixed-use neighbourhood,
- Maximise active commercial uses including leisure and entertainment on ground floors along key

routes,

- Improve the pedestrian route along the river,
- Ensure the quality of the public realm is improved and co-ordinated with the wider masterplan, especially south to Town Wharf,
- Improve the routes to the north of the study area, connecting with the existing residential streetscape,
- To protect existing homes and businesses from flood.

### Constraints

- A number of different uses and stakeholders currently reside on the site,
- There is a poor quality environment and lack of activity along Onslow Street at the back of the Friary Centre,
- Much of the site is in Flood Zone 3A or 3B,
- Buildings lack any clear relationship with streets or spaces, with inconsistent orientation and inactive frontages.

**Plot area: 4.726 Hectares**



The existing plan of Bedford Wharf, from Bridge Street in the South to Leas Road in the North

## 4.4.2

# Bedford Wharf - Proposed Movement, Parks and Squares

A key connector between the historic retail core, train station and communities to the North and West, Bedford Wharf creates a delightful arrival point into Guildford from the railway station, with the new GreenWey linear park in the heart of Guildford.

**Around the GreenWey a wide mix of uses support the town centre with new homes, jobs, community and service spaces, both for the existing population and the new neighbourhood communities. Bedford Wharf is a true example of a modern 15-minute-neighbourhood with great connections to its surrounding neighbours and the wider town.**

In collaboration with stakeholders on the site, existing uses of Bedford Wharf can be relocated and retained on site, allowing this hugely important location within Guildford town centre to fully realise its regeneration potential.

### Movement Pedestrian

- 1 New riverside footpaths and cycleways along the green park from Bridge Street to the North,
- 2 A new East to West boulevard park connects to the existing communities on the East of Woodbridge Road,
- 3 New link to the train station from the town centre using the newly built Walnut Tree Bridge, through a new public square to the pedestrian-priority, restricted access Bedford Road,
- 4 A raised boardwalk sits above the flood defences which are incorporated into the landscaped bund of the waterfront park,
- 4A A terrace of steps conceals the flood defences, leading down to the waterfront.
- 5 Future extension of the riverside walk will be encouraged as developers bring forward sites.

### Pedestrianisation

- 6 Bedford Road is pedestrian-priority, restricted access up to Laundry Road, providing an improved pedestrian link from the Train Station to town centre. This also links to the pedestrianised Bridge Street.

- 7 A pedestrian priority shared space provides restricted (out of hours) service access to the new developments and active pedestrian public realm.

### Public Space

- 8 The new Bedford Wharf square provides a grand arrival into Guildford from the railway station, with active frontages, terrace steps and seating down to the water's edge,
- 9 The GreenWey linear park is a major key feature and provides a new green lung for Guildford. A park that both provides places for locals to play, dwell, eat and pause, and also facilitates North to South movement from Bridge Street on to Dapdune Wharf, the University, to Ladymead and beyond,
- 10 An East to West boulevard provides a green finger reaching from the river to Woodbridge Road, providing improved access to the river.
- 11 A series of semi-private gardens also link the different spaces together and provide a variety of functions depending on the surrounding uses, from office lunch spaces, to a meeting place for parents picking up their children from nursery.

### Public Transport

- 12 Potential access for buses along Bedford Road if extra capacity is required for the town,
- 13 Potential for new bus stands along Onslow Street.

### Vehicle

- 14 The existing route via Leas Road to Mary Road is used to access and service the development sites, Bedford Road multi-storey car park, as well as the new public parking in undercrofts under the new developments. Vehicles exit out via Laundry Road, forming a loop with Onslow Street. A number of alternative vehicle access options have been developed for the site.



The concept masterplan of Bedford Wharf

## 4.4.3 Bedford Wharf - Proposed Uses and Character

Guildford's front garden, Bedford Wharf, is envisioned as a green and blue oasis with a waterfront linear park, leading to a sequence of delightful gardens, play spaces, pocket parks and a new civic square.

**Up to 3.15 acres of new waterfront parkland provides a proper setting to the existing mature trees. New native planting, play spaces, seating, a performance space and community gardens provide a front garden for the residents of Guildford at the water's edge.**

New paths and cycleways cut north to south through the parkland, with a boardwalk above the flood defences providing a dry route with access down to the park via a landscaped green bund.

A new square resides on the route from the train station via the new Walnut Tree Bridge to the town centre. Facing on to this square is an active ground floor with signature waterfront hotel, cinema, convenience store and restaurant.

A new community neighbourhood hub provides a large medical centre facility, as well as nursery and dentist surgery. An office district faces on to Woodbridge Road, providing up to 250,000 square feet of space for all scales of business. Start-ups can use the innovation hub, facing on to green public realm. While big business can take dedicated grade A office space in highly sustainable new buildings.

In partnership with the courts, the Crown and Magistrates' facilities are incorporated into a multi-level building. Likewise the cinema is over two levels, unlocking valuable waterfront real estate. Up to 1,000 new waterfront homes can be accommodated across the site, with associated supporting retail, services and food and beverage offers. The existing surface public parking is relocated

in ground floor undercrofts, protected by the new flood defences.

Bedford Wharf integrates public space, flood protection, sustainable transport benefits using the existing roadways, futureproofs infrastructure, complies with existing planning policy, and is supported by economic development analysis, bringing together all the thinking from the project team.

The major stakeholders involved in the area have been engaged, namely Surrey County Council, the Courts and the Constabulary.

**Overleaf is a concept vision, informed by the studies as to what Bedford Wharf could look like.**

**To the right is a view of Bedford Wharf currently.** Low scale, large footprint buildings sit next to surface car parks and turn their back on the riverside. Along the river's edge are mature trees and a patch of disused grass.





**The view from above Bedford Road surface car park looking north.**

You are looking down onto Bedford Wharf Square with the terrace of steps and seats leading down to the waterfront and the newly built Walnut Tree Bridge leading to the railway station. A boardwalk recedes into the distance and conceals the flood defences. The major new green park runs along the riverfront and is overlooked by new housing. The protected space behind the flood defence and under the housing is used for car parking.

## 4.5.1 Woodbridge Meadows - Existing

A grassy area provides pleasant paths along the waterfront, while most of the site has a mix of light industrial sheds, of various states of repair.

Over time, the site will be regenerated and will maintain the current amount of employment space. Existing employment uses on the site will be modernised to create flexible, environmentally friendly and futureproofed ground floor space. A pedestrianised public realm connects the buildings to the waterfront park, which connects into the town centre via improved paths and cycleways for both existing residents in the North and East of the borough and the new neighbourhood to enjoy.

Existing major tenants are retained and supported with new facilities and a range of scales of business can occupy the new, environmentally friendly campus.

### The development zone includes:

- 1 Woodbridge Meadows East, including the Royal Mail site,
- 2 Woodbridge Meadows West.

### Aims for this area include:

- Improved pedestrian and cycle routes,
- Biodiversity and functional green space,
- A pedestrian-friendly environment and shared spaces,
- Modern, efficient employment facilities to replace the existing low density and piecemeal warehouse units,
- Provide new community facilities and services,
- New homes above, within a 15 minute walk to the train station,

### Opportunities

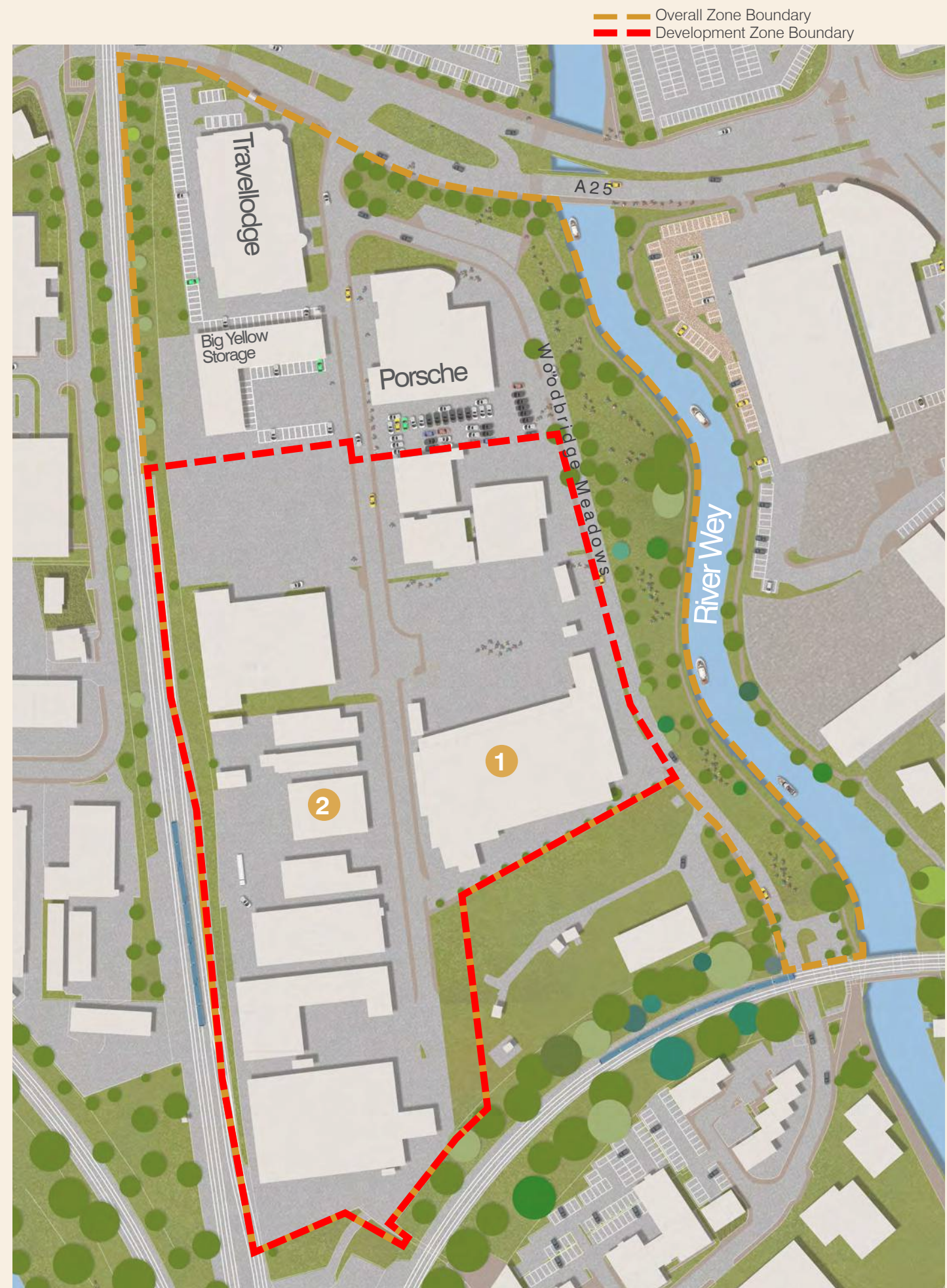
- Improve the landscape and amenity value at Woodbridge Meadows,

- Explore the potential for a new pedestrian connection south from Woodbridge Meadows through the railway viaduct,
- Plan for the gradual redevelopment of this area from piecemeal light industrial use to a mixed use employment village with residential development through a co-ordinated and incremental strategy,
- Consider the longer views to the cathedral at points within the site,
- Improve the pedestrian and cycle routes along the river banks to the north,
- The existing uses represent a low density, inefficient use of land within a 15 minute walk to train station,
- Guildford Borough Council owns the freehold of the entire site.

### Constraints

- A small portion of the South-East is in flood zone 3A and 3B,
- The zone is bounded on two sides by the railway embankment and viaduct, which lies above the general level of site,
- The A25 bounds the zone to the north, carrying heavy flows of traffic on wide carriageways detrimentally impacting the context for pedestrians,
- Access to the zone is relatively constrained due to the railway and river,
- The area is constrained by multiple leaseholds and tenants.

**Plot area: 6.31 Hectares**



The existing plan of Woodbridge Meadows, from the railway viaduct in the South to the A25 in the North

## 4.5.2

# Woodbridge Meadows - Proposed Movement and Public Space

Linking communities from the North of the town into the paths and cycleways along The GreenWey, while providing play spaces and activities on the river.

**A separation of light industrial space from public realm allows for an urban village neighbourhood to be created, providing jobs, homes and community values in a super-eco environment.**

### Movement Pedestrian

- ① An upgraded towpath provides cycleways from Ladymead all the way into to the town centre,
- ② A new towpath is also provided on the Eastern side of the river via a new connection through the railway viaduct and into Dapdune Wharf to the South.

### Pedestrianisation

- ③ Woodbridge Meadows is pedestrian-priority with time-limited access only for essential services. It is transformed into an active space which leads South, and potentially links through the existing railway viaduct and on to Walnut Tree Close (3A). The space becomes a live / work active boulevard with new green spaces, places to sit, rest, work and meet,
- ③A A potential new pedestrian connection using the existing path through the railway viaduct.

### Green Space

- ④ The waterfront park is upgraded as part of the GreenWey to provide a variety of different functions such as play spaces and closer interaction with activities on river,
- ⑤ A new village centre supporting the neighbourhood with associated convenience retail,
- ⑥ Trees, planters and seating all transform the roadway into a beautiful place to walk, work and relax,

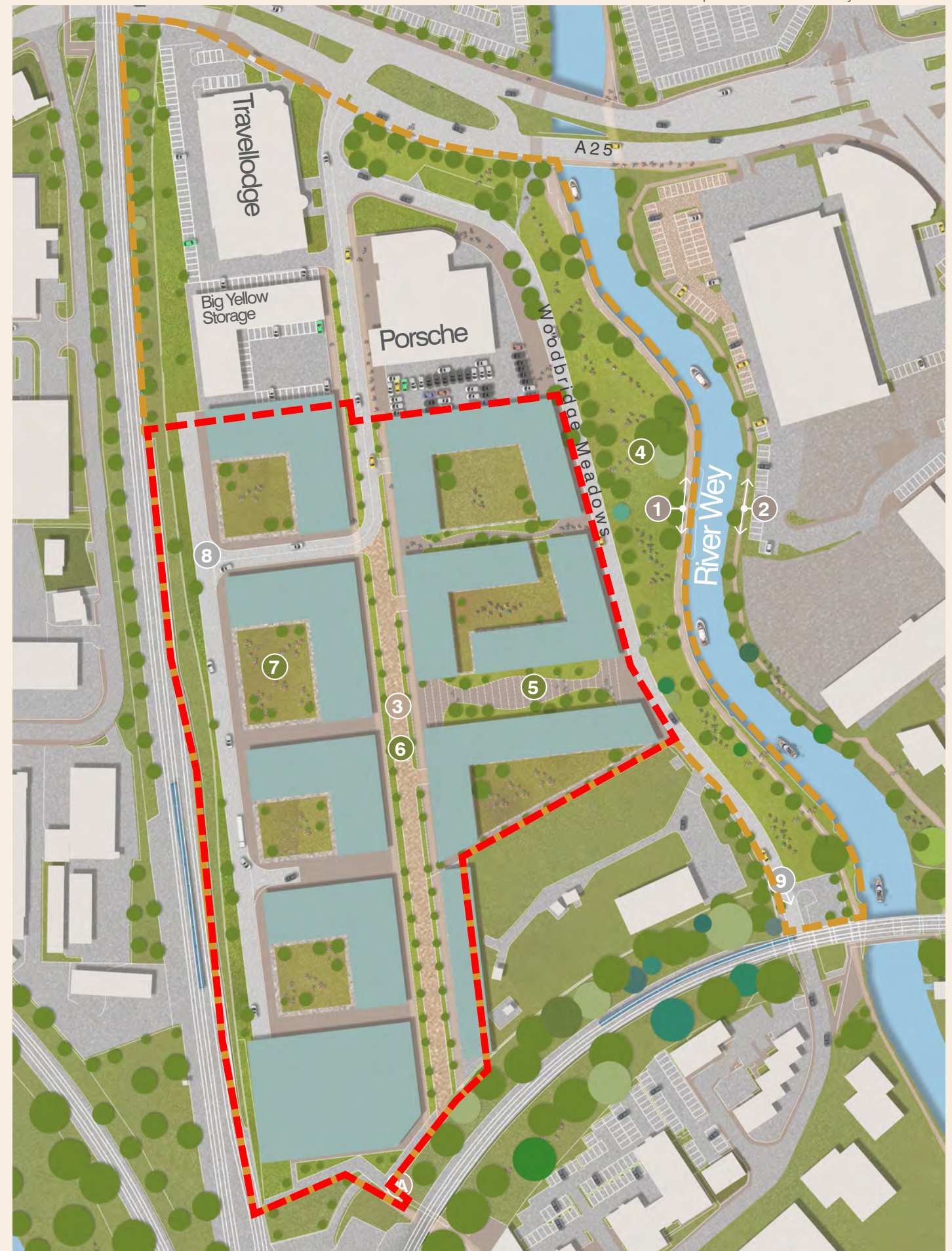
- ⑦ A series of lush podium gardens for residents.

### Vehicle

- ⑧ Heavy duty industrial access is shifted away from the central, pedestrianised boulevard to adjacent to the railway with turning, parking and service provision,
- ⑨ The existing road infrastructure is left in place, with a modal filter to prevent Northbound car journeys via Walnut Tree Close to prevent rat running.

There are no flood defences required in this area.

- - - - - Approximate location of flood defence line
- Proposed Buildings
- Overall Zone Boundary
- Development Zone Boundary



The concept masterplan of Woodbridge Meadows

## 4.5.3

# Woodbridge Meadows - Uses and Character

A new eco-employment village providing homes, jobs, community and green spaces supporting Guildford, a 15 minute walk from the train station.

**Woodbridge Meadows represents the opportunity to create a new eco-employment village, re-providing up to 120,000 square feet of strategic employment space and up to 20,000 square feet of new workshop and incubator space for a variety of business types, all within a 15 minute walk along the GreenWay to the train station along upgraded riverside paths and cycleways.**

The park stretches along the length of the riverside, providing leisure activities and access to the activities on the water. Green fingers are pulled through the site providing green links between buildings to a pedestrian priority shared space on the existing roadway as well as improved walking and cycle paths on both sides of the river.

As well as employment space, a new community hub with a nursery, medical facilities and dentists faces on to the pedestrian shared space at the heart of the village.

Homes and jobs are key cornerstones of Guildford Borough Council's Corporate Plan, and Woodbridge Meadows represents a key opportunity to provide up to 900 new homes, along with supporting amenities, convenience retail and food and beverage offers. Buildings along the waterside park will respect the scale and significance of the riverside, and rise as they get towards the railway tracks.

Woodbridge Meadows integrates public space, sustainable transport benefits using the existing roadways, futureproofs infrastructure, complies with existing planning policy, and is supported by economic development analysis, bringing together all the thinking from the project team.

**Overleaf is a concept vision, informed by the studies as to what Bedford Wharf could look like.**

**To the right is a view of Woodbridge Meadows currently.** Taken from above the railway viaduct and looking north-west, the river runs through the centre, with the grassy areas adjacent to the Woodbridge Meadows road. Beyond these a series of low-rise, light industrial sheds straddle the no-through section of Woodbridge Meadows roadway.





**The view from the railway viaduct at Woodbridge Meadows, looking North.**

A concept vision, informed by the studies as to what Town Wharf could look like. Walking and cycling routes are on both sides of the river, the riverside park provides great local amenity, to be enjoyed by the workplaces and residents on-site as well as the surrounding communities.

# 4.6.1 Outcomes

“A green, thriving town and villages where people have the homes they need, access to quality employment, with strong and safe communities that come together to support those needing help.”

Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025.

Up to 60,000ft<sup>2</sup> new workshop/incubator space.

60,000ft<sup>2</sup>



Up to 2,600 new homes including 40% affordable homes.

2,600



Up to 40,000ft<sup>2</sup> new F&B and retail space.

40,000ft<sup>2</sup>



Up to 100,000ft<sup>2</sup> reprovided F&B and retail space.

100,000ft<sup>2</sup>



Up to 250,000ft<sup>2</sup> office space in the new CBD.

250,000ft<sup>2</sup>



Up to 120,000ft<sup>2</sup> reprovided strategic employment space.

120,000ft<sup>2</sup>



# 4.6.2 Outcomes

“We want our county’s economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on it’s location and natural assets and where communities feel supported and people are able to support each other.”

Surrey County Council Community Vision for Surrey by 2030

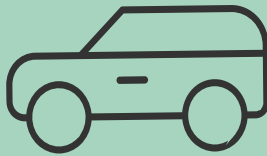


Up to 65,000ft² new amenity & community space, including medical centres, nurseries, dentists, doctors, education facilities etc.

65,000ft²



Reduction in air pollution in the centre of town, providing a healthier town centre. Guildford is currently the 6th most congested large urban area in the UK, costing the economy £44 million.



Protecting the town from the devastating effects of flood.



Create a healthier town centre for the Residents of Guildford, including opportunities for biodiversity and wilding and over 6.2 acres of new green and blue space.

6.2 acres





# 5.0 Delivery Plan

# 5.0 Delivery Plan

## Introduction

Guildford Borough Council are developing a robust strategy that can deliver the transformational regeneration outcomes for the Shaping Guildford's Future (SGF) programme based on similar principles as adopted for Weyside Urban Village project. The SGF programme comprises Strategic Infrastructure and a series of Development Zones in which the Council has significant freehold interest.

The principal Stakeholders for the Strategic Infrastructure to support the masterplan vision are Surrey County Council, the Environment Agency, and National Trust. A number of the Development Zones also have key occupational/freehold stakeholders, and the Council has received positive responses to presentations and discussions.

## JLL Competitive Positioning

JLL undertook a Competitive Positioning study in 2021 which assessed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the town which has now been updated. The updated analysis supports the identified potential uses and the objectives of the masterplan.

## Delivery Principles

The principal delivery strategy for the project is regeneration that enables value to be derived through intensification of land use from the Development Zones, with the uplift being utilised to partly offset the cost of a significant amount of strategic infrastructure costs, including:

- Flood defences,
- Transportation transformation,
- Placemaking and public realm,
- Health, well-being, and social value initiatives,
- Sustainability initiatives including biodiversity, net zero carbon, renewable energy, etc,
- Utilities and drainage network.

The expectation is that the quantum of strategic infrastructure improvement required will not be

fundable through the uplift in land values created by the Development Zones alone, and hence grant funding will be required to deliver transformational regeneration.

It is proposed that Guildford Borough Council undertake the role of Enabler for Strategic Infrastructure and Development Zones. This approach gives the Council control over the delivery of both Strategic Infrastructure and Development Zones such that the aspirations of the Council can be assured to be delivered in a controlled and timely manner.

In the enabling role the Council will procure the private sector to deliver the development zones either with adjacent/special landowners, or by selection of private sector delivery partners.

## Financial Model

Commercial analysis has been a core component of the masterplan from inception, including the uses for sites, spatial demand and needs of the town.

Modelling has been undertaken for each of the development zones to determine viability of proposals and their consequential deliverability.

Feasibility level evaluation of each of the uses in respect of value and construction cost have been undertaken as applicable, allowing for a suitable return to be made by the private developer partners. These appraisals include allowances for planning agreements (S106) and have been modelled for residential based on Local Plan policy compliance. Similarly, the cost of all Strategic Infrastructure has been assessed in respect of its construction cost.

Feasibility analysis demonstrates that all Development Zones are marginally viable. As land receipts will not be sufficient to cover the funding of the Strategic Infrastructure work, as anticipated, grant will be required to make the whole regeneration proposals deliverable.

A mix of funding sources may be from but not limited to:

- Planning Agreement (s106),
- Central Government Infrastructure Grant,
- Local Enterprise Funds,
- Surrey County Council transport funding,
- National Highways transport funding,
- One Estate funding,
- PWLB loans,
- Environment Agency.

The financial case assessment in the Strategic Outline Case (SoC) and Outline Business Case (OBC) will evaluate the concept masterplan including the range of expected financial implications and ranges of funding required and will be prepared in stage 3.

## Delivery Structure

Over the period of the project, Guildford Borough Council will allocate a suitably qualified and resourced team with the appropriate experience for delivery of the enabling role. It is envisaged that this team will be supported by ongoing engagement of professional advisors and will report into the Council management team.

# 5.1

## Next Steps - Stage 3 Scope and Roadmap

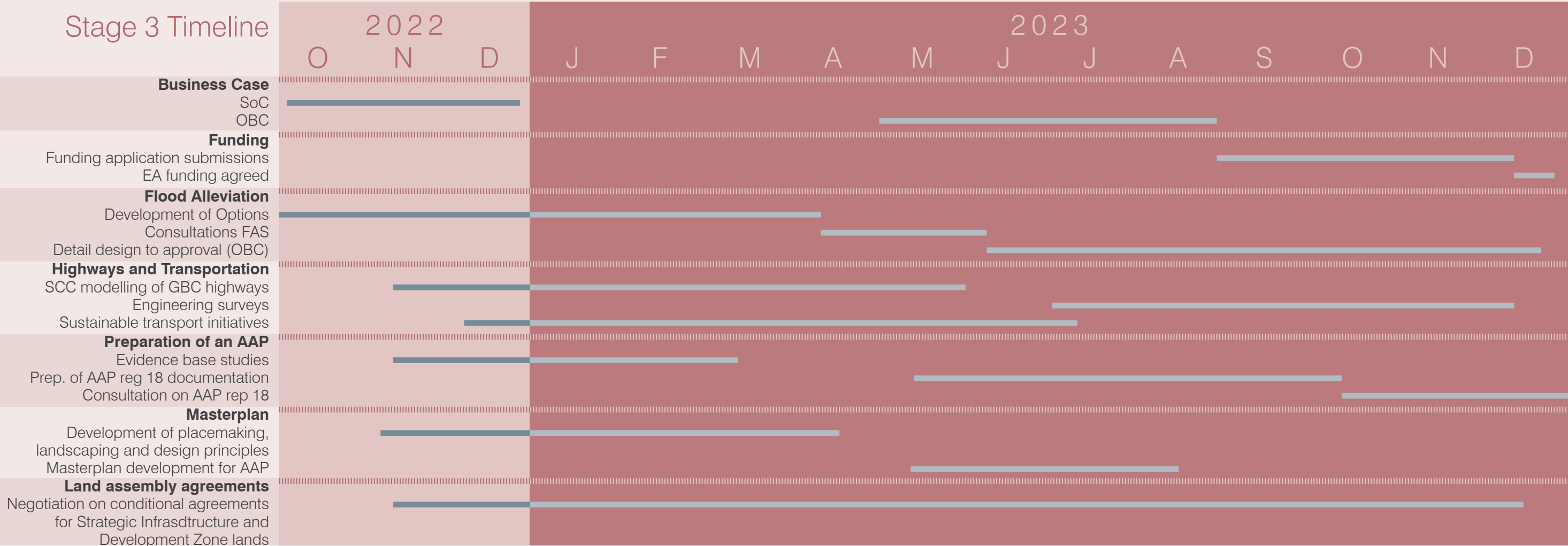
**Approval was given to a 3 stage programme to define the project and secure grant funding in May 2020.**

Approval to proceed with stage 3 is sought from the Executive on 22nd September 2022.

**Stage 3 October 2022 to December 2023:**

- Procure and progress evidence base studies to evaluate extent and support an Area Action Plan,

- Development of an Strategic Outline Case (SoC) and Outline Business Case as the basis for Grant Applications,
- Sourcing, application and securing of Grant funding to support the established Shaping Guildford's Future programme financial shortfall,
- Progress an Area Action Plan (AAP) through the Council's Planning Team,
- Further development of regional traffic modelling and negotiation for 'in-principle agreements' with Highways England and Surrey County Council,
- Development of flood defence solutions with Environment Agency to their Outline Business Case stage,
- Preparation of a Sustainability Strategy for stakeholder consultation to support Masterplan and AAP,
- Progress of agreements for purchase or relocation with principle landowning stakeholders,
- Development of Masterplan to support AAP, Landowner and Infrastructure Agreements.





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