

**Press Release**  
**The Guildford Society**

**Legal Challenge Stops Extension of  
Guildford into Green Belt**

5 October 2009

The Guildford Society congratulates Guildford Borough Council on its successful legal challenge to the Government's proposal that it should review the Green Belt. In the Final South East Plan, the Government had required the Council to review the Green Belt in order to open the way for a major urban extension of Guildford beyond Burpham. The Green Belt extension was to have accommodated 2,000 homes by 2026 and allowed for 4,110 by 2031.

Said Chairman, Michael Jeffery, "The Guildford Society congratulates GBC for protecting the countryside around Guildford, that residents so value, and for exposing the flaws in the SE Plan."

The Government has said parts of the SE Plan finalised in May will now need to be reconsidered.

Commented John Baylis, the Society's Chair of Planning, "It is vital to ensure the growth target of 10,000 new dwellings is changed. This number of homes cannot be built in existing residential areas in Guildford. The Inspectors' report into the SE Plan was very clear that major growth without an extension to Guildford would risk town cramming and loss of character.\* This legal victory requires a rethink on how much growth can be accommodated in Guildford without harming the qualities that underpin the success of the town's economy and communities. Pushing ahead with plans to expand Guildford by a third, as proposed in the SE Plan, is not an option."

“We ask GBC to press for a fundamental rethink on the housing allocation for Guildford in the SE Plan with sensible targets, that reflect the constraints on our gap town, and a much greater emphasis on meeting local needs rather than trying to help solve London’s housing shortage by extra building in Guildford.”

ENDS

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Notes:

Guildford is very constrained being a gap town in the Surrey Hills surrounded by not just Green Belt but also Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Protection Area and floodplain. It is very congested with narrow roads that converge to cross the downs.