



TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2022

MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN

Purpose of report: To update members about progress in preparing the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Introduction:

1. Surrey County Council (SCC) in its capacity as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (MWPA) has a statutory duty to maintain an up-to-date development framework in respect of minerals and waste management development.
2. At present this framework comprises the Surrey Waste Local Plan 2020; Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy 2011; Surrey Primary Aggregates Development Plan Document (DPD) 2011; Surrey Minerals Site Restoration Supplementary Planning Document 2011; and Aggregates Recycling Joint DPD 2013.
3. Planning applications for minerals and waste management development in the county must by law be determined in accordance with these policy documents and any other material planning considerations e.g., the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). Surrey's 11 district and borough councils must also have regard to these policy documents in making their local development plans and planning decisions.
4. In November 2020 SCC's Cabinet resolved to begin the preparation of the county's first joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) to address, amongst other matters, the growing overlap between minerals and waste management development, and particularly the positive role recycling can play in conserving and keeping primary materials in use for as long as possible to prevent waste.
5. In November 2021 the MWPA commenced the first formal stage of this plan-preparation process which comprised an Issues and Options public consultation exercise.
6. Accordingly, this report seeks to update members about the Issues and Options public consultation and related progress in preparing the MWLP. In this regard it should be noted that although the public consultation generated a modest

response from stakeholders, officers employed a hybrid approach to stakeholder engagement which provided for additional feedback from a representative sample of residents via commissioned market research.

Issues and Options Public Consultation

7. The first of several formal stages of preparing a local development plan document is prescribed by Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It requires that the MWPA formally notify a range of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders about SCC's intention to prepare a local development plan document and invite their representations about what that document ought to include. Such representations must be taken into account by the MWPA in preparing the relevant local development plan document.
8. Accordingly, in November 2021 the MWPA launched an extended 16-week Issues and Options public consultation to: (a) formally notify statutory and non-statutory stakeholders of SCC's intention to prepare the MWLP; and (b) scope challenges and opportunities and find out what is important to stakeholders relevant to future minerals and waste management development in the county.
9. The Issues and Options public consultation commenced on 15 November 2021 and closed on 7 March 2022.

Pre-Consultation Engagement

10. Prior to commencement of the Issues and Options consultation and in preparing the relevant consultation material officers engaged with stakeholders as follows:
 - Between January 2021 and November 2021, provided regular updates about the consultation to local and regional technical forums e.g., Surrey's Planning Working Group and South East England Aggregates Working Party.
 - In March 2021, updated the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee Sub-Group about the timetable for the preparation of the MWLP and preliminary work done in respect of the Issues and Options consultation. At this time the member engagement strategy for the preparation of the MWLP was agreed.
 - In April 2021, met with representatives of the Weald Action Group (following a specific request from this organisation) to discuss the purpose, scope, and range of the Issues and Options public consultation and answered any questions they had in this regard particularly in respect of oil and gas development.

- Between June and July 2021, invited officers from Surrey’s 11 Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to individual meetings to discuss the purpose, scope, and range of the Issues and Options consultation and answer their questions in relation to their plan-areas. Officers met with colleagues from Mole Valley District Council; Runnymede Borough Council; Spelthorne Borough Council; Tandridge District Council; and Waverley Borough Council. At this time, open invitations to discuss the preparation of the MWLP at any time over the course of the plan-making period were also extended to LPAs and local members.
 - Between August and September 2021, sought technical and professional feedback from SCC’s own Environment, Transport and Infrastructure (ETI) officers about the draft Issues and Options consultation material prior to it being finalised for publication.
 - In September 2021, briefed members at an all-member development seminar about the purpose, scope, and range of the Issues and Options consultation.
 - In September 2021, briefed the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure about the purpose, scope, and range of the Issues and Options consultation.
11. In October 2021, the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet, then authorised the launch of the Issues and Options public consultation.

Consultation Material

12. The material published by the MWPA as part of the Issues and Options public consultation included:
- Introductory and contextual information about minerals and waste management development in England and SCC’s statutory obligations in this regard particularly in respect of plan-making and the Issues and Options public consultation.
 - A draft vision and 13-strategic objectives for future minerals and waste management development in Surrey.
 - A draft spatial strategy for future minerals and waste management development in Surrey.
 - Information about the issues and challenges facing future minerals and waste management development in Surrey (and the wider region) and the potential policy options/approaches to address the same. These

issues/challenges and policy options/approaches were grouped and presented in three distinct documents – Aggregates, Minerals and Infrastructure; Protecting the Green Belt, Environment and Communities; and Waste Management.

- Several position statements relating to climate change, biodiversity net gain, the circular economy, minerals and waste management safeguarding, and SCC's obligations pursuant to the 'Duty to Cooperate'.
 - A Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Scoping Report.
 - An Equalities Impact Assessment.
 - Other material including an interactive story-map and animated video.
13. The consultation also involved a 'call for sites' exercise which comprised an invitation to landowners and the minerals and waste management industry to nominate any land in Surrey that may be suitable for future minerals or waste management development. However, it is important to note that neither the public consultation nor consultation material included or otherwise proposed to identify or allocate any land for minerals and waste management development.
14. The material published as part of the public consultation was necessarily technical, lengthy, and strategic in nature, but was designed to be:
- Accessible to all stakeholders irrespective of their technical knowledge, abilities, and resources available to them. It was drafted in plain English and did not include unnecessary jargon and technical detail; and organised to easily allow stakeholder navigation based on their particular interest.
 - Informative and stimulating with clear links to topical issues that are relevant to and have a direct impact on all stakeholders such as climate change and the decline in biodiversity.
 - Meaningful with clearly presented policy options/approaches and discussion points to encourage stakeholder engagement and provision of constructive feedback and input to the plan-preparation process.

Publicity

15. In launching the Issues and Options public consultation, the MWPA notified over 650 stakeholders in writing, and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure wrote to members and Surrey's Members of Parliament to notify them of the same and to ask them to help promote the consultation.

16. Additionally, the consultation was widely publicised over the course of the 16-week consultation period by way of:

- Posters at prominent countryside locations across Surrey (e.g. Newlands Corner and Wisley Common).
- Posters at 12 public libraries across Surrey (e.g. Reigate Library and Addlestone Library).
- SCC's website and social media (Facebook and Twitter) including targeted social media advertisements aimed at groups of people who don't generally engage with planning consultations (e.g. females, young people and individuals from ethnic minority communities).
- An email signature graphic and digital link attached to emails of ETI officers.
- A YouTube video commissioned by the MWPA about minerals and waste management development in Surrey and the consultation.
- SCC's digital publications (Surrey News and Surrey Matters).
- Digital and physical press advertisements in the Woking News and Mail, Surrey Advertiser, Surrey Mirror, and Guildford Dragon.

Stakeholder Engagement

17. Stakeholders for the purposes of preparing the MWLP include a broad and extensive range of organisations and individuals including:

- The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Surrey LPAs.
- Other LPAs and MWPAs.
- Surrey Parish Councils.
- The Environment Agency.
- Natural England.
- Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Board.
- Surrey Wildlife Trust.
- The County Highway Authority.

- Surrey's elected members.
 - Surrey residents.
 - Surrey neighbourhood planning groups, resident associations, amenity societies, and special interest groups.
 - The minerals and waste management industry including representative bodies such as the Minerals Products Association and Environmental Services Association.
 - Regional technical forums such as the South East England Aggregate Working Party and the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group.
 - Local technical and strategic forums such as Surrey's Planning Working Group, the Surrey Planning Officer Association, and the Surrey Future Steering Board.
18. In line with the Government's agenda to digitise the planning system, the Issues and Options public consultation was presented to stakeholders on a digital consultation platform which facilitated:
- On-line engagement with the public consultation as an alternative to traditional methods (e.g. inspecting documents and making representation in writing).
 - Provision of information and data in a more digestible format and offering stakeholders the option to consume information important to them and delve into varying levels of detail based on their interest and expertise.
 - Visible and transparent stakeholder digital participation information and data.
 - The use of SCC social media channels and ETI email links to advertise the public consultation.
 - Publicity about the public consultation in digital publications such as the Guildford Dragon and Surrey Matters.
 - A link to a YouTube video commissioned by the MWPA about minerals and waste management development in Surrey and the public consultation.
 - The provision of an interactive story-map based on SCC's real-time Geographical Information System (GIS).

- An accessibility menu to cater for a diverse range of stakeholder needs including those relating to neurodiversity, dyslexia, and impaired vision.
 - A 'latest news' facility which connects stakeholders with updates about the Issues and Options public consultation, preparation of the MWLP, and notifications and details about related events in the community.
19. For stakeholders without ready access to digital means of engaging, physical hardcopies of the Issues and Options consultation material was made available at 12 public libraries throughout Surrey (and at Quadrant Court) for the duration of the public consultation and stakeholders were afforded the opportunity of providing feedback or making representations in writing (email and/or letter). In this regard, and for the purposes of flexibility, the MWPA continued to accept written feedback and representations from stakeholders for a reasonable period (some 10-days) beyond the close of the public consultation.
20. Over the relevant 16-week period, the Issues and Options public consultation attracted:
- Just over 150 written representations (emails and letters).
 - 21 minerals and/or waste site nominations made pursuant to the call for sites exercise.
 - Over 2,350 visitors to the digital consultation platform with 205 contributions to proposed policy options/approaches and 208 subscriptions to relevant plan-making updates.
 - Over 334,000 targeted and organic social media impressions with 582 clicks.
 - Over 230 YouTube video views.
21. Additionally, to engage directly and in person with Surrey's residents (and other stakeholders) about the Issues and Options public consultation, officers held a series of advertised drop-in events at public libraries in February and March 2022. Stakeholders were invited to attend the relevant libraries to meet officers and find out more about the public consultation and minerals and waste management development in general. These day-long events were held at Farnham Library; Reigate Library; Guildford Library; and Addlestone Library. Over the 4 events some 28 individuals (residents, former elected members, mineral operators, and representatives of resident associations) attended to engage with officers. Officers also engaged with many residents who happened to be visiting their library on the same day and were interested in land-use planning and environmental matters more generally.

22. During the consultation period, officers also provided written briefings and offered and arranged meetings with stakeholders who were unable to attend the advertised drop-in events at public libraries or simply wished to find out more about the public consultation and minerals and waste management development in Surrey e.g., Surrey Planning Officers Association, Shakleford Parish Council, Greener Godalming, and some residents.
23. Alongside digital and traditional engagement activities, the MWPA commissioned Lake Market Research to conduct qualitative research and gather informed, in-depth feedback from Surrey residents about the vision and 13-strategic objectives proposed in the Issues and Options public consultation. This comprised two deliberative, virtual focus group workshops held with 53 residents in March 2022. The information collected from these exercises is intended to complement other consultation outputs and provide additional insight from a representative resident audience who do not typically engage in consultation exercises undertaken by the MWPA.

Emerging Themes

24. Some of the key themes emerging from stakeholder feedback and representations provided in response of the Issues and Options public consultation are summarised in the table below. It should however be noted that detailed analysis of stakeholder contributions is yet to be completed. Once this has been done, the MWPA will publish this analysis in an Issues and Options consultation summary report in the Summer (2022):

TABLE 1: Summary of themes emerging from the Issues and Options public consultation

General Topic Area	Emerging Themes
Ensuring a steady and adequate supply of minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some stakeholders appear to be concerned about influence of Government’s planning requirements relating to the supply of minerals (including oil and gas) and associated infrastructure (such as underground gas storage) and how such requirements may shape the MWLP. These stakeholders favour an approach that is best for Surrey where possible. • Stakeholders appear to place significant weight on the restoration of mineral workings as soon as possible and to a high standard tailored to local context and providing a viable after-use that enhances the local environment. • Some stakeholders are concerned about extensions to previously approved timetables for working and restoration, and

	<p>the monitoring and enforcement of planning conditions and legal agreements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is a demonstrable need, stakeholders appear to prefer extending existing mineral workings (where appropriate) over establishing new sites. However, there is seemingly general recognition that minerals can only be worked where they are found and an extension-only approach may not maintain supply or meet regional needs. • Some stakeholders appear to favour an approach which maximises recycling and use of recycled aggregates over extracting primary aggregates in the interests of sustainability. Others warn of the overreliance on recycled aggregate to replace land-won sand and gravel. • Stakeholders appear to acknowledge the challenges associated with increasing or providing new rail and wharf capacity to encourage transport of minerals by rail or water instead of by road. • Some stakeholders favour a policy approach that encourages the relocation of Woking Rail Aggregates Depot (in Woking town centre) to a more suitable location. • Some stakeholders appear to be concerned about the working of agricultural land in the context of the need for food security/production.
<p>Providing sufficient facilities to manage Surrey's waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders appear to recognise the need for Surrey to take responsibility for the sustainable management of its own waste and that sufficient facilities should be provided in this regard. • Stakeholders appear to favour extension/improvement of existing waste management facilities over the provision of new sites unless there is an overriding demonstrable need and full regard has been given to any environmental and amenity impacts. However, others advocate a flexible approach to serve growth and take account of waste types/technologies/markets, or the rigid provision of new facilities on brownfield land only, or the provision of new facilities in rural locations away from population centres. • Some stakeholders consider that adaption to a more circular / zero waste economy will be essential to meeting net zero carbon goals. • Some stakeholders want to see more permanent aggregate recycling facilities to provide certainty for developers and facilitate investment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport of waste by rail or water where possible appears to be favoured by stakeholders over road transport; but they also recognise the challenges associated with increasing or providing new rail or wharf capacity. • Some stakeholders are concerned about wastewater capacity in the context of increasing discharges to rivers. • Managing waste in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy appears to be important to stakeholders particularly preventing waste and minimising waste disposal. • Some stakeholders want to see ambitious targets for waste prevention and recycling in the county and want this to be made as easy as possible for industry and residents to achieve. • Stakeholders want to see careful consideration of and fuller justification for how much and what waste will need to be managed in Surrey over the plan-period (2024/2025 to 2039/2040).
Metropolitan Green Belt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders appear to place significant weight on the protection of Surrey’s Green Belt. • Some stakeholders recognise the need for Green Belt policy to be updated to provide clear guidance relating to ‘inappropriate development’ vis a vis minerals and waste management development. • Some stakeholders do not wish to see any development in the Green Belt, whilst others recognise the extent of the Green Belt in Surrey and balancing this with the competing demands for suitable land and need for sufficient sustainable waste management facilities. • Some stakeholders do not seem to understand the spatial purpose of the Green Belt and (incorrectly) attribute nature conservation/value/quality to the designation.
Minerals and waste safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders recognise the importance of safeguarding some mineral resources and infrastructure, and existing waste management facilities and future sites that may be suitable for strategic facilities but acknowledge the challenges of doing so particularly in respect of the growing need for other types of development such as housing. • Some stakeholders consider the ‘agent of change’ principle particularly important to minerals and waste safeguarding. • Some stakeholders consider it necessary to safeguard mineral resources within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural

	<p>Beauty (AONB) from other development regardless of whether those resources will be worked within the relevant plan-period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders want to see a rigorous and evidence-based approach to safeguarding particularly in respect of mineral resources.
Protecting communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders consider the health and wellbeing of residents to be critical and appear to welcome the MWPA's commitment to protecting and enhancing the health and amenity of residents, business and visitors. Some stakeholders are concerned about the impacts of mineral working in proximity to sensitive receptors (housing, schools etc.) particularly in respect of flooding, air quality, birdstrike, and road safety. Some stakeholders emphasise a direct link between the quality of Surrey's natural environment with their health and wellbeing. Flooding is a real concern to some stakeholders, particularly in the north-west of the county where sharp sand and gravel quarries continue to be located and other development pressures continue to be high. Some stakeholders want more meaningful engagement more often and a greater say about planning decisions and plan-making. Unsurprisingly, there appears to be some confusion and misunderstanding amongst some stakeholders about the various and specific regulatory roles of differing organisations in the context of minerals and waste management land-use planning (e.g. Environment Agency, Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, North Sea Transition Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Local Planning Authority, Waste Disposal Authority, Health and Safety Executive, and Waste Collection Authority).
Protecting and enhancing the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders appear to favour an approach that provides for clear plan linkages with other plans and strategies relating to Surrey's environment and infrastructure (e.g. such as Biodiversity Action Plans, AONB Management Plans, Rights of Way Improvement Plans, other green infrastructure strategies, Local Transport Plans, and Nature Recovery Networks). More than one stakeholder (particularly residents) wants to see a stronger stance on the impact of mineral working on Surrey's environment and communities particularly in respect of flooding and pollution (water, ground, air) and are calling for a prohibition

	<p>of mineral workings within 1,000-metre radius of sensitive receptors (housing, schools etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some stakeholders appear to be concerned about development pressure (including minerals and waste management development) and its effect on the quality of Surrey's environment particularly in the north-west of the county. • Some stakeholders consider that minerals can be successfully worked in and close to sensitive receptors, nationally and locally designated landscape, ecological and historic sites, where mitigation is embedded into the design of the development and benefits are secured through restoration and proportional long-term management. • Some stakeholders do not consider that the MWPA has given adequate consideration to the protection of horse riders, ramblers, and the county's rights of way network. • Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is welcomed by stakeholders but are concerned about how this is to be delivered, measured, monitored, and enforced. • Some stakeholders are resistant to the idea of the MWPA requiring more than the minimum of 10 per cent BNG for minerals development as advocated by the Surrey Nature Partnership who are proposing a minimum of 20 per cent BNG. Others appear to consider the provision of more than 10 per cent BNG necessary to halt the decline in Surrey's biodiversity and enhance its environment. • Stakeholders consider restoration of mineral workings to present a real opportunity for innovation and to protect and enhance Surrey's environment; however, some are cynical about delivery of any material benefits. • Some stakeholders are concerned about the effects of climate change and appear to want minerals and waste management development to maximise opportunities for adapting to and mitigating associated impacts. In this context they also appear to be concerned about the Government's continued approach to development in general and planning for hydrocarbon development (oil and gas) specifically. • Biodiversity off-setting appears to be frowned upon by some stakeholders. They would want to see any enhancement provided in Surrey, rather than elsewhere, to compensate for the impacts of development in the county.
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25. A selection of non-representative comments made by stakeholders in response to the Issues and Options consultation is provided at Annex 1, Non-Representative Stakeholder Comments.

Moving Forward

26. At present, officers are collating and analysing the Issues and Options consultation outputs arising from the various engagement activities discussed in the preceding paragraphs. These organisation and assessment exercises are necessary for the purposes of:
- Preparing and publishing an Issues and Options consultation summary report relating to the public consultation.
 - Informing the preparation of a stakeholder communication and engagement strategy relevant to the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation.
 - Informing the preparation of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation material and the draft MWLP including the proposed vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy, and policies.
27. The next formal stage in preparing the MWLP will be the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation which is also prescribed by Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. As set out in SCC's Minerals and Waste Development Scheme dated May 2022 (MWDS), this public consultation is set to take place in June 2023.
28. The Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation will involve the MWPA seeking the views of stakeholders about the preferred vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy, and policies to address the MWPA's statutory plan-making obligations and the key issues relevant to future minerals and waste management development in Surrey. These preferred options will be developed by officers having regard to stakeholder feedback received in response to the Issues and Options public consultation.
29. The Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation will also necessarily include proposed sites or areas of land to be identified or otherwise allocated or safeguarded for future minerals and waste management development in the county. In this regard, stakeholders will also be invited to provide feedback and representations about these proposed sites or areas of land.
30. The Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation will be underpinned by a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which will also take account of any relevant material feedback received during the Issues and Options public consultation. Additionally, the draft MWLP will need to be supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment relating to any mineral and

waste sites identified as being suitable for future development, and an Equalities Impact Assessment.

31. Preparation of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation will also include consideration and assessment of, amongst other potential sites and areas of land, all site nominations made by landowners and the minerals and waste management industry in response to the call for sites exercise undertaken as part of the Issues and Options public consultation.
32. There is an extensive range of considered technical assessment and drafting work that officers will also need to undertake in preparing the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation.
33. To accord with the previously approved Member Engagement Strategy and prior to the launch of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation, officers will seek to engage meaningfully with Surrey's LPAs and elected members particularly in respect of any sites or areas of land proposed to be included or otherwise identified in the draft MWLP.
34. As part of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation, and to accord with SCC's Statement of Community Involvement 2019, officers will seek to engage directly with communities (residents, Parish Councils, resident associations etc.) and other stakeholders who may be affected by any sites or areas of land proposed to be included, safeguarded, or otherwise identified as part of the draft MWLP. This engagement work is likely to take the form of advertised on-line and face-to-face meetings and organised community events.

Conclusions:

35. The initial public consultation relating to the preparation of Surrey's first joint-minerals and waste local plan was undertaken between November 2021 and March 2022. The purpose of the Issues and Options public consultation was to formally notify a range of stakeholders of SCC's intention to prepare the MWLP and to find out what is important to them about minerals and waste management development.
36. The public consultation was widely advertised in several ways over 16-weeks and stakeholders were offered the opportunity to engage with the public consultation through traditional and digital channels. Although necessarily technical, broad, and high-level the consultation material was designed to be accessible to a range of stakeholders of varying degrees of interest, knowledge, abilities, and resources.
37. Despite the concerted efforts of officers to advertise the Issues and Options public consultation and meaningfully engage with stakeholders about the same,

the public consultation attracted a modest response. However, officers also commissioned additional research which has provided a representative view of the key points within the consultation, which has helped to ensure that the MWPA has a fuller understanding of the perspective of Surrey's range of communities as a result of this exercise. Overall, feedback received in response to the Issues and Options public consultation appears to be largely constructive and positive and will be helpful in informing the continued preparation of the MWLP. Officers are presently organising and analysing the relevant Issues and Options public consultation outputs with the intention of preparing and publishing an Issues and Options consultation summary report; and informing the preparation of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation.

Recommendations:

38. To note the summary outcomes of the Issues and Options public consultation and progress in preparing the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
39. To seek the views of members about the continued use of commissioned market research to supplement traditional methods of engaging with residents and inform preparation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Next steps:

40. The consultation summary report relating to the Issues and Options public consultation is to be published in the Summer (2022).
41. The next formal stage of preparing the MWLP is the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation which is set to be undertaken in June 2023 in accordance with SCC's Minerals and Waste Development Scheme dated May 2022.

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Sources/background papers

Annex 1 - Non-Representative Stakeholder Comments.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Surrey County Council Statement of Community Involvement 2019.

Officer report - Surrey Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Proposed Member Engagement Strategy; 11 March 2021; Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee Sub-Group.

Surrey County Council Minerals and Waste Development Scheme dated May 2022