

Spelthorne New Local Plan 2028-2043

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

September 2026



**SPELTHORNE
STRATEGY & INSIGHT**

future focused, locally shaped

Foreword

The Spelthorne Local Plan will set out the vision, spatial strategy and framework for growth and development within the Borough to 2043. It will identify how future housing, employment, infrastructure, community facilities and environmental objectives will be delivered and will provide the basis for determining planning applications.

Following adoption of the Spelthorne Local Plan in March 2026, the Council committed to an immediate review to ensure that the planning framework remains responsive to changes in national policy, evidence and local circumstances. The emerging Local Plan will replace the adopted plan in due course.

The preparation of the Local Plan is guided by national planning policy and guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026). The Council is also monitoring emerging reforms to the planning system, where relevant.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), is an integral and legally required part of the preparation of Local Plans. The purpose of SA/SEA is to assess the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan and any reasonable alternatives, considering the objectives and geographical scope of the Plan.

The requirement for SA incorporating SEA arises from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The SA/SEA process helps ensure that environmental, social and economic considerations are integrated into plan-making from the outset. Although the Government has indicated a future intention to introduce Environmental Outcomes Reports (EORs) through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, these are not yet in force, and SA/SEA remains the applicable framework for plan-making.

This Final SA/SEA Scoping Report represents the first stage of the appraisal process. The report was subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies between 23 July and 11 September 2026. Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England and have informed the finalisation of the Sustainability Framework and supporting baseline evidence. No response was received from the Environment Agency during the consultation period.

The SA/SEA is an iterative process, informing the preparation of the Local Plan at each stage and ensuring that sustainability considerations are embedded in the development of the spatial strategy and policies.

Consultation formed an important part of the preparation of this Scoping Report. In accordance with the SEA Regulations, the Council consulted the statutory environmental bodies, namely the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, on the scope and content of the report between 23 July and 11 September 2026. Responses received have informed the finalisation of the evidence base and Sustainability Framework and will continue to inform subsequent stages of SA/SEA and Local Plan preparation.

Natural England welcomed the key sustainability issues and objectives identified within the report and recommended additional consideration of ecological connectivity, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and monitoring indicators. Historic England confirmed that the report adequately addresses matters relating to the historic environment and raised no substantive concerns. These comments have been incorporated where appropriate.

If you have any queries or require further information, please contact the Strategic Planning Team on 01784 446405 or email planning.policy@spelthorne.gov.uk

Contents

Foreword	2
1 Introduction & Methodology	7
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	7
The Purpose of SA/SEA	8
The SA/SEA Methodology	9
The five key stages of SA/SEA are set out below.	9
Table 1: Stages of Sustainability Appraisal	9
Table 2: Stage A – Key Tasks	9
Table 3: SEA Directive (Annex I) & Regulations (Schedule 2) Requirements.....	10
The New Spelthorne Local Plan & Relationship with Other Plans	11
Approach to Cooperation	13
Figure 1: Geographic Extent of the Spelthorne Local Plan	14
Figure 2: Extent of the Spelthorne Local Plan in the Wider Geographic Context	15
Data Gaps and Difficulties.....	16
Consultation.....	17
2 Environmental/Sustainability Project Objectives	18
Table 4: Key Environmental/Sustainability Protection Objectives & Key Messages	18
3 Environmental/Sustainability Baseline.....	26
Area description	26
Table 5: Summary of Sustainability/Environmental Baseline	29
Population & Community	36
Table 6: Ethnicity of Spelthorne, Southeast & England Population ⁵	36
Table 7: Age Breakdown of Population ⁵	37
Table 8: Population Density ⁵	37
Figure 3: Deprivation Indices.....	38
Table 9: Crimes per 1,000 Population in authorities adjacent to Spelthorne	39
Figure 4: IMD Crime Rankings ⁸	39
Table 10: Crime Statistics (overall numbers) 2022-2025.....	41
Health & Well-being	41
Table 11: Life Expectancy in Years (from birth) 1991-2024.....	42
Figure 5: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 ..	43
Economy & Employment	44
Table 12: Vacancy Rate within Main Retail Centres.....	45

Transport	47
Figure 6: Method of Travel to Work in Spelthorne (Census, 2021)	48
Table 13: Distance Travelled to Work in Spelthorne ²	48
Material Assets	51
Table 14: Average House Prices in Spelthorne (May 2024)	51
Table 15: Lower Quartile Private Rents (September 2022) - Per Month	51
Table 16: Surrey School Place Planning Forecasts (2025-2035)	53
Table 17: Facilities within a 20-minute walk	54
Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment	56
Table 18: Listed Buildings	57
Figure 7: Historic Features	58
Figure 8: Surrey Character Areas: Spelthorne ⁴⁵	60
Climate	61
Table 19: CO2 emissions from transport in Surrey and authorities adjoining Spelthorne (2023)	62
Figure 9: Risk of Flooding within Spelthorne Borough	64
Biodiversity	65
Table 20: Condition Status of SSSIs in Spelthorne	65
Figure 10: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Green) and SPA/Ramsar Sites (Striped)	66
Figure 11: Priority Habitats (top) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (bottom) in Spelthorne	68
Figure 12: Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in Spelthorne	70
Table 21: Invasive species	70
Table 22: Woodland in Spelthorne	70
Soil and Land	71
Figure 13: Agricultural Land Classification map	72
Water	73
Table 23: Waterbodies in Spelthorne and Status 2019 & 2022	73
Table 24: Air Quality Pollutants and Limits for Human Health	76
Table 25: Results of NO2 Diffusion Tubes (2020-2024)	77
Waste	79
Table 26: Overall Waste Performance in Spelthorne	80
Table 27: Household Recycling Rates by partner authority ⁷¹	80
4 Sustainability Framework	81

Table 28: Summary of Issues/Problems	82
Table 29: Sustainability Framework	85
5 Next Stages	101
Monitoring	101
Appendix A - List of Relevant Plans & Programmes.....	102

1 Introduction & Methodology

Sustainable Development

- 1.1 There are many definitions of sustainable development, however the most common and widely accepted is that adopted by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

- 1.2 Sustainable development remains a fundamental principle underpinning the planning system. In England, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026) makes clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is to be pursued through three overarching and interdependent objectives:
- An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities;
 - An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 1.3 These objectives should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Central to this is the application of a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which underpins both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 1.4 There is an ongoing national and international commitment to achieving sustainable development, including through the land use planning system. Local Plans are the primary mechanism through which sustainable development is delivered at the local level, providing a spatial framework that balances economic growth, social needs and environmental protection.
- 1.5 The Council is also monitoring emerging reforms to national planning policy, and where relevant, these have informed preparation of the evidence base and will continue to be monitored as the Local Plan progresses.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.6 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, local planning authorities are required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for Local Plan

documents. Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic and iterative process which assesses the likely social, economic and environmental effects of a plan to ensure that sustainable development is incorporated into plan-making.

- 1.7 In addition, the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) arises from Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive), as transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The SEA Regulations require that plans which are likely to have significant environmental effects are subject to environmental assessment.
- 1.8 The Spelthorne Local Plan sets the framework for future development consent and is therefore considered likely to give rise to significant effects. As such, the Council has determined that SA incorporating SEA is required. The Government has indicated an intention to introduce Environmental Outcomes Reports (EORs) through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. However, these are not yet in force, and SA incorporating SEA remains the applicable statutory framework for the preparation of Local Plans.
- 1.9 The Borough Council also recognises the need to assess the potential effects of the Local Plan on internationally designated sites of biodiversity importance, including the Southwest London Waterbodies Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar sites. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will therefore be undertaken alongside the preparation of the Local Plan and updated at each relevant stage of plan-making. The HRA will also consider potential effects on other European/international sites where relevant, including those outside the Borough boundary.

The Purpose of SA/SEA

- 1.10 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant social, economic and environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme.
- 1.11 SA/SEA ensures that the preparation of the Local Plan is informed by a systematic and transparent assessment process, enabling sustainability considerations to be integrated into plan-making. This includes the identification and appraisal of reasonable alternatives, which is a key requirement of SA/SEA to ensure that different spatial strategies and policy approaches are robustly considered.
- 1.12 In terms of SEA, the objective of the SEA Directive is:
“to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development” (Article 1).

The SA/SEA Methodology

- 1.13 National guidance and best practice on undertaking SA/SEA is provided through the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and supporting resources such as guidance from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). These advocate a structured approach to appraisal, based on a five-stage process. The SA/SEA process is iterative and runs alongside the preparation of the Local Plan, informing decisions at each stage of plan development and helping to refine options and policies as they emerge.

The five key stages of SA/SEA are set out below.

1.14

Table 1: Stages of Sustainability Appraisal

Stage A	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope
Stage B	Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects
Stage C	Preparing the Sustainability Report (including requirements of SEA)
Stage D	Seek representations on the draft Plan and SA/SEA Report
Stage E	Post adoption reporting and monitoring

This final SA/SEA Scoping Report focuses on Stage A, establishing the baseline evidence and sustainability framework that will be used to assess the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives. The key tasks undertaken at Stage A are set out below.

1.15

Table 2: Stage A – Key Tasks

Stage A1	Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and their sustainability objectives
Stage A2	Collecting baseline information
Stage A3	Identifying Sustainability issues and problems
Stage A4	Developing the SA/SEA objectives and Framework
Stage A5	Consulting on the Scope of the SA/SEA

- 1.16 In order to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, it is necessary to identify how the relevant provisions have been addressed within this report. Table 3 sets out the relationship between the requirements of the SEA Regulations (Schedule 2) and the sections of this scoping report.

Table 3: SEA Directive (Annex I) & Regulations (Schedule 2) Requirements

Information Required for Environmental Reports	Section Addressed
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Section 1 & 2
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 3
The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Section 3
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, specifically those relating to areas of particular environmental importance, such as those designated pursuant to Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).	Section 3
The environmental protection objectives, established at international, national or local level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and environmental considerations have been taken into account	Section 2
The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the inter relationship between these factors	Not applicable at this stage. These matters will be assessed at Gateway 2 (alternatives assessment) and Gateway 3 (preferred options stage), once reasonable alternatives and draft plan options have been developed
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment	Not applicable at this stage. Alternatives will be identified and assessed at Gateway 2 (alternatives assessment). Any difficulties encountered to date are described in Section 1
A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10.	Not applicable at this stage. Monitoring measures will be developed

	following the identification of significant effects at later stages
A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Not applicable at this stage. A Non-Technical Summary will be prepared at later stages once the Environmental Report is fully developed

The New Spelthorne Local Plan & Relationship with Other Plans

- 1.17 The SEA Directive requires the environmental report to include:

‘an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes’.

- 1.18 Spelthorne Borough Council adopted a new Local Plan in March 2026, setting out the spatial strategy for growth and development to 2039/40. Following adoption, the Council committed to an immediate review to ensure that the planning framework remains responsive to changes in national policy, evidence and local circumstances. The emerging Local Plan will:

- Review and update the spatial strategy;
- Respond to updated evidence and national policy;
- Plan for growth and development over a revised plan period to 2043; and
- Replace the adopted 2026 Local Plan in due course.

As with all Local Plans, it will set out:

- The level and distribution of housing and employment growth;
- The provision of infrastructure and services;
- Policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment; and
- Development management policies for determining planning applications.

- 1.19 The emerging Local Plan will draw on:

- The evidence base prepared for the adopted 2026 Local Plan;
- Previous Sustainability Appraisal and SEA work;
- Monitoring data and implementation experience from the adopted plan.

This provides a strong foundation for the Gateway 1 SA/SEA process, allowing:

- Existing baseline information to be updated and refined;
- Key sustainability issues to be reviewed in light of current conditions;

- Continuity in the sustainability framework and objectives.

1.20 The Local Plan is prepared within a wider framework of plans, policies and strategies, including:

- National planning policy (NPPF);
- Environmental legislation and strategies;
- Infrastructure plans and programmes;
- Neighbouring authorities' Local Plans.

These relationships are relevant to the SA/SEA, particularly in identifying:

- Cumulative and in-combination effects;
- Cross-boundary environmental issues;
- Strategic infrastructure and growth patterns.

A review of relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives is provided in Section 2 and Appendix A.

1.21 At Gateway 1 (Scoping stage), the SA/SEA is focused on:

- Establishing the context and scope of the assessment;
- Reviewing existing evidence and baseline conditions;
- Identifying key sustainability issues;
- Understanding relationships with other plans and programmes.

As the plan progresses, the SA/SEA will:

- Assess the likely significant effects of reasonable alternatives and draft policies;
- Consider cumulative effects and cross-boundary impacts;
- Identify measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate adverse effects.

1.22 Under the previous plan-making system, local planning authorities were required to engage under the Duty to Cooperate. However, under the new plan-making system introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, this requirement has been replaced by strengthened expectations to maintain and demonstrate cooperation in plan-making.

The NPPF (2026) includes policies relating to the maintenance and demonstration of cooperation on strategic cross-boundary matters:

- Maintain cooperation by engaging proactively, constructively and on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies on strategic cross-boundary matters; and
- Demonstrate cooperation through clear and proportionate evidence, including:
 - Preparation of Statements of Common Ground where appropriate;
 - Joint evidence base documents;
 - Agreed actions and outcomes;

- Consultation summaries and engagement records.

These requirements apply throughout the plan-making process, from the Scoping Consultation stage through Gateway 1 and subsequent Gateways, ensuring that cross-boundary working is embedded from the outset.

The requirement to maintain and demonstrate cooperation is particularly important for the SA/SEA process, as it ensures that:

- Cross-boundary environmental effects are identified and assessed (e.g. flood risk, air quality, biodiversity networks);
- Cumulative and in-combination effects of development are properly considered;
- Strategic matters such as housing need, infrastructure provision, and environmental constraints are assessed at an appropriate spatial scale;
- The SA/SEA takes account of shared environmental resources and functional geographies, rather than being limited to administrative boundaries.

The identification of strategic cross-boundary matters through the Council's Scoping Statement will directly inform:

- The scope of the SA/SEA baseline and key issues;
- The development of the sustainability framework;
- The assessment of reasonable alternatives at later stages.

Approach to Cooperation

Spelthorne Borough Council will maintain and demonstrate cooperation, and will have regard to any emerging strategic planning arrangements arising from Local Government Reorganisation, through a range of mechanisms, including:

- Ongoing engagement with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies;
- Ongoing engagement with statutory bodies including Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency
- Preparation of Statements of Common Ground on key strategic issues;
- Joint preparation of technical evidence (e.g. housing need, flood risk, infrastructure);
- Participation in cross-boundary partnerships and strategic forums;
- Publication of consultation summaries and engagement records at each Gateway stage.

Statements of Common Ground will be progressed proportionately, focusing initially on higher-risk strategic matters (such as housing need, Green Belt and flood risk), and updated iteratively as the plan progresses.

1.23 Figures 1 and 2 show the geographical extent of the Spelthorne Local Plan.

Figure 1: Geographic Extent of the Spelthorne Local Plan

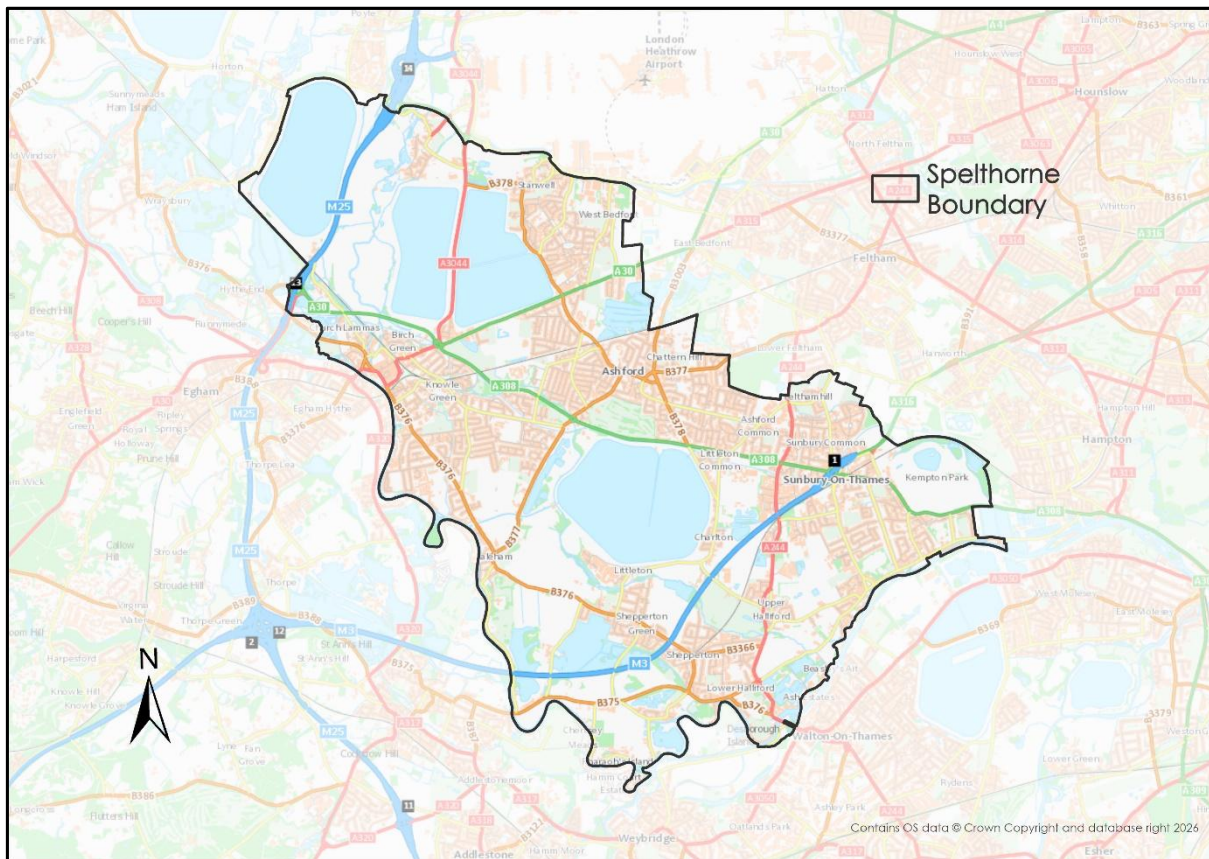
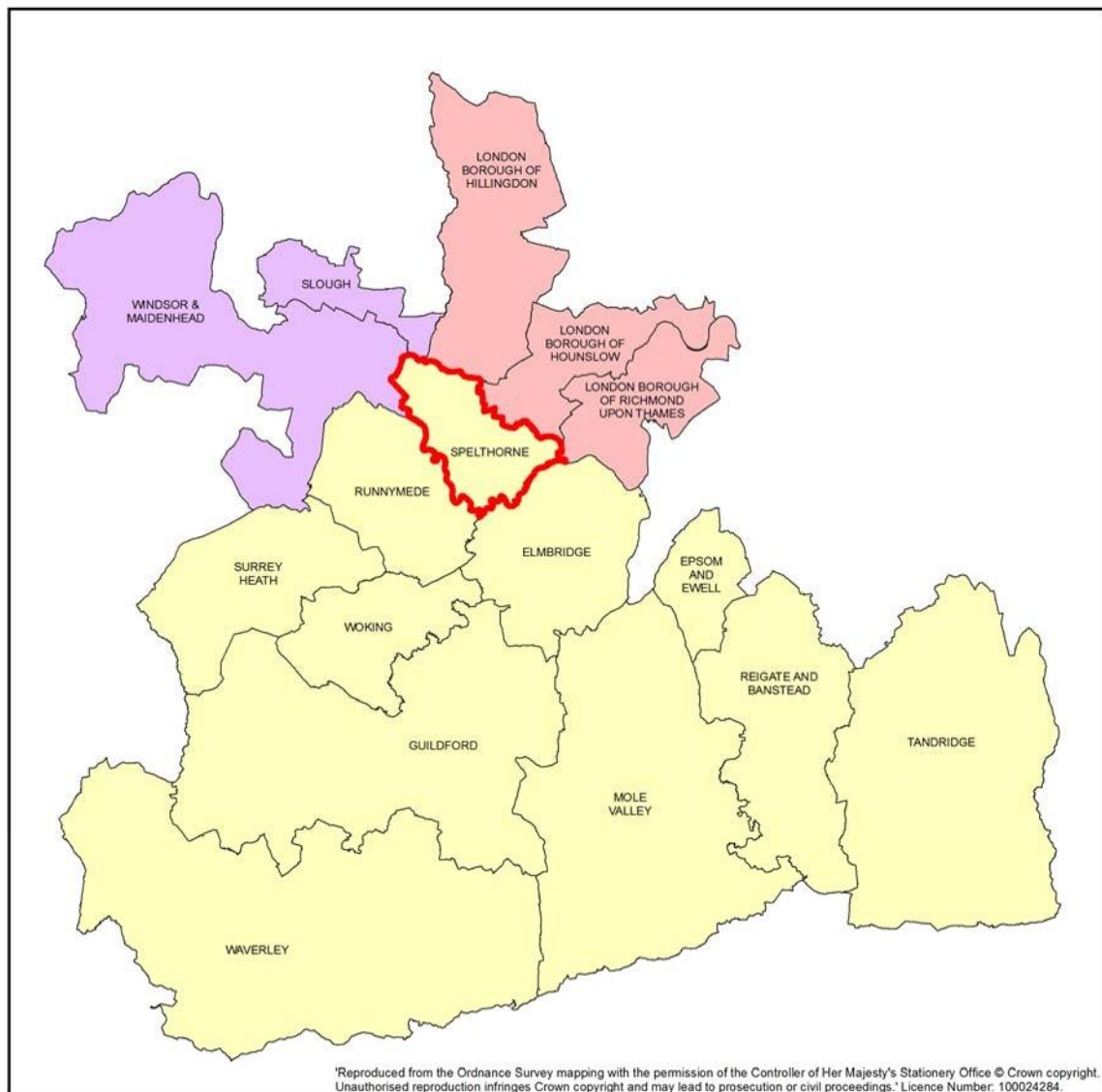


Figure 2: Extent of the Spelthorne Local Plan in the Wider Geographic Context



- 1.24 At the time of preparing this Scoping Report, proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Surrey are being developed, including the potential creation of new unitary authorities. Whilst the outcome and timing of these proposals remain subject to Government decisions, any future changes to local government structures may influence governance arrangements, service delivery responsibilities, evidence preparation and strategic planning relationships relevant to the Local Plan. The SA/SEA process will continue to monitor emerging arrangements and ensure that relevant plans, programmes, evidence and environmental protection objectives are reviewed and updated, where necessary, throughout the plan-making process.

- 1.25 It is important at this stage to clarify the role and purpose of the emerging Local Plan, including what it is expected to address and the limitations of the plan making process.
- 1.26 The Local Plan will establish the overall spatial strategy for development in Spelthorne over the plan period. This will include identifying:
- The scale and distribution of housing and employment development.
 - The infrastructure required to support growth
 - Areas for protection and enhancement
 - Strategic and development management policies against which applications will be determined
- 1.27 Local Plans should set out the sites which will need to be allocated for development over the plan period and identify the type of development expected as well as set out the detailed policies against which individual planning applications will be determined. The Local Plan cannot set strategies or allocate land or guide development outside the geographic scope of the plan area (Figure 1), although it can support and reflect agreed approaches to strategic cross-boundary matters where these have been developed collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies. Further, plans must be strategic in nature so that even in allocating individual sites, it will be for the development management process to consider detailed issues against the plan's policies. This is reflected in the strategic nature of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Data Gaps and Difficulties

- 1.28 Baseline data has been collated and informs the scope of this report and predicted future trends across a range of sustainability criteria in the absence of the plan. Gathering data in this manner relies on other parties and the accuracy of their data collation or data sets. Therefore, the Council does not have complete control over the detail or quality of the majority of baseline data available.
- 1.29 As such, some data collected can only give an indication of the sustainability baseline and trends over a wider geographical scope than the plan area and/or other data collated relates to areas or sustainability topics which sit outside of the geographical scope of the plan but nevertheless could be affected by it.
- 1.30 This includes data on water quality where river or groundwater units cover a larger than Borough area and the condition status of SSSI units which form part of the Southwest London Waterbodies SPA which sit outside of the Borough boundary. Where this occurred, it was assumed that the wider geographical trend would be reflected in the plan area. This was taken into account in terms of trends in the absence of the plan and this data still informs the assessment of the potential sustainability effects of the Local Plan and is therefore an important component of the evidence base.

- 1.31 In terms of data gaps, local air quality monitoring (undertaken by the Borough Council) only takes account of nitrogen dioxide and no other emissions with the exception of the Oaks Road site which also monitors PM10 and PM2.5. However, nitrogen dioxide is the pollutant most commonly associated with road traffic emissions and is therefore of particular relevance to the SA process. Other gaps in data exist in terms of condition status of some SSSIs with respect to previous year's data. As such for some SSSIs it was not possible to see a determinate trend.
- 1.32 Other data gaps include the condition status of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). The Council will seek updated condition surveys and ecological information from Surrey Wildlife Trust or the Surrey Local Nature Partnership to understand the condition of these sites and whether they are improving or deteriorating. The Council will also continue to review emerging evidence relating to ecological networks, habitat connectivity and the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy as this becomes available.

Consultation

- 1.33 The Draft SA/SEA Scoping Report was consulted upon between 23 July 2026 and 11 September 2026 with the statutory consultation bodies, namely Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.
- 1.34 Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England. Natural England welcomed the key sustainability issues and objectives identified within the report and provided a number of recommendations relating to ecological connectivity, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and monitoring indicators. Historic England confirmed that the scoping report adequately covers matters relating to the historic environment and raised no substantive concerns. No response was received from the Environment Agency.
- 1.35 The Council has reviewed all comments received and, where appropriate, incorporated amendments into this Final SA/SEA Scoping Report. Amendments include strengthened consideration of ecological connectivity, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and monitoring indicators.

2 Environmental/Sustainability Project Objectives

- 2.1 The scoping stage of SA/SEA involves establishing the context in which the Local Plan is being prepared. The SEA Directive and Regulations require:
‘the identification and review of environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation’.

Although this terminology originates from the SEA Directive, the requirements have been retained through domestic legislation.

- 2.2 The review ensures that the Local Plan takes account of environmental/ sustainability protection objectives and key messages or targets at an international, national and local level at the earliest stage of plan preparation. In reviewing the environmental/ sustainability protection objectives only those considered most relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan have been reviewed. This allows the review to remain focussed on those objectives, key messages and targets which have the most relevance and/or are the most up to date.
- 2.3 The full list of relevant plans and programmes and their objectives or key messages are set out in Appendix A. A summary of the key messages and how these should be taken into account in the Local Plan and within sustainability objectives are set out in Table 4. The sustainability objectives are set out within the Sustainability Framework which can be found in Section 4 of this Scoping Report.

Table 4: Key Environmental/Sustainability Protection Objectives & Key Messages

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Population & Community	
Planning should take account of strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and achieve places which promote mixed use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and create safe and accessible environments.	The Local Plan should seek to improve access to essential facilities/services and seek to protect the most valued community assets. The Local Plan should also consider policies which aid in the reduction of crime.
Policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision of shared space, community facilities and other local services and restrict the unnecessary loss of valued facilities.	Subject to an assessment of needs, the Local Plan will also need to ensure it includes any pitch/plot targets for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek improved access to services/facilities/jobs,

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Priorities include improving health & learning and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour Targets for Gypsy & Traveller pitches and plots for Travelling Showpeople should be set out in plans. Policies should promote integrated co-existence, access to health and education.	maintenance/improvement of community assets, provision of housing for all and creating safer places crime. The Local Plan should support inclusive and accessible communities, reduce inequalities and ensure that new development contributes positively to community cohesion and social inclusion.
Human Health & Wellbeing	
Priorities for Surrey include improving children's health and wellbeing, promoting emotional and mental health, improving older adult's health and wellbeing and safeguarding the population. Suitable affordable housing and accommodation for Gypsies & Travellers should support healthy lifestyles, with access to education, health, welfare and employment. Objectives also include improving quality of life, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting families. Effects of pollution on health should also be considered.	The Local Plan should help to improve the health and well-being of the population. This could be achieved through enabling or providing better access for all to leisure/recreation facilities, essential services and employment opportunities whether by walking & cycling or more generally. Enabling affordable housing and delivering suitable Gypsy & Traveller pitches/Showmen plots should also be included as well as policies for achieving a high-quality built environment and improving air quality and avoiding noise impacts. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek improvements to health, accessibility to services, providing affordable housing and suitable accommodation for all, high quality sustainable design and improving or a neutral impact on air quality and noise. The Local Plan should promote healthy place-making through access to green infrastructure, active travel opportunities, recreation facilities and high-quality environments which support physical and mental wellbeing. The Local Plan should seek to improve access to nature and protect the quality and extent of existing recreational assets, including rights of way, green spaces and informal recreation opportunities.
Economy & Employment	
Planning should promote and support sustainable economic development, and local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs	The Local Plan should support and promote businesses and job creation through the delivery of sustainable economic growth and inward investment into Spelthorne

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
of business and address potential barriers to growth. New and emerging sectors should be planned for. Actions should include maintaining/growing the business base, promoting inward investment, deliver innovation and growth in high value industries and increase the supply of labour. Help to improve Surrey's global competitiveness and make Surrey's economy more inclusive and make best use of assets.	The Local Plan will also need to consider the infrastructure improvements to support economic growth. The vitality/viability and attractiveness of all retail centres in Spelthorne should be supported and for larger centres set out a strategy for delivery. Sustainability objectives should be developed which support business/economic growth/inward investment, the viability/vitality and attractiveness of retail centres and ensure infrastructure supports this.
Transport	
A Transport system which is greener, safer and improves quality of life. Transport planning should be integrated with land use planning and be balanced in favour of sustainable transport. Local planning authorities should support patterns of development which facilitates the use of sustainable transport. Improve transport infrastructure, journey time, road safety and provide an integrated transport system. Ensure congestion does not deteriorate and improve the reliability of journeys, reducing delays for all transport modes. More people in Surrey cycling and more safely, delivering cycling improvements and seek funding to improve infrastructure to make cycling safe, attractive and convenient. Improve accessibility of bus services for passengers with objectives for rail to maintain Surrey's global competitiveness, drive economic growth, reduce impacts on the environment and accommodate sustainable population growth. Limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK affected by aircraft noise.	The Local Plan should encourage more sustainable forms of travel and aim to either improve or ensure that congestion does not deteriorate below current levels. Consideration should be given to the location of development in terms of its accessibility to sustainable transport modes, aim to improve accessibility more generally and should address improvements to cycling/walking infrastructure where possible. Where possible the Local Plan should limit the number of people affected by aircraft noise. Sustainability objectives should be developed which encourage sustainable modes of transport, improve transport accessibility, improve congestion and reduce or ensure neutral noise impacts. The Local Plan should support a shift towards walking, cycling and public transport and seek to reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.
Material Assets	

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Focus on tackling housing shortages and giving people the opportunity to get on the housing ladder. Establish an effective housing development strategy. Increase the supply of new homes, improve the tenure mix and improve the quality of homes. Use land and assets to achieve best value in terms of provision of facilities. Reduce demand for primary minerals by encouraging efficient use of resources and recycled materials.	The Local Plan should seek to meet market and affordable housing need as far as is sustainably possible. The Plan should not only consider housing numbers but also the mix of housing tenures and types. The Local Plan should enable the delivery of necessary infrastructure including communications and ensure that existing facilities and services are used as efficiently as possible. The Plan could introduce policies to reduce/minimise the use of primary aggregates in development and encourage recycled material. Sustainability objectives should be developed which meet the identified housing needs as far as is sustainably possible, maintain/improve/deliver infrastructure assets and reduce demand for aggregates /encourage recycling. The Local Plan should support the provision of digital and communications infrastructure to meet future needs.
Cultural Heritage & Historic Environment	
Promote policies for the conservation of heritage and archaeological heritage. Protection for statutorily designated scheduled monuments. Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance and Local Plans should set out a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and its enhancement. Historic environment will continue to promote economic growth, have improved resilience to the impacts of climate change and social/economic forces and there will be a shared understanding of how best to adapt the built environment sympathetically to secure its future and conserve its historic significance.	The Local Plan should take account of the historic environment and develop policies which minimise risks to the historic environment and offer protection and enhancement of heritage assets. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to protect and enhance heritage assets considering climate change adaption.
Landscape/ Townscape	

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Establish and implement landscape policies and promote landscape protection, management and planning. Integrate landscape into town planning policies. Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of urban areas, protecting Green Belt and recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside. Important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development including buildings, public & private spaces and wider area schemes. Planning should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and allocating land with least environmental value.	The Local Plan should consider how development can improve/enhance the quality of the built environment and the character of places. This could be through policies which require high quality design of the built environment and its spaces. The Local Plan should also consider policies which protect and enhance the most valued landscapes in Spelthorne and consider how lower quality landscapes could be improved. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek high quality sustainable design and protection/enhancement of valued landscapes and townscapes.
Climate	
Become a net zero authority by 2030 Local Plans are required to include and should adopt proactive strategies designed to contribute to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change and take account of climate change over the longer term. Local authorities should plan for developments in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support energy efficiency, promote and identify suitable areas for energy from renewable and low carbon sources and support community led initiatives. Reduce the threat of flooding and put in place long-term plans to manage risks. Deliver sustainable new development, including infrastructure that minimises vulnerability. Local authorities should use plan making to reduce transport emissions, plan for infrastructure such as low carbon district heating, green infrastructure, SuDS and avoid increasing the areas risk to climate change impacts by locating new development in areas of lowest flood risk.	The Local Plan could promote energy efficiency measures in development. The Local Plan will need to consider the location of development and how this can deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including reducing emissions from transport, reducing flood risk from all sources and green infrastructure enhancement to reduce flood risk and adapt/mitigate climate change. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to reduce carbon/greenhouse gas emissions reduce flood risk and deliver renewable energy. The Local Plan should support development which is resilient to future climate conditions, including overheating, drought and increased flood risk. The Local Plan should support the use of nature-based solutions, including habitat restoration, tree planting, wetland creation and multifunctional green infrastructure, to help address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Biodiversity (including fauna & flora)	
Deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation should be halted. Achieve significant and measurable improvements in their status. Support for healthy well-functioning ecosystems and coherent ecological networks with protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives of the planning system. Local planning to support Nature Improvement Areas and deliver measurable biodiversity net gain and contribute towards wider nature recovery. Where possible and should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and protection and recovery of priority species populations. Increasing the proportion of SSSI's in favourable condition.	The Local Plan should seek to protect and where appropriate enhance sites of nature conservation importance at international, national and local level. Policies which seek to minimise risk and avoid the fragmentation of sites and/or ecological networks should be sought. The Local Plan should also consider supporting Nature Improvement Areas and ways to deliver net gains in biodiversity. Although only a very small proportion of the Borough lies within 7km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA; the Local Plan will need to ensure compliance with relevant avoidance and mitigation measures where development has the potential to affect the Thames Basin Heaths SPA either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek protection/enhancement of designated sites and biodiversity more generally, support Nature Improvement Areas and provide for net gains in biodiversity. The Local Plan should contribute to the delivery of the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy and strengthen ecological connectivity. The Local Plan should seek to strengthen ecological networks and avoid the creation of isolated habitats which do not contribute to wider nature recovery objectives.
Soil & Land	
Spatial planning strategies should integrate soil and land protection objectives, including promotion of brownfield land and clean-up of contaminated land. By 2030 England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled. Soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change, agricultural soils will be better managed, soil in urban areas valued during development and pollution of soils prevented and legacy of contaminated land dealt with.	The Local Plan should seek to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land and protect soil quality more generally. Priority should be given to developing and making the most effective use of previously developed land, especially that of lower environmental quality and where this could help remediate/mitigate contaminated sites. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to protect soil quality especially best and most versatile agricultural land and

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
Planning should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land where appropriate. Encourage effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed provided it is not of high environmental value.	prioritise the efficient re-use of previously developed land.
Water	
Protect the environment from adverse effects of waste and water discharges and enhance and prevent further deterioration of aquatic and wetland ecosystems. Reduce pollution of water and ensure progressive reduction of groundwater pollution with concentrations of harmful pollutants avoided, prevented or reduced. Protect water ecosystems including habitats and species. Promote sustainable use of water and improve water quality and tackle unsustainable abstraction. Manage flood risks and promote approaches to flood and erosion management. Direct inappropriate development away from areas at highest risk of flooding applying a sequential, risk-based approach. Encourage partners to develop policies, strategies and initiatives to increase flood resistance and resilience of all new development at risk of flooding, protect land needed to manage flood risk in the future and identify opportunities to recreate river corridors in urban areas.	The Local Plan should promote water efficiency and seek to protect water quality to/from all sources and protect the water environment including aquatic/wetland ecology. The Local Plan should contain policies to minimise the risk of flooding from all sources and should avoid inappropriate development in flood plains and direct development away from flood risk areas in line with the sequential approach. Policies could be developed which seek to design in flood resilience/protection measures. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to protect/improve water quality and aquatic ecosystems, avoid/reduce flood risk and promote water efficiency. Given the Borough's location within an area of serious water stress, the Local Plan should support high standards of water efficiency and ensure that development is aligned with available water and wastewater infrastructure capacity.
Air	
Objective to achieve levels of air quality that do not result in unacceptable impacts on, and risks to, human health and the environment. Primary objective is to ensure all citizens have access to outdoor air without significant risk to their health,	The Local Plan should promote traffic management and encourage sustainable transport to affect an improvement in air quality within the Borough. The Plan should consider the location of development to affect sustainable transport choices and avoid

Summary of Objectives/ Key Messages	How should this be taken into account?
where economically and technically feasible. New development should be located in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. New and existing development should be prevented from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution.	development which would deteriorate local air quality. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to improve or have a neutral impact on air quality, promote sustainable transport choices, reduce exposure to poor air quality and reduce transport emissions.
Waste	
Waste to be managed without endangering human health and harming the environment and without risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals and without causing a nuisance through noise or odours and without adversely affecting the countryside or places of interest. Drive waste up the waste hierarchy of prevent, reuse, recycle, recover, disposal. Stimulate demand for recycled plastic by introducing a tax on plastic packaging manufactured in or imported into the UK that contains less than 30% recycled plastics. This came into effect on 1 April 2022. Reducing the use of unnecessary single-use plastic (SUP) products including bans on items such as plastic straws, cotton buds, and drink stirrers. Consider waste management alongside other spatial planning concerns and ensure the design and layout of new residential and commercial development compliments sustainable waste management.	The Local Plan should promote waste management in the design of new development and encourage the efficient use of resources including reuse/recycling of building materials in new development. Measures to help achieve recycling targets should be considered. Sustainability objectives should be developed which aim to reduce waste and promote reuse/recycling. The Local Plan should support the efficient use of resources, encourage reuse and recycling, minimise waste generation and contribute towards a circular economy.

3 Environmental/Sustainability Baseline

- 3.1 The SEA Directive and Regulations require an assessment of the state of the environment, and for sustainability appraisal social and economic issues as well, as they stand at this moment in time. This is known as the environmental/sustainability baseline. The SA/SEA also needs to predict how the baseline will evolve over time in the absence of the plan and identify any existing environmental/sustainability problems/issues. The SEA Directive and Regulations require the identification of:
- The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.
 - The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected
 - Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance, such as areas such as areas designated under legislation relating to the conservation of wild birds and natural habitats, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites.
- 3.2 The baseline position has been set out in a series of thematic areas (including the receiving environments as contained within Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive and Social/Economic criteria). The thematic structure broadly reflects the environmental topics identified within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, together with additional social and economic topics considered through the Sustainability Appraisal process. This section will also set out the likely future conditions in the absence of the Local Plan.

Area description

- 3.3 The Borough of Spelthorne lies in the north-west corner of Surrey and adjoins the counties of Berkshire and the Greater London area. The Borough is 5,118 ha in area and had a population of 102,956¹ at the 2021 census. The main towns in Spelthorne are Ashford, Shepperton, Staines-upon-Thames (Staines), Stanwell and Sunbury-on-Thames.
- 3.4 Spelthorne is generally flat and low-lying and forms part of the valley floor of the River Thames, underlain by London Clay with deposits of alluvium and gravel. Approximately 65% of the Borough is designated as Green Belt, reflecting its location on the edge of Greater London. Due to the presence of the River Thames and its tributaries, flood risk represents a significant constraint within parts of the Borough, with extensive areas located within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

¹ 2021 Census - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000213/>

- 3.5 There are four large reservoirs in Spelthorne which comprise 17% of the Borough's total land area. The Wraysbury, Staines and King George VI reservoirs comprise part of the Southwest London Waterbodies Special Protection Area² (SPA) and Ramsar site which have been designated at an international level for their importance to overwintering waterfowl such as Gadwall and Shoveler. These three reservoirs along with areas of Common land including Staines Moor are also designated as SSSIs. All four of the reservoirs in Spelthorne are also designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) at the local level. The area around Staines Moor lies within the southern part of the Colne Valley Regional Park.
- 3.6 The M3 motorway is a major strategic transport route which crosses through the southern part of the Borough with Junction 1 situated at Sunbury-on-Thames. The M25 runs north/south along the western periphery of the Borough with Junction 13 at Staines. Other major highways which run through the Borough include the A30 which runs from the southwest into London and the A308 which connects Staines with junction 1 of the M3 at Sunbury-on-Thames and continues to Hampton Court.
- 3.7 Spelthorne is served by six rail stations at Ashford, Kempton Park, Shepperton, Staines, Sunbury-on-Thames and Upper Halliford. All six stations are situated either on the Reading-Waterloo, Windsor-Waterloo, Weybridge-Waterloo or Shepperton-Waterloo lines with services also available from Staines to other areas of Surrey and Greater London. These connections provide strong links to London and the wider Southeast, although there remains no direct rail connection to Heathrow Airport.
- 3.8 Heathrow airport lies just north of Spelthorne in the London Borough of Hillingdon and is a major employment site for Spelthorne residents with the airport currently supporting approximately 80,000 direct on-airport jobs.³ The Government continues to support the exploration of proposals for a third runway at Heathrow Airport, which could have implications for employment, transport, air quality and noise within Spelthorne.

Baseline Environment, Issues & Problems

- 3.9 An analysis of the baseline environment has been broken down into key thematic areas. For ease of reading, the baseline and future trends in the absence of the plan are summarised in Table 5 with a more in-depth analysis of each thematic area set out after. Each theme identifies current baseline conditions, likely future trends in the absence of the Local Plan, and any key sustainability issues or challenges.
- 3.10 Spelthorne is characterised by a combination of significant environmental constraints and strategic opportunities, including extensive Green Belt designation,

² In Spelthorne the Southwest London Water Bodies SPA designation covers Wraysbury Reservoir SSSI, Staines Moor SSSI and part of the Kempton Park Reservoirs SSSI.

³ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a801f8aed915d74e622c9a0/heathrow-airport-consultation-jobs-and-the-economy.pdf>

areas of flood risk, internationally and nationally designated biodiversity sites, proximity to Heathrow Airport and strong connections to London and the wider Southeast. These factors provide the context for the sustainability issues identified throughout this report.

Table Key

✓	Positive/Improving	✗	Negative/Deteriorating	-	Mixed/Neutral/Stable	?	Uncertain	N/A	Not Applicable
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Table 5: Summary of Sustainability/Environmental Baseline

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Population & Community				
Total Population	-	-	Population is expected to increase even in the absence of the plan, leading to pressures on housing and services. Average age is moving towards an older profile, and so vacant jobs may become harder to fill encouraging in-commuting.	Increasing and ageing population
Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Showmen Accommodation	?	?	Up to date assessment of pitch needs required.	Seek to meet requirements of Gypsy & Travellers
Combined Indices of Multiple Deprivation	-	-	Rank of combined indices of multiple deprivation do not show significant change, despite a general decrease since 2015 and this trend is likely to continue in the absence of the plan. There are, however, pockets of relative deprivation in the Borough.	Pockets of relative deprivation in some areas of the Borough
Crime Rate	✓	-	Number of crimes recorded since 2022 has generally fallen. This trend is likely to continue or remain relatively constant.	
Health & Wellbeing				
Health Profiles	✓	-	Overall health outcomes are generally good, although pockets of health deprivation remain. This position is likely to remain broadly stable in the future.	Pockets of health deprivation, lower life

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Noise Levels	✓	?	Continue to secure reductions in noise but uncertainty with Heathrow expansion.	expectancy & high levels of adult obesity Pressure on health, education and community facilities and services Ageing population may require bespoke housing solutions
Life Expectancy	✓	✓	Life expectancy is higher than the national average and is likely to continue to rise although this could be curtailed by adult obesity levels. Rising life expectancy will place additional pressure on services and facilities and may require bespoke housing solutions.	
Life Expectancy (most deprived areas)	✗	✗	Life expectancy in the most deprived areas of Spelthorne is 7.2 years lower for men and 7.5 years lower for women than the least deprived areas. This gap has widened since 2006 and therefore the trend is a worsening situation, without intervention the gap is likely to persist or widen.	
Economy & Employment				
Income	✓	✓	Incomes of both those who live and those who work in Spelthorne are higher than the national average and are likely to continue to rise.	Working age population continues to decline.
Education	-	✗	Rates of those acquiring higher educational attainment have fallen and those without qualifications have risen slightly. Recent trends indicate a slight reduction in the proportion of residents achieving higher level qualifications and a corresponding increase in vocational and technical qualifications.	
Employment	✓	-	Unemployment remains low and broadly comparable with regional and national levels.	
Working Age Population	✗	✗	Working age population is continuing to decline which may result in vacant jobs becoming harder to fill, encouraging higher levels of in-commuting.	

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Competitiveness	✓	?	High ranking of 13 th out of 379 authority areas for competitiveness. The future trend is however uncertain given an ageing workforce and the affordability of housing.	
Transport				
Congestion	✗	✗	Congestion is an issue for Spelthorne, especially in certain areas of the Borough.	Increased levels of Congestion
Transport Mode	✗	✗	High levels of car use as the main mode of travel, especially over short distances.	Reliance on the car as mode of travel to work for short distances
Bus & Rail Services	✓	-	Generally, rail and bus services are good which is likely to continue in the future. There is however currently a lack of direct rail connectivity to Heathrow.	Lack of direct connectivity to Heathrow Airport via rail
Material Assets				
Housing	✗	✗	Entry level house prices are approximately 12x average salary of younger households. Rising population relative to availability is placing pressure on housing needs. This trend is likely to continue as demand increases.	High entry level house prices
Education Provision	✓	-	Increase in pupil numbers are expected with additional school places required.	Rising population and demand for housing

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Health Facilities	✖	?	Some health facilities in Spelthorne are operating at or near capacity, with Sunbury Health Centre experiencing capacity pressures. Resolution largely depends on funding decisions by the NHS properties and services.	Pressure on education, health and leisure infrastructure
Leisure Facilities	✓	✖	There is high demand for the services provided by the Leisure centres and playing pitch availability for young people teams is a particular issue. This is likely to worsen as population increases.	
Cultural Heritage & Historic Environment				
Heritage Assets	✓	-	There is unlikely to be any significant change to heritage assets in Spelthorne, and this is likely to continue into the future.	Heritage assets and their settings need continued protection
Landscape/Townscape				
Landscape/Townscape Character	-	-	The Borough's Landscape/Townscape character requires continued protection as new development is accommodated	Protection of landscape and townscape character
Climate				
CO ₂ Emissions	✓	?	Within Spelthorne there has been a decrease in CO ₂ emissions from the transport and domestic sectors which is likely to continue in the future. There has however been a significant rise in emissions from the commercial/industrial sector, and it is uncertain whether this is a short-term effect or longer-term trend	CO ₂ emissions may increase

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Flood Risk	-	?	More frequent and intense rainfall events may increase risk of flooding from fluvial, surface run-off and groundwater. This may be offset by the River Thames Scheme in the longer term and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems, but this is uncertain.	Climate Change impacts may increase flood risk
Biodiversity				
SSSI Condition Status	✓	?	All SSSIs in the Borough are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition and are meeting Natural England's management objectives. This is likely to continue in the future as Natural England /Spelthorne Borough Council work with landowners to implement suitable management plans, although climate change impacts may start to affect biodiversity interests.	Climate change may impact biodiversity
SNCI Condition Status	?	?	There is currently a lack of information as to the current status condition of SNCIs in the Borough and as such their current and future status is identified as uncertain.	Loss or damage to unprotected habitats
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) & Nature Recovery	?	✓	Biodiversity Net Gain has become a mandatory requirement for most development and provides opportunities to secure measurable improvements in habitats and ecological connectivity. The preparation of the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy and implementation of BNG are expected to support the recovery of biodiversity and enhance nature networks across the Borough. However, the extent to which BNG delivery will contribute to wider strategic nature recovery outcomes is not yet fully understood.	Delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain and wider nature recovery objectives. Ensuring gains are secured, maintained and contribute to coherent ecological networks rather than isolated habitat enhancements.

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Soil & Land				
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	✓	✓	99% of all development came forward on Previously Developed Land in 2024-25 and is expected to remain as a higher percentage.	High percentage of development on PDL reduces impact on soil quality
Water				
Water Quantity	✗	✗	Thames River Basin district identified as one of the driest in the UK, however, Affinity Water suggests supply will be maintained by water transfers and sustainability reductions. Environment Agency finds no water available for abstraction at low flows. Some demand may be offset by supply side efficiencies and control of abstraction licences but area likely to remain 'water stressed'.	Demand for water increases
Water Quality	-	✓	Water bodies within Spelthorne range from good to poor ecological status. River Basin Management Plan objectives seek continued improvements in water quality, and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and wastewater management measures should support progress towards these objectives	Water quality declines or fails to improve
Air				

Theme	Current Trend	Future Trend	Comments	Issues & Problems
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	✗	?	Monitoring data indicates that nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂) concentrations have generally reduced over the longer term, reflecting improvements in vehicle emission standards and fleet composition. Whilst further improvements may occur as cleaner vehicle technologies become more widespread, future trends remain uncertain due to factors including traffic growth, Heathrow Airport activity and future development pressures.	Exceedances of the annual mean NO ₂ objective continue at some locations within the Borough. Traffic growth, Heathrow-related activity and new development have the potential to affect future air quality.
Waste				
Total Household Waste	✓	?	Total household waste sent to landfill from Spelthorne has fallen and the level of recycling has increased. A higher population and an increase in the number of households may increase total household waste. Higher recycling rates could offset this increase but may rely on continued communications to residents and so is uncertain.	Household waste levels continue to rise with additional households

Population & Community

- 3.11 The population of the Borough recorded by the 2021 Census currently stands at 102,956⁴ people comprising 49% males and 51% females. This has increased from 2011⁵ by 7,358 or 7.7%. The 2024 Mid-Year Estimates (MYE) from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows the Spelthorne population at 107,074 which is an increase of 4,118 since 2021 or 4%. Over the same period the population in the Southeast of England grew by 3.9% and in England by 3.6%.
- 3.12 The ethnic mix of residents is predominantly white British at 78.7% with other minority ethnic groups (BME) comprising the remaining 21.3%, the largest group of which is Asian/British Asian/Welsh Asian at 12.8%. This is a higher percentage of BME population than both the Southeast of England (13.7%) and England (19%). Gypsy or Irish Travellers make up 0.3% of the population which is slightly higher than the Southeast percentage (0.2%) and England's (0.1%). Spelthorne has a diverse population, with minority ethnic groups accounting for over one-fifth of residents. This diversity contributes positively to the social and economic character of the Borough and should be considered as part of future service provision and community planning.

Table 6: Ethnicity of Spelthorne, Southeast & England Population⁴

	Spelthorne	Southeast	England
White	78.7%	86.3%	81%
White Other	6.1%	5.3%	5.6%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	3.7%	2.8%	3.0%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	12.8%	7%	9.6%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	2.5%	2.4%	4.2%
Other ethnic group	1%	1.5%	2.2%

**Figures do not sum due to rounding*

- 3.13 The age structure of the Borough population is set out in Table 7. There is a lower percentage of people aged under 25 (26.8%) compared to the Southeast (28.7%) and England (29.1%), but a higher percentage of people aged between 35 and 64 (41.2%)⁴.

⁴ Census 2021 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000213/>

⁵ Census 2011 - https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration/media/3844/Spelthorne-and-the-2011-Census/pdf/spelthorne_2011_census.pdf

Table 7: Age Breakdown of Population⁴

Age	Spelthorne	Southeast	England
0 – 4	5.8%	5.3%	5.4%
5 – 9	6.2%	6%	5.9%
10 – 15	7%	7.3%	7.2%
16 – 19	3.9%	4.5%	4.6%
20 – 24	4.8%	5.6%	6%
25 – 34	13.1%	12.4%	13.6%
35 – 49	21.3%	19.7%	19.4%
50 – 64	19.9%	19.8%	19.4%
65 – 74	9%	10.2%	9.8%
75 – 84	6.3%	6.5%	6.1%
85+	2.7%	2.7%	2.4%

- 3.14 Spelthorne has a higher population density by some margin when compared to the Southeast and England as whole.

Table 8: Population Density⁴

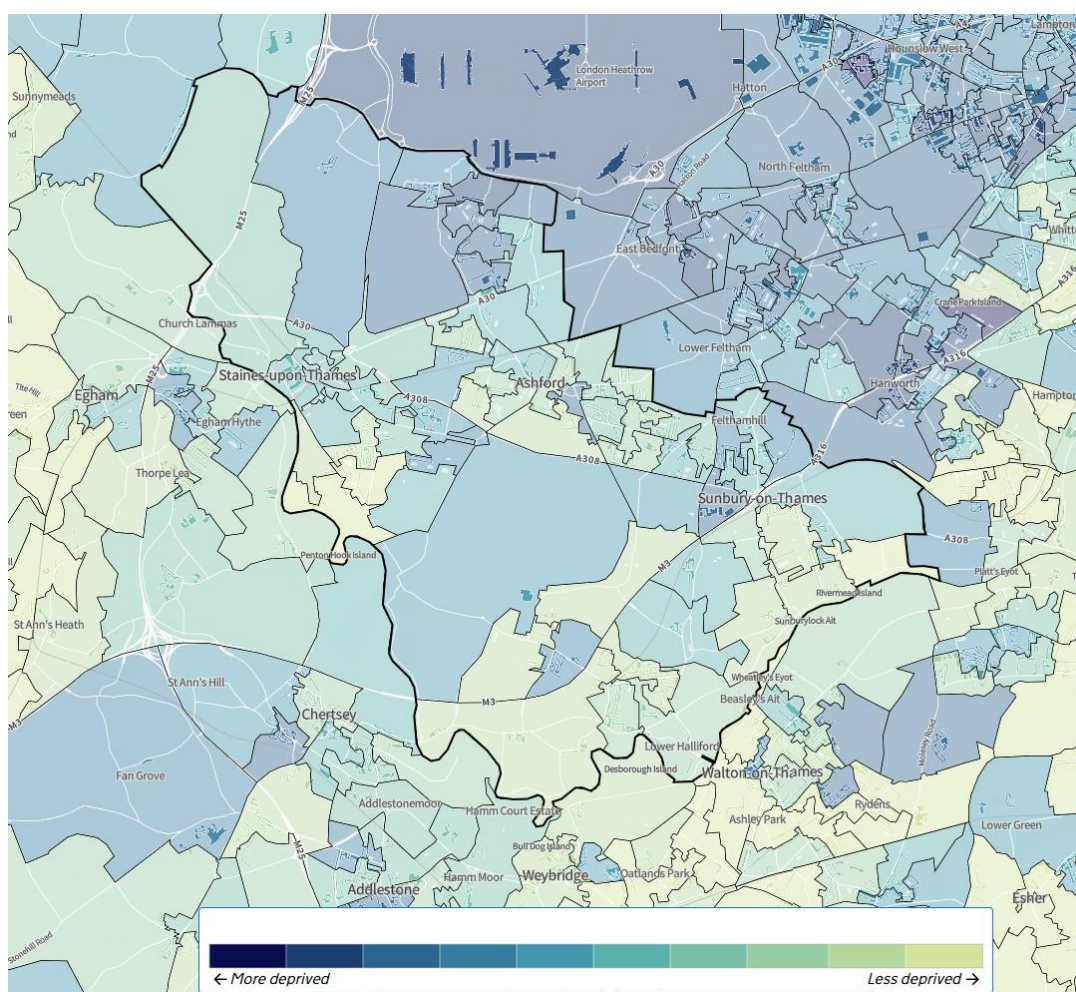
	Spelthorne	Southeast	England
Total Population	102,956	9,278,100	56,490,048
Area (ha)	4,488*	1,906,965	13,027,843
Persons per hectare	22.9	4.9	4.3

*Excludes reservoirs and water bodies

- 3.15 Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD)⁶ provide an indication of levels of deprivation for a number of topic areas including health, employment etc. A ranking of 1 shows the highest level of deprivation and 296 the least. The 2025 Indices of Multiple Deprivation rank Spelthorne 196th out of 296 local authority areas in England, where 1 represents the most deprived authority and 296 the least deprived.

⁶ English Indices of Deprivation (2025) - <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/indices-of-deprivation-iod-2025-in-surrey-vd34n>

Figure 3: Deprivation Indices⁷



3.16 Crime statistics for 2025⁸ show that in Spelthorne a total of 8,142 crimes took place, the majority of which (35%) were related to Violence Against the Person Offences. In the 12 months leading up to December 2025, the crime rate in Spelthorne was 81.97 per 1,000 population⁹. Table 9 below shows the crime rate in the authorities neighbouring Spelthorne, which have an average of 77.06. As such, the crime rate in Spelthorne falls above this average, but is lower than England and Wales which stands at 85 per 1,000 population. The 2025 Indices of Deprivation (IoD) ranking on the Crime Domain for Spelthorne is 15,540 out of 33,755¹⁰, with a rank of 1 representing the highest crime rate neighbourhood. Spelthorne has higher levels of crime deprivation compared to both Surrey (20,551) and England (16,699).

⁷ English Indices of Deprivation 2025 - <https://deprivation.communities.gov.uk/about-your-neighbourhood>

⁸ Spelthorne crime statistics (September 2025) - <https://homenicom.co.uk/area/spelthorne/crime-rate>

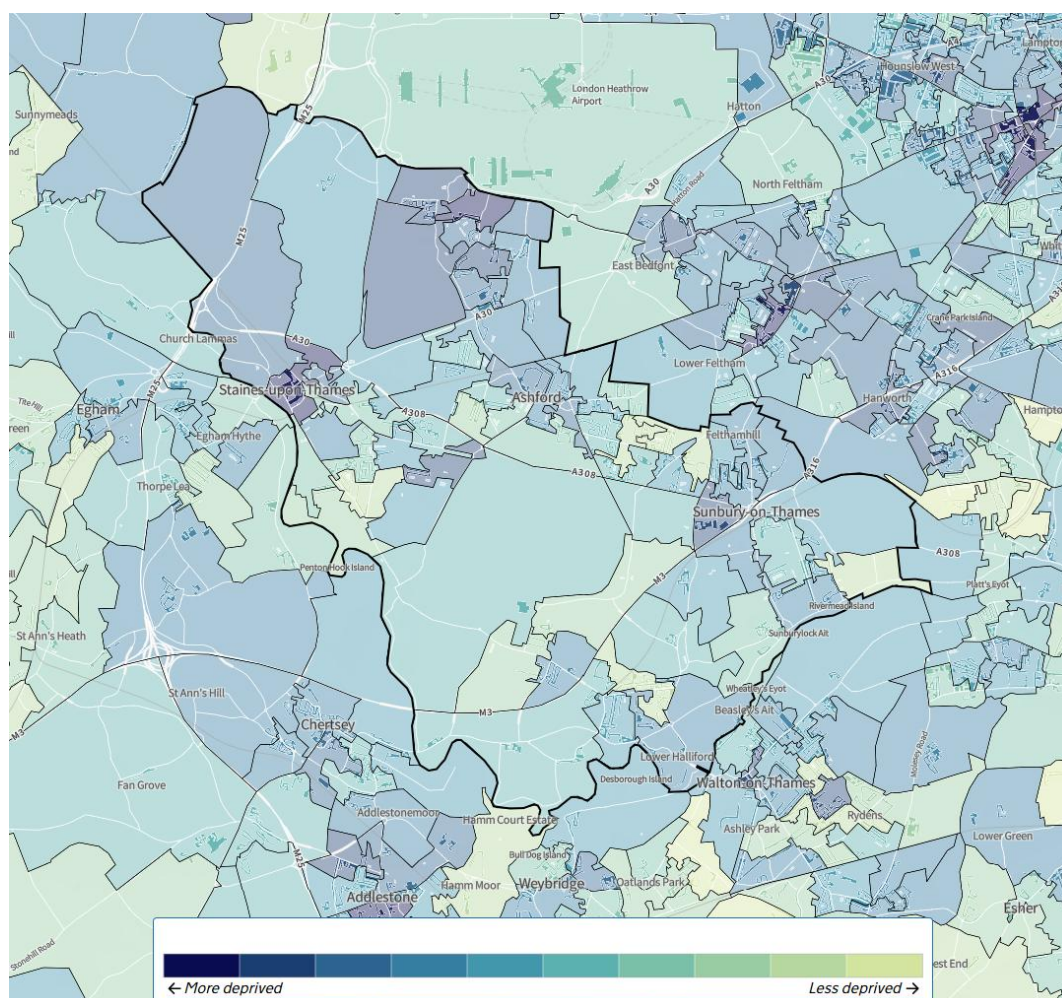
⁹ Surrey Police (December 2025) - <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/surrey-police/performance/compare-your-area/?tc=SPSU>

¹⁰ Local Insight England Report (October 2025) - <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/download/vd34n/ng9/IoD%202025%20Local%20Insight%20report%20-%20Spelthorne.pdf>

Table 9: Crimes per 1,000 Population in authorities adjacent to Spelthorne

Local Authority	Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population
Spelthorne	81.97
Runnymede	74.16
Elmbridge	53.14
Windsor & Maidenhead	61.29
Slough	96.9
Hounslow	96.14
Richmond-upon-Thames	57.39
Hillingdon	98.98
Average	77.06

Figure 4: IMD Crime Rankings⁷



Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.17 The 2024 MYE¹¹ shows that the Spelthorne population is growing. The population is estimated to have grown by 4,118 since the Census of 2021 which is an increase of 4% compared to 3.9% in the Southeast and 3.6% in England. The ONS 2022 population projections, estimate the population in Spelthorne by 2043 to be 111,773¹². Some of this change is attributable to natural changes (births/deaths) and as such the population is likely to increase even in the absence of the plan.
- 3.18 The 2024 MYE¹³ also shows that the percentage of people under 30 has remained similar to the 2011 census at 34%. However, the population aged 65+ has increased from 17.4% to 18.4%, the largest increase being 23% in the 90+ age cohort and 9.3% in the 65-74 cohort. The population aged 10-24 decreased by 3.3%, although ages 0-9 increased by 1%. The 2012 SNPP shows a trend toward an ageing population with the age cohort 55+ expected to increase by 41.5% to 2033, with those under 55 by 8.9% in comparison. The trend towards an ageing population is likely to happen even in the absence of the plan.
- 3.19 2021 Census data reveals the number of Gypsy and Irish Travellers resident in Spelthorne as 280¹⁴. There are currently 5 Gypsy and Traveller sites in Spelthorne comprising 23 permanent (10 public, 13 private) and 15 transit pitches. There are 4 Travelling Showmen sites comprising 10 plots. The relationship between the resident Gypsy and Traveller population and authorised pitch provision is not currently fully understood. An updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is therefore required to establish current and future accommodation needs. The Council is in the process of producing an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment which will be available and inform the relevant stages of plan making.
- 3.20 Combined IMD scores for Spelthorne were 233 in 2015, 208 in 2019 and 196 in 2024. Whilst Spelthorne is likely to remain an area of relatively low deprivation despite its gradual decline in relative ranking, pockets of relative deprivation will continue to be evident even in the absence of the plan¹⁵.

¹¹ <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/population-estimates-em0ym>

¹² [Population projections for local authorities by five-year age groups and sex, England - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹³

<https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/download/em0ym/1le/Population%20Estimates%20Over%20Time%20in%20Surrey%20COUNTY%20and%20LADs%20and%20UAs.xlsx>

¹⁴

[https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/gypsyoririshtravellerpopulationsenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=1.-,Main%20points,population%20of%20England%20and%20Wales\).](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/gypsyoririshtravellerpopulationsenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=1.-,Main%20points,population%20of%20England%20and%20Wales).)

¹⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, English Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019; Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, English Indices of Deprivation. Figures represent Spelthorne Borough's relative ranking amongst local authorities in England, where a lower ranking indicates a higher level of deprivation.

- 3.21 Table 10 shows crime statistics between 2022 and 2025. This shows that, aside from 2023, the overall number of crimes recorded has generally fallen since 2022 with this being likely to continue into the future.

Table 10: Crime Statistics (overall numbers) 2022-2025¹⁶

Year	Total Crimes Recorded
2022	8,447
2023	8,694
2024	8,608
2025	8,142

- 3.22 An increasing population is likely to require additional housing and place pressure on existing infrastructure capacity and services. The general trend of an ageing population may require bespoke services and/or housing. An ageing population is also likely to reduce the working age population of the Borough with persons from outside of Spelthorne filling vacancies and encouraging in-commuting with associated issues of congestion and transport infrastructure capacity.

Issue or Problem
Increasing population and newly forming households will require additional housing including affordable housing.
Demand for Gypsy/Traveller Pitches and Showmen Plots need to be assessed.
Ageing population may require bespoke housing solutions and place pressure on existing services.
Reduction in working age population may result in higher levels of in-commuting.
Pockets of relative deprivation in some areas of the Borough

Health & Well-being

- 3.23 The World Health Organisation defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease¹⁷. Health can be affected by both environmental and social factors such as poor air quality or high levels of deprivation.
- 3.24 Life expectancy (from birth) in Spelthorne is on average 80.4 years for males, slightly lower than the Southeast average of 80.7, but slightly higher than the England average of 79.5. Female life expectancy in Spelthorne is 83.9, slightly lower than the Southeast average of 84.4 but higher than the England average of 83.3. Life

¹⁶ <https://www.ukcrimestats.com/Constituency/187578/>

¹⁷ <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution>

expectancy in Spelthorne remains higher than the national average, although recent data suggests that previous long-term improvements have slowed and, in the case of male life expectancy, have marginally declined since 2011-13. This is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Life Expectancy in Years (from birth) 1991-2024¹⁸

	Spelthorne	Southeast	England
1991-93 Male	76.1	74.9	73.7
2001-03 Male	78.2	77.4	76.2
2011-13 Male	81.4	80.4	79.4
2022-24 Male	80.4	80.7	79.5
1991-93 Female	80.6	80.1	79.1
2001-03 Female	82.0	81.6	80.7
2011-13 Female	83.7	83.9	83.1
2022-24 Female	83.9	84.4	83.3

- 3.25 Local health profiles¹⁹ show that overall health outcomes in Spelthorne are generally better than the England average, although some indicators show poorer performance than both Surrey and Southeast averages, 28% of children live in income deprived families with this being higher than Surrey at 19.62%. Similarly, the level of income deprived individuals aged 60+ in Spelthorne, 11.5%, is higher than Surrey at 9.78%, but lower than the level in England at 18.58%.
- 3.26 In 2022, 67.2% of adults in the borough were classified as obese or overweight which is worse than the national average (64.5%). 18.2% of year 6 children (age 10-11) are classified as obese, which is lower than the England average (22.2%)²⁰. Obesity remains one of the Borough's most significant health challenges and may contribute to future pressure on health services and reduced healthy life expectancy.
- 3.27 Indicators relating to teenage conception and alcohol-specific hospital admissions for those aged under 18 are generally better than the national average, suggesting positive outcomes for children and young people within the Borough. Similarly,

¹⁸

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/bulletins/lifeexpectancyforlocalareasoftheuk/between2001to2003and2022to2024>

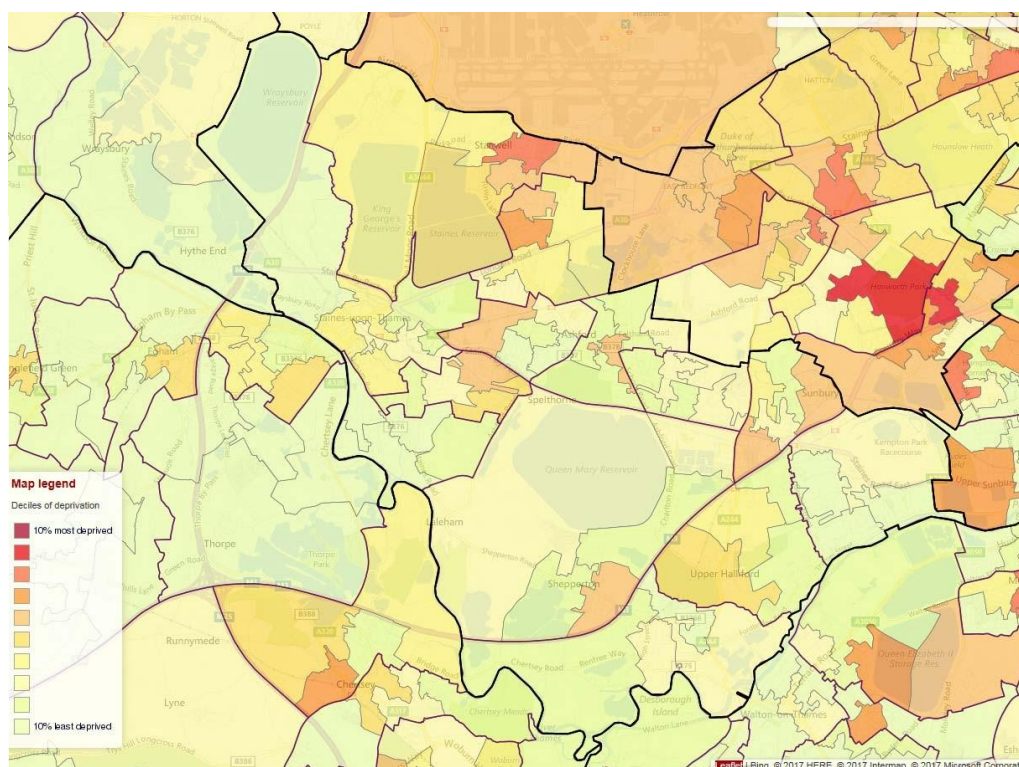
¹⁹ <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/download/vd34n/ng9/IoD%202025%20Local%20Insight%20report%20-%20Spelthorne.pdf>

²⁰ https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration/media/15700/Spelthorne-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2022-2027/pdf/Health_and_Wellbeing_Strategy_2022_-_2027.pdf

conception rates per 1000 women under 18 were lower in Spelthorne at 11.4, compared to 13.9 in England²¹.

- 3.28 The percentage of physically active adults was lower than the national average at 57.7% compared to 63.4%²² and the number of adults who smoke was recorded at 10.8% in Spelthorne, which is higher than the Southeast at 9.4% and England at 10.4%²³. The mortality rate of those under 75 for cardiovascular disease was lower than England, rated at 59.7 compared to 74.4²⁴.
- 3.29 The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain of the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies pockets of relative health deprivation within Spelthorne, particularly within parts of Stanwell and Staines, although the majority of the Borough falls within less deprived categories.

Figure 5: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019



²¹ https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-area=E07000213&mod-group=AllDistrictInRegion_SouthEast&mod-metric=688&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

²² <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-10/Leisure%20and%20Culture%20Strategy%202025-35.pdf>

²³ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/tobacco-control/data#page/1/gid/1938132885/ati/501/iid/92443/age/168/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/1/cid/4/tbm/1>

²⁴ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/under%2075%20mortality#page/1/gid/1/pat/6/ati/501/are/E07000213/iid/108/age/163/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/1/cid/4/tbm/1>

- 3.30 85% of the Spelthorne population consider their health to be ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ which compares to 84% for the Southeast and 82% for England. 14.4% of the Spelthorne population have a long-term health problem or disability which is lower than both the Southeast at 16.1% and England (17.7%)¹.
- 3.31 The primary sources of environmental noise within the Borough are Heathrow Airport and the strategic road network, including the M25, M3, A30 and A308. Aircraft noise is particularly relevant in the north of the Borough around Stanwell and Stanwell Moor. Heathrow noise contours are identified within the adopted Local Plan and continue to be used when considering noise impacts on new development.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.32 It is considered that low levels of health deprivation will remain into the future, and life expectancy is expected to remain relatively high, although future improvements may be limited by factors such as rising obesity levels and health inequalities. This may be curtailed if levels of obesity continue to rise. Pockets of health deprivation are likely to remain, and life expectancy inequalities have widened for those living in the most deprived areas of the Borough.
- 3.33 Increased life expectancy brings with it potential issues and problems of limiting long term illness which has implications for quality of life. Rising life expectancy coupled with an increase in population will place further pressures on health, education and community services and facilities.
- 3.34 The possibility of a third runway at Heathrow Airport could alter current noise contours which could affect the number of people impacted by aircraft noise. Any future expansion of Heathrow Airport, including a potential third runway, could alter existing aircraft noise contours and affect the number of people exposed to aircraft noise. As such, it is not possible to predict how aircraft noise will evolve in the future, even in the absence of the plan.

Issue or Problem
Increased life expectancy may increase pressure on health and community services.
Pockets of deprivation show some differences in life expectancy across the borough.
Adult obesity levels are above the national average.
Numbers affected by aircraft noise

Economy & Employment

- 3.35 Despite the recent economic downturn, the Spelthorne economy is buoyant with low rates of unemployment (3.1%) compared to the Southeast (3.9%) and UK as a

whole (4.6%)²⁵. 59% of Spelthorne's population is of working age (aged 20-64) compared to 57.5% for the Southeast and 58.5% for England¹. 74.3% of Spelthorne's working age population are employed, with this being lower than the Southeast at 79.3%²⁶.

- 3.36 The majority of Spelthorne residents are employed as managers/senior officials or as professionals (49%) which is below the Southeast average (56.3%) but slightly above England (46.55%). The majority of employment floorspace is located within designated Employment Areas, including Staines Town Centre.
- 3.37 Data from the Valuation Office Agency (March 2023) shows that the current supply of business floorspace in Spelthorne stands at around 770,000sqm, comprising approximately 309,000sqm industrial floorspace, 168,000sqm office floorspace, 167,000sqm retail floorspace and 127,000sqm of other commercial floorspace.²⁷ Employment Land Needs Assessment 2022²⁸ indicates continued demand for employment premises across the Borough, with a number of key employment areas reported as having few vacant units or being fully occupied.
- 3.38 Retail vacancy rates in Staines, Ashford, Shepperton and Sunbury Cross centres were recorded in October 2025. Table 12 shows that vacancy rates are the lowest in Shepperton and the highest in Ashford. Nationally, vacancy on high streets averages about 13%²⁹ showing the levels of vacancy in all but one of the Borough centre's to be above the national level.

Table 12: Vacancy Rate within Main Retail Centres

Location	Total Units in Centre	Number of Units Vacant	Vacancy as % of all units
Ashford	189	26	14
Shepperton	96	4	4
Staines	391	29	8
Sunbury Cross	58	4	7

- 3.39 There are 4,835 businesses in Spelthorne, with 81.7% having between 1 and 4 employees and 92.7% employing less than 20 people³⁰.

²⁵

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/timeseries/mgsx/lms>

²⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/labourmarketlocal/E07000213/>

²⁷

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6467499f0d6646000cd96310/NDR_Business_Floorspace_Tables_2023.xlsx

²⁸ [ECN001-Employment-Land-Needs-Assessment-2022.pdf](https://www.ecn001-employment-land-needs-assessment-2022.pdf)

²⁹ https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/387975-0

³⁰ https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration/media/16065/Local-Economic-Assessment/pdf/Local_Economic_Assessment_v5.pdf

- 3.40 Gross weekly pay for those living in Spelthorne³¹ is £867.70 for full-time employees, which compares to £749.60 for those people who work in Spelthorne³². This may indicate that many residents commute to higher-paid employment opportunities outside the Borough. although resident earnings are still above the Southeast average (£775.80) and England (£770.80).
- 3.41 49.5% of the Spelthorne population are educated to NVQ level 3 (2 or more A-Levels) or above with 33.5% educated to NVQ level 4 or above (HND, degree). This compares to 45.1% for the Southeast and 43.1% for England. The number of Spelthorne residents with no qualifications is 16.8% which is lower than England at 18.2%³³. Although qualification levels remain above regional and national averages, more recent trends indicate a reduction in the proportion of residents holding higher level qualifications.
- 3.42 The UK Competitiveness Index ranks each local authority in terms of how it performs against a range of data sets. The lower the ranking score the more competitive an area. According to the 2023 UK Competitiveness Ranking³⁴, Spelthorne was ranked 66th out of 362 authority areas. This is a lower ranking compared to some of Spelthorne's neighbouring Boroughs, with examples of these being Runnymede with a rank of 9th, Elmbridge with 11th and Richmond upon Thames at 16th.
- 3.43 Heathrow Airport is a major employment site which sits just outside of Spelthorne in the neighbouring London Borough of Hillingdon. In 2025 the airport handled some 84.5m passengers. There are approximately 80,000 direct on-airport jobs generated by over 400 companies with roughly 8.3% of the Spelthorne population being employed at Heathrow Airport.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.44 Spelthorne has a relatively strong labour market, with an economic activity rate of approximately 80.8% in 2025. Around 62.8% of the Borough's population is of working age (16-64). As with many areas nationally, demographic projections indicate an ageing population profile, which may reduce the proportion of residents of working age over time. Population growth may partially offset these effects.

³¹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/placeofresidencebylocalauthorityshetable8>

³²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/placeofworkbylocalauthorityshetable7>

³³ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-and-training-statistics-for-the-uk/2025>

³⁴ <https://cforic.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/UKCI-2023.pdf>

- 3.45 Commercial vacancy rates have fluctuated over recent years. Employment market evidence indicates that office availability in the wider Thames Valley market remained around 10.7% at the end of 2021, while industrial and logistics floorspace availability across the Western Corridor remained at historically low levels, reflecting continued demand for industrial premises.

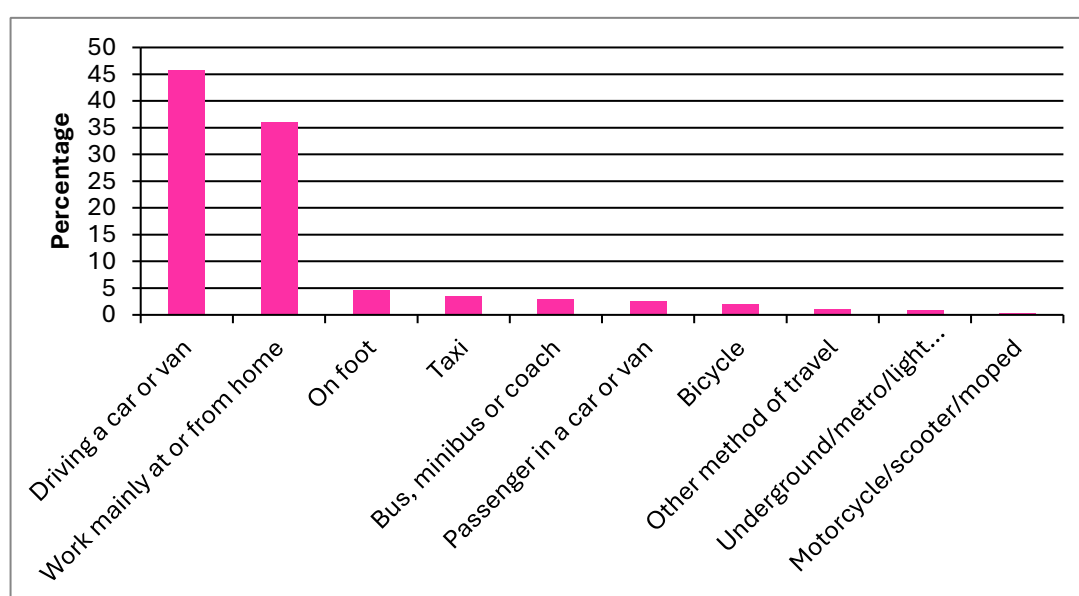
Issue or Problem
Declining proportion of working-age residents may affect future labour supply.
Ensuring an adequate supply of employment floorspace to support economic growth.
Maintaining the vitality and viability of town and local centres.
Skills and qualification levels have declined in recent years.
Maintaining competitiveness in the face of demographic and housing affordability pressures.
Dependence on Heathrow Airport and wider economic conditions

Transport

- 3.46 Government policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework recognises a need for transport policies to facilitate sustainable development and for plans to maximise sustainable transport modes.
- 3.47 Five trunk roads pass through the Borough of Spelthorne, comprising of:
- M25 through the north-west corner at junctions 13 and 14
 - M3 through the south, with junction 1 at Sunbury Cross
 - A316 which extends from Sunbury Cross to London
 - A30 which moves through Ashford North and Stanwell South from junction 13 of the M25
 - A3113 from junction 14 of the M25 towards Stanwell Moor Road
- 3.48 National Highways manages the Strategic Road Network in Spelthorne, which is made up of the motorways and major trunk roads. The local road network within the Borough is managed by Surrey County Council.
- 3.49 There are four road bridges which join the Borough of Spelthorne to areas south of the River Thames (Staines Bridge, M3 Bridges at Chertsey, Chertsey Bridge and Walton Bridge). These, along with the presence of Hampton Court Bridge to the Southeast and Heathrow Airport to the north, have the effect of funnelling traffic movements into and out of the borough to these key points.
- 3.50 Car/van availability within the borough is higher than both the regional and national averages, with only 14.7% of households not having a car available, in comparison to the higher 16.9% and 23.5% in Southeast and England respectively¹.

- 3.51 This trend is reflected in method of travel to work, with 45.7% of people using a car/van to get to work followed by travel on foot with 4.5% and 0.9% by train. 35.9% work mainly at or from home³⁵. The second most common work pattern is working mainly from home (35.9%).

Figure 6: Method of Travel to Work in Spelthorne (Census, 2021)



- 3.52 Car/van travel was found to be the most common method of travel for journeys in Spelthorne, with travel on foot second, yet there is a large disparity between the first and second ranking with car/van travel much more popular¹. Table 13 sets out commuting distances for Spelthorne residents. The relatively short travel distances recorded suggest there is potential to increase the proportion of trips made by active travel and public transport.

Table 13: Distance Travelled to Work in Spelthorne¹

Distance travelled to work	Percentage
<2km	14.6%
2km-<5km	25%

³⁵ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/page/464/spelthorne-population-data>

5km-<10km	31.2%
10km-<20km	17.9%
20km-<30km	7.7%
30km-<40km	1.6%
40km-<60km	0.9%
60km+	1.2%

- 3.53 Over half of Spelthorne residents (56.2%) travel less than 10km to work with 74% of individuals commuting less than 20km. Longer distance travel is much less common, with only 11.4% travelling more than 20km and 3.7% travelling more than 30km.
- 3.54 Census 2021 travel-to-work data indicates that private car and van travel remains the dominant mode of transport for commuting in Spelthorne, accounting for 45.7% of journeys to work. A significant proportion of residents (35.9%) work mainly at or from home, reflecting changes in working practices since the Covid-19 pandemic. Walking accounts for 4.5% of journeys to work, with smaller proportions travelling by public transport, bicycle or other modes.
- 3.55 Two rail lines pass through the Borough of Spelthorne, comprising the London Waterloo to Reading line and the Shepperton branch line. These provide connections to London Waterloo, Reading, Weybridge and Windsor, with stations located at Sunbury, Kempton Park, Shepperton, Upper Halliford, Ashford and Staines. Staines is one of Surrey's busiest railway stations, recording approximately 2.87 million entries and exits in 2018/19, and functions as an important interchange within the rail network. Although Heathrow Airport lies immediately north of the Borough, there is currently no direct rail connection between Spelthorne and Heathrow. The Surrey Rail Strategy 2021 identifies improved rail connectivity to Heathrow as a strategic priority and supports proposals for Southern Rail Access to Heathrow, including a potential direct Waterloo to Heathrow service via Staines and wider regional rail connections serving Surrey³⁶.
- 3.56 Crossrail 2 has been proposed and is expected to improve connectivity between London and the Borough, with part of the proposed route running through Surrey and into Spelthorne. The scheme was previously in the early stages of planning however has now officially paused. Crossrail 2 remains safeguarded but there is currently no committed programme for delivery.
- 3.57 Bus services operate throughout Spelthorne, providing connections between the Borough's main settlements, neighbouring Surrey authorities, Heathrow Airport and destinations in west and south-west London. Staines serves as the principal public

³⁶ [Surrey Rail Strategy 2021](#)

transport hub within the Borough, benefiting from a purpose-built bus station where a number of local and regional services converge. The Borough has a relatively extensive bus network compared with many parts of Surrey, reflecting its proximity to Heathrow Airport, London and surrounding employment centres. Bus services play an important role in supporting access to employment, education, retail and leisure destinations, while also providing an alternative to private car travel.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.58 The high level of car use is likely to continue and as such congestion will remain an issue within Spelthorne and could worsen over time, especially in the town centres of Staines and at Sunbury Cross. There has been an increase in Spelthorne in the percentage of households owning 3 or more cars/vans per household rising from 10.7% in 2011 to 12% in 2021¹. This reflects the national trend, which has also seen an increase in car/van ownership. Based on historic census trends, car ownership levels are likely to remain high.
- 3.59 Any future expansion of Heathrow Airport could increase employment opportunities and associated travel demand, with potential implications for congestion on the local and strategic road network.
- 3.60 Flooding will remain a key issue affecting the Borough's transport network. The 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies widespread fluvial and surface water flood risk across Spelthorne, with surface water flooding often concentrated along road networks and major transport corridors. Flooding has the potential to affect accessibility, connectivity and the operation of transport infrastructure during severe weather events. The impacts of climate change are expected to increase flood risk over time, reinforcing the need for resilient transport infrastructure.³⁷
- 3.61 Rail and bus services in the Borough are good in terms of number and frequency of services with routes into London and the rest of Surrey. This is likely to continue in the absence of the plan although rail access to Heathrow is an issue.

Issue or Problem
High levels of car ownership and traffic congestion across parts of the Borough.
Dominance of car travel for relatively short journeys.
Lack of direct rail connectivity to Heathrow Airport.
Future Heathrow expansion may increase travel demand and pressure on transport infrastructure.
Flooding can affect the resilience of parts of the transport network.
Need to increase travel by walking, cycling and public transport.

³⁷ [Spelthorne_Level1_SFRA Main Report 2024-10.docx](#)

Material Assets

- 3.62 Although there is no set definition of what constitutes ‘material assets’, this section will focus on housing, infrastructure and minerals.

Housing

- 3.63 There were 44,656 dwellings within the borough of Spelthorne in 2025³⁸ with a large proportion of these built between 1920 and 1970. Of these, the largest dwelling type is ‘semi-detached’ at 34.2%, which is higher than the regional and national averages. This is followed by flats at 22.8% which is similar to the national average at 21.7%. The number of dwellings has continued to increase over time, reflecting ongoing housing delivery within the Borough.
- 3.64 In Census 2021 data indicates that owner occupation remains the dominant form of tenure within Spelthorne. Households that own their home with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership arrangement account for 35.9% of all households, while a further 33.4% own their home outright. Together, these categories account for over two-thirds of households in the Borough, demonstrating relatively high levels of home ownership. Private rented accommodation and households living rent free account for 18.0% of households, while 12.7% of households live in socially rented accommodation. The proportion of households living in private rented accommodation has increased since 2011, reflecting national and regional trends. Although previous datasets distinguished between council and housing association rented accommodation, Spelthorne Borough Council transferred its housing stock to Spelthorne Housing Association (now A2Dominion) in 1997 and no longer owns council housing stock directly.
- 3.65 Entry level house prices within the borough are roughly 12x the average earnings of households in comparison of a 7.7 ratio nationally.

Table 14: Average House Prices in Spelthorne (May 2024)

Detached	Semidetached	Terraced	Flats	Overall
£743,831	£494,510	£397,014	£268,490	£475,957

- 3.66 Census 2021 data indicates that Spelthorne's housing stock is dominated by family-sized dwellings, with approximately 60% of households occupying properties with three or more bedrooms and 19.8% occupying properties with four or more bedrooms.

Table 15: Lower Quartile Private Rents (September 2022) - Per Month

Dwelling Size	Spelthorne
---------------	------------

³⁸ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/682deb00b33f68eaba95391b/LiveTable100.ods>

Room only	£625
Studio	£795
1 bedroom	£925
2 bedroom	£1,150
3 bedroom	£1,350
4+ bedroom	£1,600

- 3.67 Spelthorne's completion rates do not meet the requirement of the current Local Housing Need figure of 631 dwellings per annum as set out in Spelthorne's Statement of Housing Land Supply (March 2026) with net completions for 2024/25 having totalled 194³⁹. An additional 20% buffer is applied to this target due to previous years under delivery.

Education

- 3.68 Spelthorne contains a range of educational facilities serving children and young people of all ages, including primary schools, secondary schools, sixth form provision, specialist educational facilities and alternative provision. Educational provision within the Borough forms part of Surrey County Council's wider school place planning framework, which seeks to ensure a sufficient supply of school places and specialist provision to meet local needs. Surrey County Council forecasts that primary pupil numbers will continue to decline in line with falling birth rates, while secondary school demand is expected to remain higher in the short term before stabilising and reducing over the longer term. Any future increases in demand are expected to arise primarily from new housing development and migration. The School Organisation Plan 2025-2035 also highlights continuing growth in demand for specialist provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with additional specialist places being delivered across Surrey through the SEND and Alternative Provision Capital Programme⁴⁰.
- 3.69 Birth rates have generally declined since their peak in 2012, reflecting national and countywide trends. As a consequence, demand for primary school places is also declining. Surrey County Council's School Organisation Plan 2025-2035 notes that any future increases in demand for school places are expected to arise primarily from new housing development and migration rather than underlying demographic growth. The Council continues to monitor demand and capacity to ensure a sufficient supply of school places across the county.
- 3.70 School place demand in Spelthorne reflects wider trends across Surrey. The School Organisation Plan 2025-2035 notes that demand for primary school places has

³⁹ Spelthorne Borough Council internal monitoring

⁴⁰ [School Organisation Plan 2025-2035](#)

declined in recent years as a result of falling birth rates, with the number of pupils requiring primary school places expected to remain lower than previous peaks. Any future increases in demand are expected to arise primarily from new housing development and migration. In contrast, demand for secondary school places is expected to remain higher in the short term as larger pupil cohorts move through the education system before stabilising and declining later in the plan period. Surrey County Council continues to monitor school place provision and demand to ensure a sufficient supply of places across all phases of education

Table 16: Surrey School Place Planning Forecasts (2025-2035)

Phase	Trend
Primary	Demand has declined due to falling birth rates and is expected to remain below historic peaks.
Secondary	Demand is expected to increase in the short term before stabilising and declining.
Post-16	Demand continues to be influenced by learner choice, demographic change and skills requirements.
SEND	Continued growth in demand for specialist provision and EHCP support.

Health

- 3.71 Spelthorne lies within the Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System. Healthcare provision is supported by a network of GP practices and community health facilities, with acute services primarily provided by Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2024-2039 identifies ongoing demand for healthcare infrastructure arising from planned population growth, including the proposed Staines Health and Wellbeing Centre and improvements to primary healthcare facilities in Sunbury and Staines.⁴¹
- 3.72 Sunbury Health Centre is reported to be operating under capacity pressures reflecting growth in registered patient numbers and changing healthcare demands.

Leisure Centres⁴²

⁴¹ [INF006_Infrastructure-Delivery-Plan-2024-With-minor-revisions-January-2025.pdf](#)

⁴² Based on 2017 Needs Assessment and information from SBC Leisure and Wellbeing team https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration/media/19095/Leisure-Needs-Analysis/pdf/Leisure_Needs_Analysis11.pdf

- 3.73 Within the borough of Spelthorne there are 6 Swimming Pools accompanied by 5 teaching pools. 1 of these pools is a 25m 8 lane pool at the new Eclipse leisure centre operated by Places Leisure on behalf of the Council. Places Leisure also operate a further 25m 6 lane pool on behalf of the Council at Sunbury Leisure Centre. The remaining swimming pools are smaller in size and are either in private health clubs or on school sites.

9 main sports halls are present within Spelthorne, with 8 being 4-court halls and one being a 6-court hall. Eclipse Leisure Centre is the only sports hall within the borough that provides community daytime weekday access during term time with the others being on school sites or business premises. Furthermore, the quality of sports halls in the borough varies from excellent/brand new at Eclipse Leisure Centre to some older facilities date from the 1980s and 1990s.

- 3.74 Moreover, the sports halls at Eclipse Leisure Centre and Sunbury Leisure Centre operate near 100% capacity on weekday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Table 17: Facilities within a 20-minute walk

Facility Type	Ashford	Laleham	Shepperton	Staines	Stanwell	Sunbury-on-Thames
Main Sports Halls	1	0	1	3	0	2
Activity Halls	3	0	2	1	0	2
Main Swimming Pools	0	1	0	1	0	2
Teaching Pools	0	0	0	2	0	2
Lidos	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Fitness Suites	0	1	3	3	0	3
Studios	0	3	3	5	0	3
Squash Courts	0	0	0	3	0	0
Tennis Courts	9 + 2 mini	0	3	7 + 4 mini	0	3

- 3.75 Staines, and Ashford appear to have a large proportion of leisure facilities within a 20-minute walk, whereas Laleham and Stanwell do not have any facilities within a 20-minute walking distance. All of the communities are of widely varying populations and distances are measured from the centre point of those communities. Some types of facility are only provided for a large population.

Open Spaces and Sports Pitches

- 3.76 Open space and sports pitches within the borough are of good provision as a whole; however, there is a more limited quantity of facilities in parts of Staines and Ashford.
- 3.77 Currently in Spelthorne there is a deficit for most types/sizes of football pitches including a clear deficit for 3G pitches. The supply of cricket pitches meets current demand, but there is no spare capacity and there is limited spare capacity for rugby and hockey.
- 3.78 In terms of future provision, it is likely that existing shortfalls will increase, and further shortfalls will develop due to a rising population and increased demand. There is a need therefore to protect all existing outdoor pitch provision as well as to improve the quality and/or quantity of existing provision in some areas.
- 3.79 Whilst some of the shortfalls seen for pitch sports could be met via pitch quality improvements at existing sites, the extent to which increased capacity is achievable in this way is dependent on available opportunities and funding to deliver and sustain such enhancements. This may not be feasible in all cases. Further exploration of other opportunities such as greater use of educational sites is therefore required.

Reservoirs and Water Treatment Works

- 3.80 There are five major water supply reservoirs in Spelthorne. These are the Wraysbury Reservoir, King George VI Reservoir, two Staines Reservoirs and Queen Mary Reservoir.
- 3.81 To the east of Queen Mary Reservoir lies the water treatment works at Ashford Common.

Minerals

- 3.82 Primary aggregates are present in parts of Spelthorne, with unworked deposits at King George VI Reservoir, Queen Mary Reservoir, Manor Farm, Home Farm and extensions at Shepperton and Watersplash Farm, Sunbury. These are all included within Surrey County Council's Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Development Plan Document as preferred areas and areas of search. Mineral extraction is a temporary activity, and all extraction proposals include appropriate restoration.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.83 The number of dwellings in the Borough is currently likely to continue to rise, given the Local Housing Need figure of 631 dwellings per annum is applicable at present. The rising population both natural and from migration will continue to place pressure on housing needs in the Borough, including affordable housing needs. This is supported by the fact that house prices are on average 12x the average salary of households. This trend is likely to continue as housing demand increases.

- 3.84 With an aging population, the quantity of people aged 65+ is expected to rise by 41.4% by 2035⁴³. As such, it is possible that a proportion of these people may choose to downsize, impacting upon the requirements for different housing stock. An ageing population also has implications for health infrastructure and services.
- 3.85 The increase in population is anticipated to generate the need for additional secondary school places. However forward planning for school provision has enabled this need to be absorbed by existing and planned capacity improvements at a number of schools in Spelthorne. Similarly, a rising population will place increasing pressure on health services, some of which are operating at or already over capacity.
- 3.86 In terms of leisure space, there are current deficits for certain types of sports facilities and pitches and will be placed under further pressure by the expected increase in population in the borough by 2035 at 18.1%. A new leisure centre was opened in Staines in October 2024 providing new and upgraded facilities to meet demand.

Issue or Problem
Housing affordability remains a significant challenge within the Borough.
Rising population and household growth place pressure on housing supply, including affordable housing.
An ageing population may increase demand for specialist and adaptable housing.
Additional pressure is likely to be placed on education, health and leisure infrastructure.
Deficits exist in some sports pitch provision, particularly football and 3G facilities.

Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment

- 3.87 According to UNESCO (1972), Cultural Heritage encompasses⁴⁴:
- Monuments: Architectural works, works of monumental sculpture, elements of structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features which are of outstanding values from the point of view of history, art or science
 - Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites, which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

⁴³ https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration/media/21634/Spelthorne-SHMA-Update-Report/pdf/Spelthorne_SHMA_Update_Report.pdf

⁴⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

- Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science

3.88 Within Spelthorne there are 198 statutory listed buildings. In addition to these, there is a further 157 other buildings and structures within the borough that are of local significance⁴⁵.

Table 18: Listed Buildings

Grade	Number in Spelthorne (%)	National Stock of Listed Buildings by grade
Grade I	3 (1.5%)	2.5%
Grade II*	12 (6.1%)	5.5%
Grade II	183 (92.4%)	92.0%

3.89 The distribution of listed buildings by grade is broadly consistent with the national profile. Percentages in both of these gradings are above that of the national stock, however there is a slightly lower proportion of Grade I listed buildings in the Borough.

Within the Borough there are four Scheduled Monuments of national significance. Spelthorne also contains a number of sites of archaeological importance recorded through the Surrey Historic Environment Record, including designated sites at Matthew Arnold School and Saxon Primary School. These assets provide evidence of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and later activity within the Borough.⁴⁶

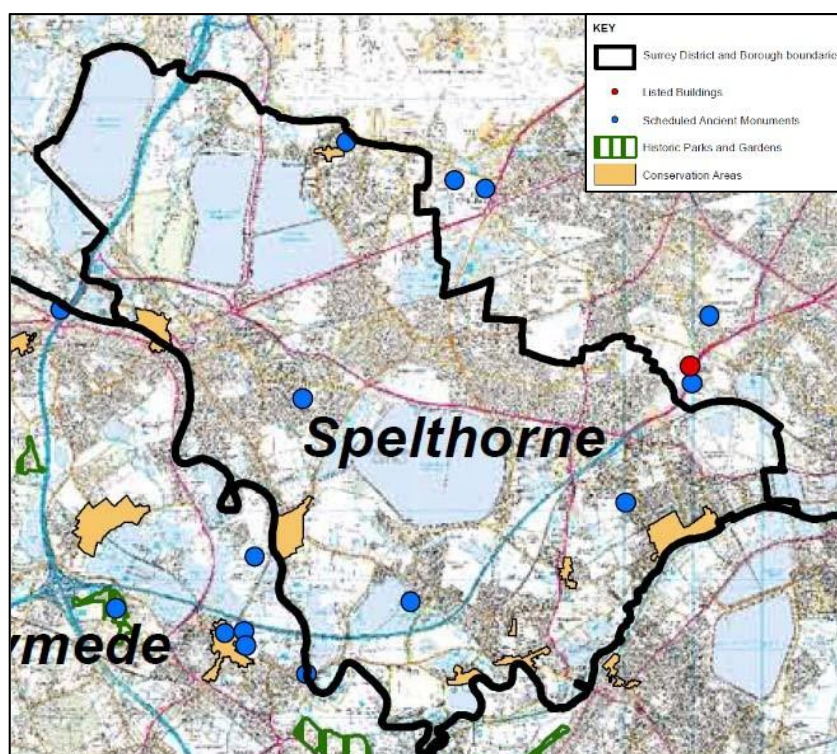
3.90 There are also 8 conservation areas within the borough at Laleham; Lower Halliford; Lower Sunbury; Manygate Lane, Shepperton; Staines; Stanwell; Upper Halliford. Enhancement plans exist for each of the conservation areas.

3.91 There are no historic parks and gardens within Spelthorne; however, it is home to the Sunbury Walled Garden, built in early 18th Century and the Nursery in Laleham.

⁴⁵ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/Authority%20Monitoring%20Report%202025.pdf>

⁴⁶ [Map Search | Search the List: Map Search | Historic England](#)

Figure 7: Historic Features⁴⁷



Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.92 It is unlikely that cultural heritage and the historic environment will undergo any significant change, although the Borough Council could designate or remove buildings and structures from local lists and conservation areas could be amended or added. Similarly, the current review of designated sites of archaeological importance could remove, amend or add sites.
- 3.93 No significant existing issues affecting designated heritage assets have been identified; however, continued protection and sensitive management of heritage assets and their settings remain important considerations for future development.

Issue or Problem

Need to protect and enhance heritage assets, archaeological remains and their settings as growth and change occur.

Landscape

- 3.94 Spelthorne is situated within the Thames Valley National Character Area (NCA)⁴⁸. The River Thames at the centre of the landscape means that the environment is

⁴⁷ https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/82257/Surrey-LCA-2015-SPELTHORNE-Report.pdf

⁴⁸ <https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/thames-valley/>

generally flat and open, with 65% of the Borough is designated as Green Belt⁴⁹. A portion of the River Thames has historically become somewhat urbanised by interwar plotland developments which hold a unique character, however much of the river is 'natural'. Many assets of the environment have developed around the river and the tributaries which include the River Colne and the River Ash.

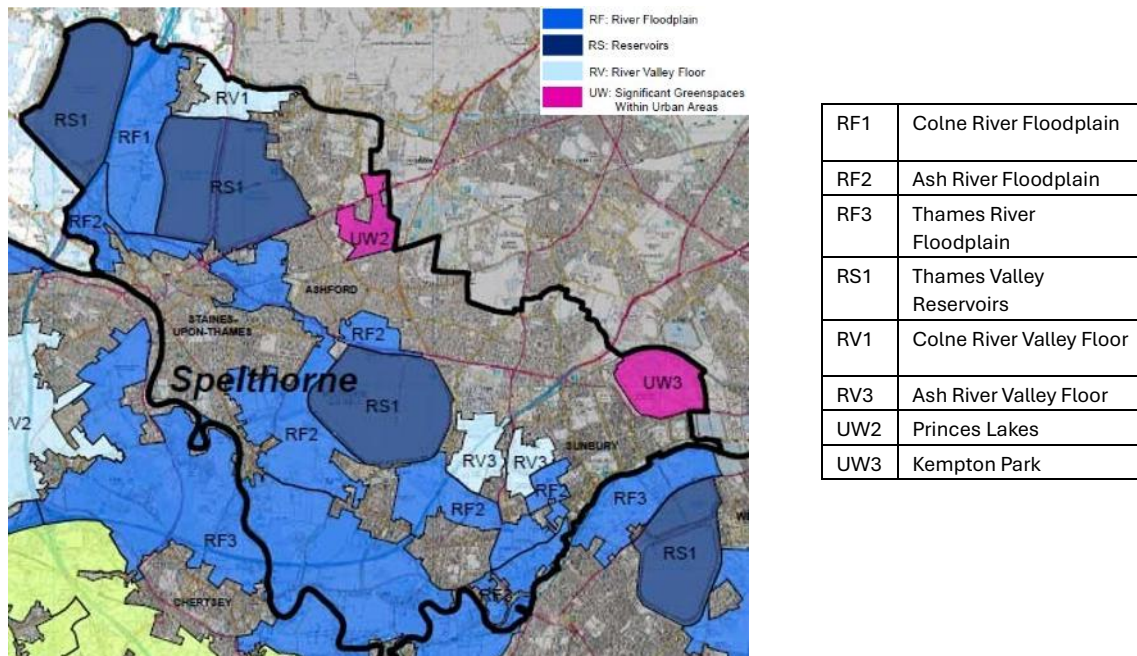
- 3.95 The Thames Valley National Character Area extends east from Reading towards Slough, Windsor, the Colne Valley and the south-west London fringes. The area is split by transport links, and the eastern portion is largely urban. Despite this urban character, there are 38 sites of special scientific interest within the NCA, which equates to over 6% of the land area. Four of these are located within Spelthorne.
- 3.96 As such, the landscape is governed by river floodplains, reservoirs and river valleys, with the path of the River Thames a significant factor in shaping this. The Northwest of the borough is home to the Colne River which creates a character landscape based on the floodplain and river valley. This area is characterised by its low level which allows for expansive views. Staines Moor makes up the southern portion of the character area, whilst to the north old gravel pit lakes are present. The Thames Valley Reservoirs are also key features of the landscape, with embankments approximately 15m above ground level. Fencing and sheep grazing often stand on the sides of the embankment. The area is a mixture of settlement, pastoral land, water features, roads and railway.
- 3.97 Also in the north is Princes Lakes, a significant greenspace within the urban area, providing open water and relief from the surrounding developed space. Similarly, Kempton Park is present on the eastern periphery of the borough and is also identified as a significant greenspace within the urban area⁵⁰.
- 3.98 Towards the centre of the borough is the River Ash. The floodplain for this river extends from north of Staines, running generally southwards through the Borough to Shepperton where the Ash meets the River Thames. Much of the landscape associated with this is small to medium sized pastoral fields and lakes created following the completion of gravel and mineral extraction. The A30 and A308 as well as Shepperton Station mark the landscape and there is a small ancient woodland west of Queen Mary Reservoir.
- 3.99 The Thames Floodplain expands through much of the south of Spelthorne, whereby the flat, low-lying land is bounded by built up areas. This urban presence, as well as the close proximity of the M3, means that there is restricted tranquillity within the landscape.

⁴⁹ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/Authority%20Monitoring%20Report%202025.pdf>

⁵⁰ https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/82257/Surrey-LCA-2015-SPELTHORNE-Report.pdf

- 3.100 Throughout the area, gravel and mineral extraction and low-quality restoration works has left a relatively damaged landscape, often adjacent to higher quality land which has undergone natural regeneration.

Figure 8: Surrey Character Areas: Spelthorne⁵⁰



Townscape

- 3.101 Staines, Sunbury-on-Thames, Ashford, Shepperton and Stanwell are the main settlements within Spelthorne. The majority of residential growth within the borough occurred between 1930 and 1950, with the Green Belt designation introduced in 1956. This led to growth being confined largely to already urban areas.
- 3.102 Staines is a suburban settlement on the western periphery of the M25 and is a retail hub to the surrounding catchment. The area is relatively flat. There are no remaining woods within the town; however, there are a notable number of parks and open spaces. A large conservation area comprises the western end of Staines which holds historic buildings and route ways at Church Lammas.
- 3.103 Ashford is the second largest retail centre within the area, holding a linear character, with the majority of the centre developed primarily in the 1960s. This area is largely residential with largely low density, low- and medium-rise buildings.
- 3.104 Stanwell is approximately 0.5 miles from Heathrow and is a suburban settlement. Stanwell Moor Village is a semi-rural settlement separated from Stanwell by a dual-carriageway, reservoir and fields. Some factories erected during the 1950s are still present along the A30 and the main shopping areas in Stanwell are the High Street and Clare Road. Stanwell conservation area is also present to the east of Staines Reservoirs.

- 3.105 Sunbury centre is split into 2 parts: The Parade and The Centre, to the north and south of Staines Road West respectively. There has been some upgrading of the public realm at the Parade, though the centre remains visually dominated by the main road. The Centre has however recently been the subject of several small-scale refurbishments. Lower Sunbury conservation area surrounds Sunbury Park. Lower Sunbury comprises half of the settlement which is largely a green-buffered residential area, whereas Sunbury Common to the north is ordered by its tower blocks.
- 3.106 Shepperton is chiefly a convenience centre that serves the southern portion of Spelthorne. The area is home to Shepperton conservation area, Manygate Lane conservation area and is in close proximity to Lower Halliford and Upper Halliford conservation areas.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.107 It is considered that in the future many of the landscape and townscape characteristics in the Borough will remain largely unchanged in the absence of the plan. However future development, infrastructure provision and climate adaptation measures have the potential to affect landscape and townscape character if not carefully planned and designed. The Borough's parks, river corridors, reservoirs and open spaces also form an important Green Infrastructure network which contributes to biodiversity, recreation, climate resilience and local character.

Issue or Problem

Need to protect and enhance landscape and townscape character while accommodating future growth and infrastructure requirements.

Climate

- 3.108 The accumulation of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere such as carbon dioxide is predicted to alter the weather and climate on a global and national scale, climate projections indicate that the Southeast is likely to experience warmer temperatures, more frequent heatwaves, drier summers and wetter winters over the coming decades. Furthermore, heatwaves will become more of a regular occurrence in the summer, and rainfall will rise in winter⁵¹.
- 3.109 CO2 emissions in Spelthorne have continually fallen since 2005 from 548.8 kilo tonnes to 372 kilo tonnes in 2023, a decrease of 32%. This trend is also reflected in Surrey which saw a 47% decrease in CO2 emissions within the same time period. During the 2012-2023 period domestic sector emissions in Spelthorne fell from 216 kilo tonnes to 113 kilo tonnes (47.7%) but increased from the transport sector from 118 kilo tonnes to 175.7(49%). In the same period emissions from the industrial/commercial sector decreased from 249 kilo tonnes to 53.5 (78.5%). As a

⁵¹ [Spelthorne Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document - June 2026.pdf](#)

result, transport has become the dominant source of carbon emissions within the Borough.

- 3.110 Excluding motorway traffic, per capita emissions of CO₂ for Spelthorne have reduced from 6 tonnes per capita in 2012 to 3.6 tonnes per capita in 2023, resulting in a 45% reduction⁵². This is reflective of the Surrey average at 6.1 tonnes per resident in 2012 which reduced to 3.7 tonnes per capita.
- 3.111 Surrey as a county holds an 86% household car ownership rate, compared to 78% on average in England. On a per-capita basis, transport emissions in Spelthorne are lower than the Surrey average, although transport remains the Borough's largest source of carbon emissions.

Table 19: CO₂ emissions from transport in Surrey and authorities adjoining Spelthorne (2023)⁵³

	Total transport emissions (kilo tonnes CO ₂)	Population (2021 Census) ⁵⁴	Transport emissions Per Capita (tonnes CO ₂)
Elmbridge	251.4	138,800	1.81
Epsom & Ewell	66.6	80,900	0.82
Guildford	351.2	143,600	2.45
Mole Valley	239.1	87,400	2.74
Reigate & Banstead	309.0	150,800	2.05
Runnymede	316.5	88,100	3.59
Spelthorne	175.7	103,000	1.71
Surrey Heath	233.4	90,500	2.58
Tandridge	337.6	87,900	3.84
Waverley	220.7	128,200	1.72
Woking	111.1	103,900	1.07
Surrey (Total)	2,612.3	1,203,100	2.17
Windsor & Maidenhead	343.6	153,500	2.24
Slough	162.7	158,500	1.03
Hillingdon	573.8	305,900	1.88
Hounslow	331.9	288,200	1.15
Richmond	186.8	195,300	0.96

- 3.112 The presence of the River Thames and its tributaries running through Spelthorne means that flood risk within the borough is significant. This risk is enhanced by the relatively flat nature of the borough; with the highest point at Oaks Road, Stanwell at

⁵² Per Capita emissions are calculated by dividing the total emissions by the population, therefore a rise in population equates to a reduction in per capita emissions.

⁵³ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686539026569be0acf74db5a/2005-23-uk-local-authority-ghg-emissions.xlsx>

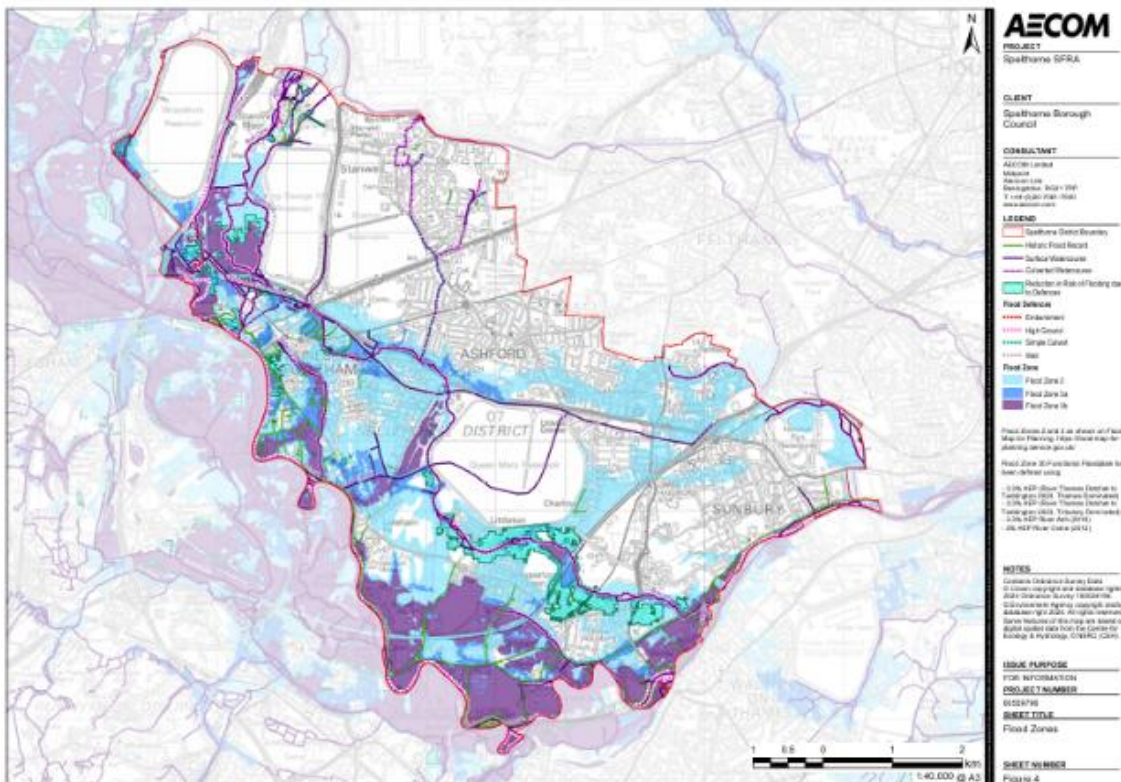
⁵⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000213/>

23.8m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the lowest point at Lower Sunbury at 7.5m AOD⁵⁵.

- 3.113 Flood risk remains a significant issue within Spelthorne due to the presence of the River Thames, River Ash and River Colne and their associated floodplains. Large areas of the Borough are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and several of the Borough's main settlements, including Staines, Shepperton, Sunbury-on-Thames and Ashford, are affected by fluvial flood risk. In addition, the 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies widespread surface water flood risk throughout the Borough, particularly along road networks and within urban areas.
- 3.114 Flood defences within the borough are located largely on the lower Colne system, with raised defences and raised banks.
- 3.115 As a result of the area's susceptibility to flooding, The River Thames Scheme is in the process of development. The scheme will go through the Development Consent Order process as it is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It is currently at the pre-application stage. The programme remains subject to detailed design, consenting and funding arrangements.
- 3.116 The scheme involves a series of projects such as a new flood channel, property level products, improved flood response, biodiversity improvements and improved community support. The scheme will create three flood alleviation channels running from Datchet in Berkshire, through Surrey to Teddington. The size of the weirs will be increased at Sunbury, Molesey, Teddington and Desborough Cut, to increase their capacity enabling more water to flow through. The scheme's wider benefits will include new walking and cycle paths, parks and wildlife habitats.
- 3.117 It is estimated that the scheme will reduce flood risk to 15,000 properties and tens of thousands of people living and working near the River Thames. £404 million has already been committed to the scheme with it estimating to cost £640 million in total.

⁵⁵ https://spelthornelocalplan.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FLD154-Spelthorne_Level1_SFRA-Main-Report-2024-07.pdf

Figure 9: Risk of Flooding within Spelthorne Borough⁵⁶



Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.118 Climate change impacts are predicted to continue and worsen over time. With more frequent and intense rainfall events fluvial flood risk may increase in the borough, given its close proximity to the Thames and flat topography. Some of this risk will be offset if the River Thames Scheme is implemented in the longer term, but areas and properties within the Borough will remain at risk from fluvial flooding.
- 3.119 With the advent of more frequent rainfall events flood risk from surface water flooding and groundwater flooding are also likely, although to some extent this may be offset by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems which are now compulsory.
- 3.120 As such, the future trend for flood risk is uncertain.
- 3.121 The decrease in CO2 emissions from the domestic sector is likely to continue, reflecting sustained improvements in residential energy efficiency and building standards. However, recent trends show a significant increase in emissions from the transport sector, likely driven by continued reliance on private vehicles and increased travel demand. In contrast, emissions from the industrial and commercial sector have declined markedly, suggesting improvements in energy efficiency,

⁵⁶ [FLD204-Spelthorne_Level1_SFRA_Figure4_FloodZoneMaps_Overview-1.pdf](#)

changes in economic activity, or reduced carbon intensity of operations. However, the extent to which this decline will continue remains uncertain and will depend on future national policy. Overall, while reductions in emissions from buildings are expected to continue, transport remains the key challenge and is likely to be the dominant source of emissions unless further intervention is implemented.

- 3.122 In addition to flood risk, climate projections indicate that the Borough is likely to experience more frequent heatwaves, hotter summers and periods of drought. These changes may increase pressure on water resources, affect public health, place stress on infrastructure and require new development to be designed to be resilient to future climate conditions.

Issue or Problem
Climate change is likely to increase the frequency and severity of flood events.
Transport is the largest source of carbon emissions within the Borough.
Development will need to contribute towards climate change mitigation and adaptation.
Increasing temperatures and more frequent heatwaves may affect public health, infrastructure and water resources.

Biodiversity

- 3.123 Biodiversity is the variety of life. Within Spelthorne there are a number of international, national and locally protected sites of conservation importance.
- 3.124 Internationally protected sites include the Southwest London Waterbodies Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar which in Spelthorne is made up of the King George VI, Staines, Wraysbury and Kempton Park Reservoirs and part of the Staines Moor SSSI. Other components of the SPA and Ramsar site lie outside Spelthorne within neighbouring authorities.
- 3.125 At the national level, there are four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) SSSIs located solely or partially within the borough: Dumsey Meadow SSSI, the Staines Moor SSSI, the Wraysbury Reservoir SSSI and the Kempton Park Reservoirs SSSI.

Table 20: Condition Status of SSSIs in Spelthorne⁵⁷

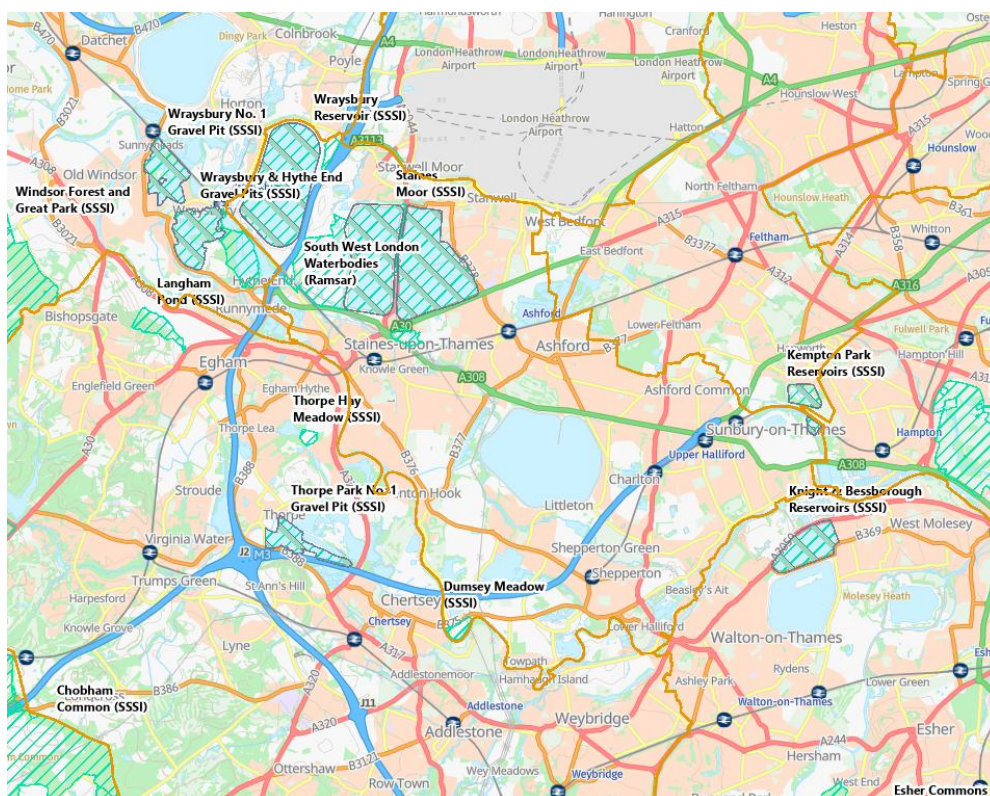
SSSI	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No Change	Unfavourable - Declining	Destroyed/ Partially Destroyed
Staines Moor*	96.16%	2.13%	0.00%	1.71%	0.00%
Dumsey Meadow	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Kempton Park Reservoirs*	0.00%	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

⁵⁷ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>

Wraysbury Reservoir*	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Knight & Bessborough Reservoirs*	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Wraysbury No 1 Gravel Pit*	0.00%	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Wraysbury & Hythe End Gravel Pits*	0.00%	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

*Forms part of the Southwest London Waterbodies SPA

Figure 10: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Green) and SPA/Ramsar Sites (Striped)⁵⁸



- 3.126 All SSSIs within the Borough are meeting Natural England's objective of maintaining sites in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition. However, Unit 1 (Poyle Meadow) which makes up 1.71% of the Staines Moor SSSI is in an unfavourable declining status. The reasons for this are a lack of indicator species, herb to grass ratio and a number of negative indicator species such as thistles, nettle and ragwort.
- 3.127 There are also 30 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) located within the borough (Figure 11). Surveys for a small number of sites were undertaken in 2018/19 which indicated that these sites should be retained as SNCIs. Further survey work is required to be carried out on the remaining sites however securing

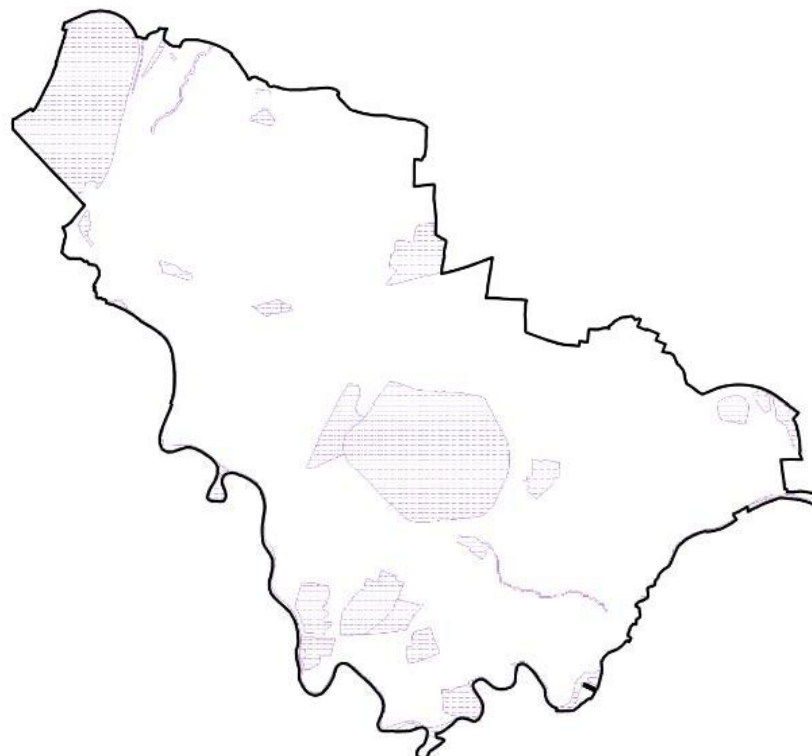
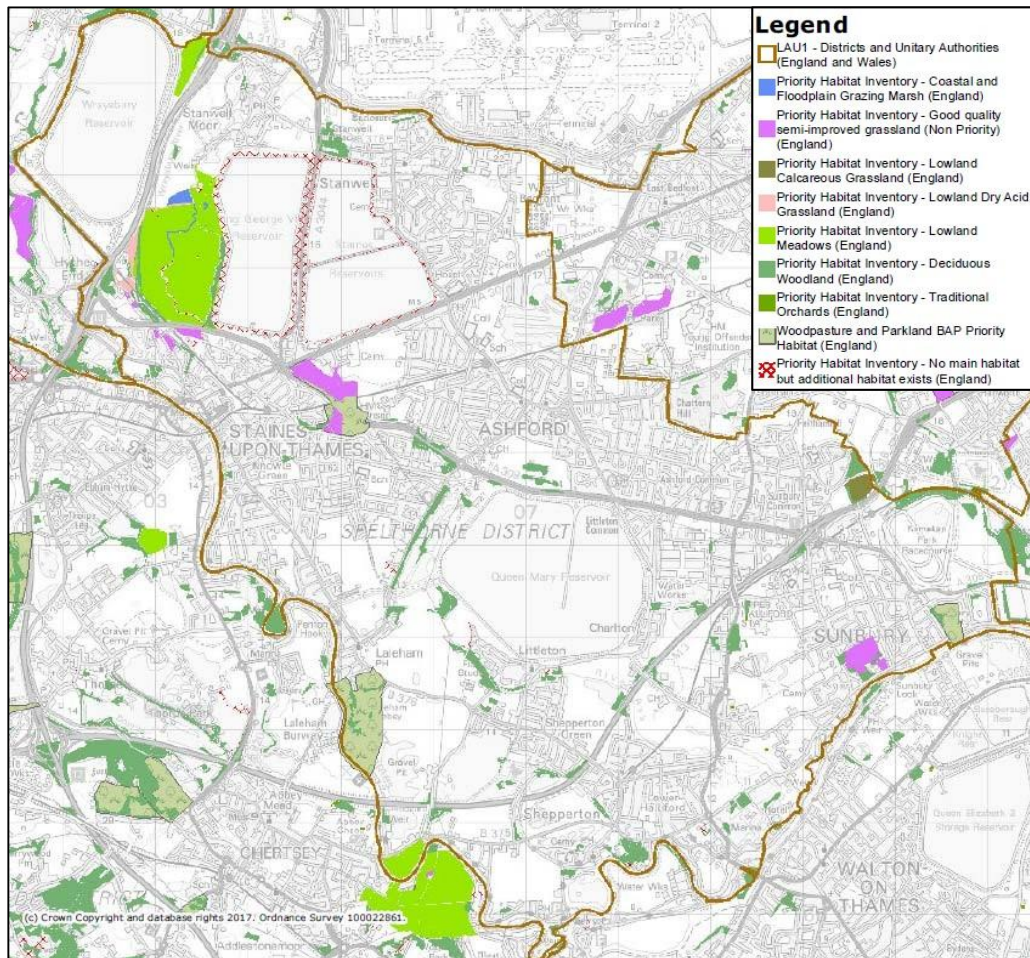
⁵⁸ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>

access to these is an obstacle. SNCIs play an important role in maintaining local biodiversity, ecological connectivity and nature recovery and should be protected and enhanced where possible.

- 3.128 A small portion of the Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) is located within Spelthorne. The Park is the first major greenspace encountered when travelling west out of London. It comprises 43 square miles of woodland, farmland and water on the periphery of Greater London⁵⁹. Spelthorne is a formal member of the CVRP and its Partnership and this provides an opportunity for various projects to be undertaken in the Borough. The Park also forms an important component of the Borough's Green Infrastructure network.

⁵⁹ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-12/Biodiversity%20Report.pdf>

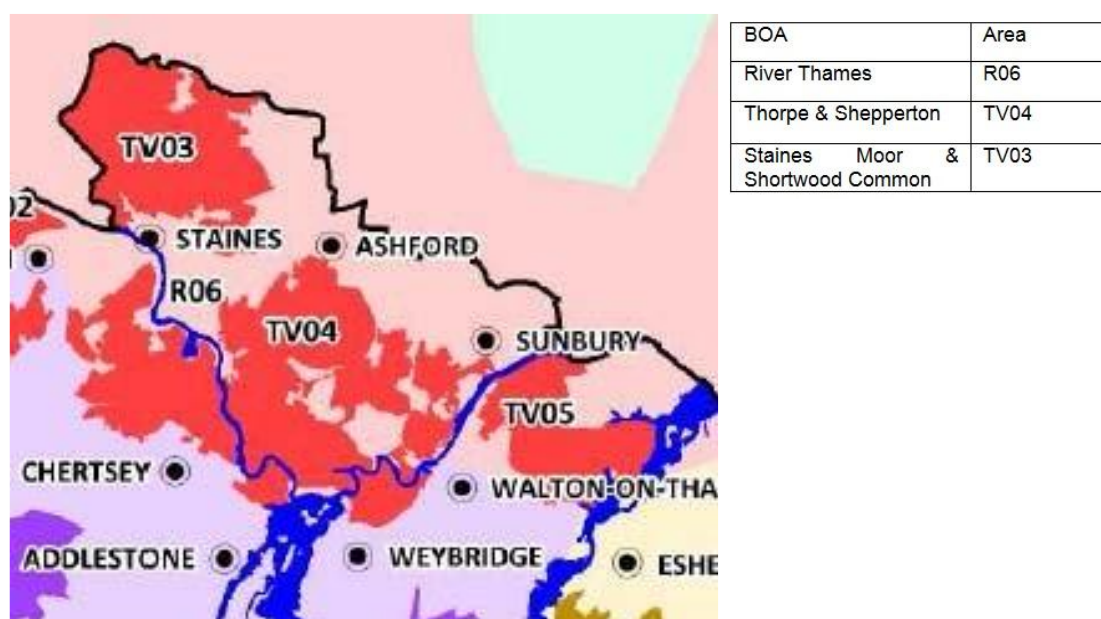
Figure 11: Priority Habitats (top) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (bottom) in Spelthorne



- 3.129 The Borough of Spelthorne also contains various uncommon species. In terms of rare plants, this includes small water-pepper (*Polygonum minus*) which is of National Significance, brown sedge (*Carex disticha*), southern marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*), marsh stitchwort (*Stellaria palustris*), marsh arrowgrass (*Triglochin palustris*) which are of County Significance and brown galingale (*Cyperus fuscus*), which is of High National Significance. Various diverse animal life is also present within the borough including stag beetles (*Lucanus cervus*), pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and yellow meadow ant (*Lasius flavus*).
- 3.130 A great degree of Spelthorne's most valued sites are in some part influenced by fluvial habitats, with both lotic and lentic environments influential in all of the Borough's Sites of Scientific Interest. Several Priority habitats (floodplain grazing marsh, unimproved meadows and historic parkland) and Broad habitats (standing open water and reedbeds and the urban environment) are present within the borough, home to various wildlife species (Figure 11).
- 3.131 Spelthorne is also home to three Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), which have been created for the county of Surrey as a whole to conserve and improve biodiversity at the scale of the landscape. These include the River Thames BOA, the Thorpe and Shepperton BOA and the Staines Moor and Shortwood Common BOA, all with their own unique habitats and collection of species all of which support a range of important habitats and species (See Figure 12)⁶⁰. These areas are also likely to contribute to the delivery of wider nature recovery objectives, including those identified through the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 3.132 The Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy will provide a framework for identifying priorities and opportunities for habitat enhancement and ecological connectivity across the county.
- 3.133 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now a mandatory requirement for most new development and requires the delivery of measurable improvements to biodiversity beyond pre-development conditions. BNG provides opportunities to strengthen ecological networks, improve habitat quality and contribute towards wider nature recovery objectives within the Borough.

⁶⁰ <https://surreynaturepartnership.org/biodiversity-opportunity-areas/>

Figure 12: Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in Spelthorne



3.134 Table 21 shows the invasive species present in Spelthorne. These all have an irregular distribution and are subject to management plans.

Table 21: Invasive species

Location	Species
Staines Moor, River Colne	Himalayan Balsam
Staines Moor, River Wrybury	Himalayan Balsam
River Ash	Japanese Knotweed and Orange Blossom
Sunbury, Rivermede Island, River Thames	Floating Pennywort
Shortwood Common pond	New Zealand Pigmyweed and Parrots Feather

3.135 The Borough contains a small area of ancient woodland identified on the Ancient Woodland Inventory.⁶¹

Table 22: Woodland in Spelthorne

	Area in Hectares	% of the District	No. of Woodland Parcels	Average area of woodland parcel
Spelthorne	5,116			
All woodlands (NIWT)	55.9	1.1	20	2.8
First digitized AWI (including woods <2ha)	0	0	0	0
Revised AWI (including woods <2ha)	1.7	0.03	1	1.7
Overall ancient woodland gain-compared to first digitized AWI (2000)	1.7	0.03	1	

⁶¹ Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory for Surrey 2011 - <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/countryside/management/woodlands/surveys>

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.136 The majority of SSSI units within and adjoining the Borough are currently recorded as either favourable or unfavourable recovering. While this indicates a generally positive trend, future condition will depend on ongoing site management, water quality, visitor pressure and the effects of climate change.
- 3.137 The projected increase in population and supporting development is likely to put pressure on biodiversity interests both directly (i.e. habitat loss) and indirectly (i.e. pollution). Sites with the highest level of designation are likely to fair best, whereas areas of unprotected habitat may suffer adverse ecological effects. Development proposals will need to minimise adverse effects on biodiversity and deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with national requirements.
- 3.138 Climate Change is likely to impact habitats and species in the future. As such, Wildlife corridors and Green Infrastructure networks are likely to become increasingly important in enabling species movement and adaptation to climate change.

Issue or Problem
Climate change may affect habitats, species and ecological networks.
Loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitats and green/blue infrastructure.
Lack of comprehensive condition data for SNCIs.
Need to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain and wider nature recovery objectives.
Recreational pressure and development growth may affect biodiversity interests.

Soil and Land

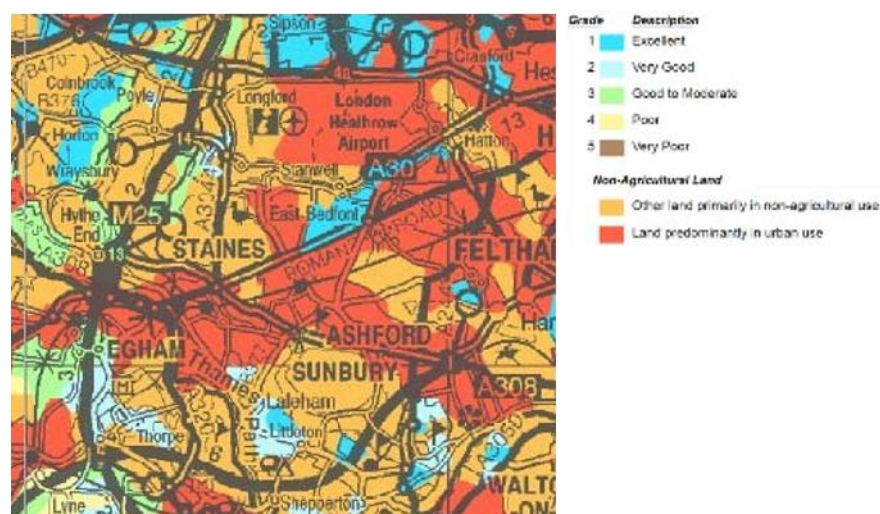
- 3.139 Geological bedrock within Spelthorne consists largely of London Clay formation bedrock to the north, Claygate bedrock to the centre and Bagshot bedrock to the southern portion of the borough. These largely consist of sand, silt and clay. This is overlain by alluvium deposits from the River Thames and a mixture of sand, silt, clay and river terrace gravel⁶².
- 3.140 The majority of soil in Spelthorne is slightly acidic and loamy, draining more freely to the centre of the borough and being naturally wet on Staines Moor and around the River Thames⁶³.
- 3.141 The agricultural land classification recognizes the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land as grades 1, 2 and 3a. Land in Spelthorne is predominantly in urban and non-agricultural uses and as such has a limited amount of agricultural

⁶² https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?_ga=2.64763047.949925380.1782826702-1037435104.1782826702

⁶³ <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

land. There are, however, small areas of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) within the Borough, although their extent is limited.

Figure 13: Agricultural Land Classification map



3.142 Large areas of the Borough have been worked for minerals and the land subsequently filled. Much of this activity was carried out on land within the Green Belt and many old sites are now occupied by or are close to housing and commercial developments. Over 200 former mineral extraction sites have been identified across the Borough, many of which pre-date modern environmental regulation have been identified from Ordnance Survey mapping. These pits were filled long before any controls existed on waste disposal. There are two areas of previously contaminated land on the public register in Spelthorne. These are both within Ashford: Station Crescent, Ashford (determined 27 October 2000) and Denman Drive, Ashford (Determined 27 May 2011). Both of these sites have since undergone remediation⁶⁴.

3.143 99% of new and converted dwellings completed from 2024-2025 have been completed on previously developed land⁶⁵.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

3.144 In the absence of a plan a notable amount of development will continue to come forward on previously developed land and as such no significant changes in soil quality or structure are likely.

3.145 No issues or problems have been identified with contaminated land in the borough, and this is likely to continue, however future development could reveal undiscovered areas of contamination.

⁶⁴ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/page/1137/contaminated-land-information>

⁶⁵ <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/Authority%20Monitoring%20Report%202025.pdf>

Issue or Problem

Maintaining soils of higher quality

Water

- 3.146 Water quality is determined by the biological, chemical and physical makeup of a body of water, and The European Water Framework Directive has targets of achieving 'good' status in all waterbodies. The majority of surface water bodies within or partly within Spelthorne are classified as either moderate or poor overall status. Two groundwater bodies lie beneath Spelthorne, Lower Thames Gravels and Chobham Bagshot Beds, and both are in a 'good' condition. At 'operational catchment' level, the main threats to not achieving 'good' status are largely to do with agriculture and rural land management, urban and transport and water industry reasons⁶⁶.
- 3.147 The Environment Agency's Thames River Basin Management Plan notes that the Thames River Basin District is one of the driest in the UK with rainfall levels below the national average. The water bodies in the area have undergone extensive modification to manage flood risk and aid navigation⁶⁷.
- 3.148 The Thames River Basin Management Plan splits the Thames Catchment into separate units, with Spelthorne being home to several river and reservoir units. Table 23 shows the status of units in the Borough in 2019 and 2022⁶⁶.

Table 23: Waterbodies in Spelthorne and Status 2019 & 2022

Management Catchment	Operational Catchment	Water body	2019		2022	
London	Crane Rivers & Lakes	Portlane Brook (2013) River	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
Maidenhead & Sunbury	Lower Thames	Thames (Cookham to Egham) River	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Thames (Egham to Teddington) River	Overall	Poor	Overall	Poor
			Ecological	Poor	Ecological	Poor
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment

⁶⁶ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/6>

⁶⁷

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/635248048fa8f554cca7b226/Thames_river_basin_management_plan_2022_HRA.pdf

Colne	Colne	Colne (Confluence with Chess to River Thames) <i>River</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Surrey Ash <i>River</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Queen Mary Reservoir <i>Lake</i>	Overall	Poor	Overall	Poor
			Ecological	Poor	Ecological	Poor
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		King George VI Reservoir <i>Lake</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Staines Reservoir North <i>Lake</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Staines Reservoir South <i>Lake</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
		Wraysbury Reservoir <i>Lake</i>	Overall	Moderate	Overall	Moderate
			Ecological	Moderate	Ecological	Moderate
			Chemical	Fail	Chemical	Does not require assessment
Thames Groundwater	Chobham Bagshot Beds	Chobham Bagshot Beds <i>Groundwater</i>	Overall	Poor	Overall	Poor
			Quantitative	Poor	Quantitative	
			Chemical	Poor	Chemical	
	Colne Groundwater	Lower Thames Gravels <i>Groundwater</i>	Overall	Poor	Overall	Poor
			Quantitative	Poor	Quantitative	
			Chemical	Good	Chemical	

3.149 The overall condition of waterbodies in Spelthorne is either poor, moderate or good with no overall 'fail' waterbodies. The majority of water bodies remain in moderate or

poor overall condition and significant improvements will be required to achieve Water Framework Directive objectives.

- 3.150 A large portion of Spelthorne is underlain by principal aquifers which provide a high level of water storage. Part of the source protection zone for public water abstraction at Chertsey is located within the western and southern parts of the Borough.
- 3.151 Affinity Water provides water to Spelthorne, which lies within its 'central' region. Within this region, the borough is in water resource zone 6, which possesses its own water sources and is assisted by inter-zone transfers. The evaluation of available water for the central region finds that there is not a sufficient supply of water for the future plan period; further assessment finds that with climate change and without action, the region faces a possible shortfall of 449 million litres a day by 2050. Available water supplies continue to fall throughout this time due to the impacts of climate change and demand increases due to population growth.
- 3.152 In response to the challenge faced, Affinity Water have developed a planning process and investment programme that is both flexible to future uncertainties and ensures that it will maintain the balance between supply and demand through investments that represent the best value to customers. For the Central region AW have adopted an 'adaptive planning' approach. As with conventional Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs), such an approach contains a currently preferred set of investments that will allow the region to meet this challenge.
- 3.153 The Environment Agency finds the wider South-East region as under severe water stress. Spelthorne lies within AP6 catchment of the Thames according to the Environment Agency, detailing that there is no water available at low flows, with water abstractions only acceptable at flows 21% or less of the time⁶⁸. Climate change and increasing population growth are likely to place additional pressure on water resources.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.154 Within Water Resource Zone 6, by 2040 population is expected to increase by 15%⁶⁹. As such, demand for water will rise and supply will be required to follow the trend. The South-East is predicted to remain a high water-stressed area.
- 3.155 Land management actions have meant that multifaceted flooding and pollution issues have arisen in the borough, and diffuse pollution may continue into the future. There is a general trend of maintaining or declining status of waterbodies in

⁶⁸

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/849612/Thames-Abstraction-Licensing-Strategy.pdf

⁶⁹ <https://stakeholder.affinitywater.co.uk/water-resources>

Spelthorne. With the River Basin Management Plan, which is currently being updated, it is predicted that many unit areas of the Thames basin will gain an improved status.

Issue or Problem
Increased population and demand on water
Need to protect and improve water quality and groundwater supplies

- 3.156 The UK's Air Quality Strategy sets out air quality objectives for a number of pollutants. The air quality objectives for various pollutants are shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Air Quality Pollutants and Limits for Human Health

Pollutant	Limit
Particles (PM ₁₀)	40 µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)
Particles (PM _{2.5})	25 µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	40 µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)
Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Not to exceed 125 µg m ⁻³ (24 hour mean) more than 3 times a year
Ozone	Not to exceed 100 µg m ⁻³ (8-hour mean) more than 10 times a year
Benzene	16.25 µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)
1,3-Butadiene	2.25 µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)
Lead	0.25µg m ⁻³ (annual mean)

- 3.157 Air quality in Spelthorne is influenced primarily by road traffic emissions, together with background pollution sources and emissions associated with the wider strategic transport network. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) remains the principal pollutant of concern within the Borough, although particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) is also recognised as having significant health impacts. Monitoring has shown that concentrations of benzene, 1,3-butadiene, lead, sulphur dioxide and particulate matter comply with relevant national air quality objectives ⁷⁰
- 3.158 An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was originally declared across the Borough in 2003 due to exceedances of the annual mean objective for NO₂. However, sustained improvements in local air quality resulted in the AQMA being reduced in extent in 2024 to better reflect areas where air quality pressures remain.
- 3.159 Air quality monitoring within the Borough is undertaken through a network comprising automatic monitoring stations and diffusion tube monitoring locations. In 2024, Spelthorne operated two automatic monitoring sites at Oaks Road,

⁷⁰ [Annual Status Report 2025_0.pdf](#)

Stanwell and Sunbury Cross, together with 51 diffusion tube monitoring locations distributed across the Borough. Pollutants monitored included NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

- 3.160 Monitoring data demonstrates a significant improvement in air quality over the longer term. Nitrogen dioxide concentrations have generally declined since the mid-2000s, with further reductions observed following the Covid-19 pandemic. These improvements have been sustained despite the recovery in traffic flows across Surrey.
- 3.161 In 2024 no monitoring locations recorded exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ objective of 40 µg/m³. The highest measured annual mean concentration was 27.7 µg/m³ at Sunbury Cross East (SP58). This represents the second consecutive year in which no exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ objective have been recorded within the Borough.
- 3.162 Concentrations of particulate matter also remained below relevant national objectives. In 2024 annual mean PM₁₀ concentrations ranged between 11.9 µg/m³ and 12.8 µg/m³, while annual mean PM_{2.5} concentrations ranged between 6.9 µg/m³ and 7.5 µg/m³. These values are below both the national air quality objectives and the interim targets established under the Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023
- 3.163 Despite these improvements, air pollution remains a significant public health issue. Road traffic continues to be the dominant source of local emissions, while Heathrow Airport, construction activity and regional background pollution also contribute to air quality conditions within the Borough. The Council adopted a new Air Quality Action Plan (2024-2029) in December 2024, setting out a range of measures to maintain compliance and deliver further air quality improvements.

Table 25: Results of NO2 Diffusion Tubes (2020-2024)⁷¹

Location	Annual mean concentration (µg/m ³)				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Staines High Street (SP1)	16.8	17.5	18.9	20.3	17.7
London Road, Staines (SP28)	29.2	28.0	28.0	25.7	22.3
Church Road, Ashford (SP5)	27.2	27.6	26.7	23.8	22.0
High Street, Shepperton (SP59)	20.4	20.5	20.5	24.7	19.9
Sunbury Cross (east) (SP58)	35.8	35.1	31.4	32.5	27.7

⁷¹ https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-10/Annual%20Status%20Report%202025_0.pdf

Bedfont Road, Stanwell (SP19)	22.6	23.1	24.7	21.8	21.2
Vicarage Road, Sunbury (SP35)	27.4	27.3	25.9	24.3	20.2

**Adapted from 2025 Air Quality Annual Status Report for Spelthorne Borough Council*

- 3.164 The Southwest London Waterbodies Special Protection Area and Ramsar in Spelthorne have current site-average nitrogen deposition rates below the lower range of the critical load. Similarly current site-average NOx concentrations are below the critical level and air quality objective⁷².
- 3.165 Air pollution can affect designated ecological sites through nitrogen deposition and nitrogen oxide (NOx) concentrations. However, the sensitivity of designated sites varies according to habitat type. Recent technical work relating to the Southwest London Waterbodies Ramsar, SPA and SSSI indicates that the site is not considered sensitive to nutrient nitrogen deposition or acid deposition. Nevertheless, air quality remains an important consideration for biodiversity and ecological networks, particularly in relation to traffic-related emissions and the potential effects on sensitive habitats elsewhere within and adjoining the Borough.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.166 Air quality within Spelthorne has generally improved over recent decades and recent monitoring indicates continued compliance with national air quality objectives for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. However, future changes in traffic volumes, airport-related activity and development pressure may affect local air quality conditions.
- 3.167 Population growth and new development have the potential to increase transport demand and associated emissions. Development proposals should therefore seek to minimise air quality impacts and encourage sustainable travel choices, including walking, cycling, public transport use and the uptake of low and zero-emission vehicles.
- 3.168 Advances in vehicle technology, fleet electrification, sustainable transport initiatives and implementation of the Council's Air Quality Action Plan are expected to contribute towards further improvements in air quality. Nevertheless, continued monitoring will be required to ensure that improvements are maintained and that any emerging issues are identified

Issue or Problem

Traffic remains the principal source of local air pollution.

Future traffic growth and airport-related activity may affect air quality.

⁷² <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a75719c40f0b6360e474280/air-quality-local-assessment-report.pdf>

Need to maintain compliance with national air quality objectives and improve public health outcomes.

New development should avoid exacerbating existing air quality issues and support sustainable transport choices.

Continued monitoring and implementation of air quality improvement measures is required.

Waste

- 3.169 The Waste Licensing Regulations (1994) define waste as ‘any substance or object which the producer or the person in possession of it, discards or intends or is required to discard’. Controlled wastes are subject to regulation and include industrial, commercial, household and hazardous wastes.
- 3.170 Spelthorne Borough Council is responsible for the collection of household waste, whilst Surrey County Council is responsible for waste disposal and strategic waste planning functions.
- 3.171 Spelthorne is part of the Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP), which has joined the End Designations of Recycling Charter. As such, SEP issues an End Designations Register which shows what becomes of recyclable materials collected in Surrey. Surrey has a recycling target of 65% by 2035⁷³. The Partnership also supports a transition towards a more circular economy through increasing reuse, repair and recycling and reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal.
- 3.172 Within Spelthorne there is a trend towards a rise in kerb side recycling collection and a fall in household landfill waste. There has been an overall shift from residual to recycling; residual waste as a proportion of total waste has decreased from 53.6% in 2010/11 to 44.0% in 2019/20.
- 3.173 Spelthorne's recycling rate remains below the Surrey average, although performance has improved significantly over the longer term, increasing from 33% in 2009/10 to 44% in 2023/24. The overall trend is towards increasing recycling rates to meet the national target of 65% of municipal waste recycled by 2035. Considerable work is ongoing to improve recycling rates.
- 3.174 National waste policy is increasingly focused on the transition to a circular economy, which seeks to minimise waste generation, maximise reuse and recycling, and retain materials in productive use for as long as possible. New development can contribute to these objectives through sustainable construction practices, efficient use of materials and waste minimisation measures.

⁷³ <https://www.surreyep.org.uk/about-us/sep-2025-strategy-document/>

Table 26: Overall Waste Performance in Spelthorne⁷⁴

Year	Total Local Authority Waste Collected (tonnes)	Local Authority collected waste not sent for recycling	Local Authority Waste- Sent for recycling/ composting/ reuse	Recycling, Reuse and Composting Rates
2023/24	35,690	19,992	15,698	44%
2022/23	34,579	19,900	14,679	42%
2021/22	37,289	20,182	17,107	46%
2020/21	37,809	20,477	17,333	46%
2019/20	35,123	19,023	16,100	46%
2018/19	34,355	19,656	14,700	43%

Table 27: Household Recycling Rates by partner authority⁷⁴

Authority	2022/23	2023/24
Elmbridge	53.4%	54.1%
Epsom & Ewell	48.6%	50.1%
Guildford	53.5%	55.0%
Mole Valley	55.1%	56.3%
Reigate & Banstead	52.1%	52.0%
Runnymede	44.4%	43.8%
Spelthorne	42.5%	44.0%
Surrey Heath	59.0%	58.7%
Tandridge	57.2%	57.0%
Waverley	57.7%	56.9%
Woking	54.3%	54.8%

3.175 The Surrey Waste Plan (2019) has allocated Oak Leaf Farm, Horton Road in Stanwell Moor as a Waste management site in the Borough. The Waste Plan also identifies Windmill Road in Sunbury as an Industrial Land Area of Search for future consideration as a location for waste management facilities⁷⁵.

3.176 The Eco Park at Charlton Lane in Shepperton functions as a Community Recycling Centre and facilities waste processing from Surrey households to create fuels to produce power for the national grid and a fertiliser for use in farming. The Eco Park provides a capacity for the operation of anaerobic digestion and gasification as a

⁷⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables>

⁷⁵ <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste/waste-plan>

means of producing this power. The Eco Park at Charlton Lane is a strategically important waste management facility within Surrey, incorporating a Community Recycling Centre alongside facilities for anaerobic digestion and energy recovery.

Future Trend, Issues & Problems

- 3.177 National policy seeks to increase municipal waste recycling rates to 65% by 2035 and reduce the proportion of municipal waste sent to landfill to no more than 10%. The national target of recycling 50% of waste by 2020 was not met and the new targets set out an ambitious agenda to further improve these rates. However, these new targets will put pressure on existing facilities to increase capacity and could result in expansion or the development of new facilities. Such a scenario would lead to increased competition over land use and its availability and continue to put pressure on local communities, infrastructure and environmental assets.

Issue or Problem
Population growth is likely to increase waste arisings.
Recycling rates remain below the Surrey average, and further improvement is needed to meet national targets.
Increasing pressure on waste management infrastructure and resources.
Need to support circular economy principles, waste reduction and resource efficiency.

4 Sustainability Framework

- 4.1 The purpose of the Sustainability Framework is to develop a set of sustainability objectives, decision making questions and indicators against which all Local Plan

options and policies can be considered in order to determine how each performs in sustainability terms. The SA/SEA framework provides a way in which the sustainability effects of the Local Plan and its options can be described, analysed and compared.

- 4.2 Further iterations of the SA/SEA appraisal process will involve considering all of the reasonable options and alternatives of the Local Plan against each SA/SEA objective, so that a comparison can be made between the sustainability credentials of each option.
- 4.3 Table 28 sets out a summary of the issues/problems identified in Section 3 and how the Local Plan should seek to address these.

Table 28: Summary of Issues/Problems

Issue or Problem	How should the Local Plan address this?
An increasing population will require additional housing including affordable housing with entry level house prices Roughly 12x average earnings. An ageing population may require bespoke housing solutions including affordable, accessible and adaptable housing and specialist accommodation for older people and those with specific needs. There are pockets of relative deprivation in the Borough.	Local Plans are required to set housing targets and allocate sites over the plan period and include a proportion as affordable. This includes making provision for housing for an ageing population including specialist accommodation.
A growing and ageing population with increased life expectancy will place pressure on existing infrastructure and services. Pockets of disparity in life expectancy within the Borough. Increase in pupils starting in reception. Leisure centres running at over-capacity in the future and adult obesity levels are above the national average.	The Local Plan should aim to improve access to infrastructure/services and address capacity and the need for additional facilities which could require allocation. The Local Plan should protect existing open space and recreational facilities and provide additional facilities in new developments as well as encouraging sustainable travel through walking/cycling and improve access to green and blue infrastructure which supports physical and mental wellbeing.
Reduction in working age population may result in higher levels of in-commuting which with increased levels of car ownership exacerbates congestion. Lack of direct connectivity to Heathrow Airport via rail and dominance of the car as main mode of travel for short distances continues.	The Local Plan will need to consider the balance between jobs and homes to address in-commuting and locate development to areas most accessible by public transport. The Local Plan should address more sustainable modes of travel and aim to improve public transport

	connectivity, including connections to Heathrow Airport and key employment destinations. The flat topography of Spelthorne offers opportunities for cycling/walking.
Development could affect heritage assets or the setting of assets. Need for continued protection of landscape and townscape character.	The Local Plan should include policies that protect and enhance the historic environment and ensure its setting is not compromised. The Local Plan should consider how the quality of the built environment, character of places, and the most valued landscapes can be improved/enhanced.
Climate Change impacts may increase flood risk, and CO ₂ emissions could rise. Reliance on non-sustainable energy sources and increased demand on water resources. Impact to biodiversity through loss or damage to protected and/or unprotected sites/habitats.	The Local Plan should ensure sustainable drainage systems are incorporated into new development and that areas at highest risk of flooding are protected from inappropriate development. The Local Plan should promote climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable design, water efficiency and renewable energy generation. It should support biodiversity net gain, delivery of the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure.
Development pressures may result in increased development on greenfield land, whilst high density development could adversely affect local character and townscape.	The Local Plan should prioritise previously developed land where appropriate and make efficient use of land whilst respecting local character.
Water quality declines or fails to improve.	The Local Plan should include policies that protect and enhance the water environment, seek opportunities to improve water quality and promote water efficiency measures.
New development exacerbates air quality, and waste levels rise.	The Local Plan should minimise exposure to poor air quality, support sustainable transport choices and avoid exacerbating existing air quality issues. The Local Plan should complement Waste Plan policies, support waste reduction and resource efficiency, encourage circular economy principles and ensure developments provide

	sufficient space for recycling and waste storage.
Potential third runway at Heathrow changes numbers affected by aircraft noise.	The Local Plan should seek to minimise noise impacts on sensitive receptors and consider the implications of any future changes to Heathrow Airport operations and expansion proposals.

- 4.4 The sustainability framework presented in Table 29 includes a set of SA/SEA objectives and associated decision-making questions and indicators. These have largely been derived from the Sustainability Appraisal for the previous Local Plan as many of the sustainability issues and objectives remain relevant.
- 4.5 However, some objectives, decision aiding questions and indicators have been amended to take account of other plans, policies and programmes identified in Section 2 and the issues/problems identified in Section 3 (and above). The first column of Table 29 identifies the relevant plans, policies, programmes and baseline issues that have informed each objective.

Table 29: Sustainability Framework - organised into a series of thematic objectives derived from the review of plans, programmes and policies and the baseline issues identified in Sections 2 and 3.

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Housing Increased housing demand with high house prices and affordability issues. Sustainability objectives should be developed which meet the identified housing needs as far as is sustainably possible and providing affordable housing and suitable accommodation for all.	1	To provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford	Will it provide housing to help meet identified needs? Will it reduce the number of unfit homes? Will it improve affordability? Will it provide specialist accommodation for elderly/disabled persons? Will it provide accessible and adaptable homes suitable for all stages of life?	Total housing completions by size, type and tenure including Market Housing Affordable Housing Self-Build Plots Affordable home ownership products Gypsy & Traveller Pitches Travelling Showmen Plots Sheltered/Extra Care Number of households on the housing register Plot requirements on the self-build register Lower quartile property price compared against lower quartile workplace earnings Number of unfit homes in the Borough

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Health & Wellbeing Increase in life expectancy but disparities in different areas of the Borough. Adult obesity levels above national average. Growing and ageing population will place pressure on existing	2	To facilitate the improved health and well-being of the whole population.	Will it improve access to or provide healthcare and/or cultural facilities? Will it help to meet Accessible Natural Greenspace standards (ANGst)? Will it improve opportunities for active travel? Will it improve access to nature and recreational assets for all residents?	Percentage of people whose health is classed as not good Life expectancy Adult & child obesity levels IMD Health Rankings Percentage of population within walking distance of natural greenspace. Rates of physical inactivity
Infrastructure and services. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to improve/maintain/deliver infrastructure assets and improve access to services.	3	To maintain, improve and deliver accessible infrastructure, services and community facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents.	Will it improve access to healthcare facilities and services? Will it improve access to education, leisure, recreation and community facilities? Will it improve access to green and blue infrastructure? Will it help ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity to support new development?	Accessibility to Hospitals and GP Surgeries Capacity of Health Facilities School admission numbers/capacity Amount and quality of green infrastructure/recreation space by type (ha) Number and type of leisure facilities

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
			Will it improve highway safety for road users, cyclists and pedestrians? Will it contribute towards healthier and more sustainable communities? Will it improve access to green infrastructure and multifunctional greenspace?	Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) targets Motorists/pedestrians/cyclists killed or seriously injured (KSI) per 100,000 population Infrastructure capacity constraints identified through infrastructure planning evidence Percentage of population within 400m of accessible natural greenspace Hectares of accessible greenspace per 1,000 population

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Social Inclusion Pockets of relative deprivation. Increase in pupils starting in reception. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek improved access to services/facilities/jobs, maintenance/improvement of community assets.	4	To reduce poverty and promote social inclusion.	Will it reduce the proportion of children under 16 living in income deprived households? Will it improve access to or provide additional opportunities for education, employment and/or community facilities and local services?	Average score for Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Accessibility to education and community facilities, service centres and employment areas. School admission numbers
Crime & Community Safety Crime rates may change in Spelthorne Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to create safer places.	5	To create and maintain safer and more secure communities	Will it reduce recorded levels of crime? Will it contribute toward a safe & secure built environment?	Total recorded crime by type IMD crime ranking Number of developments implementing 'Secured by Design'
Flood Risk & Climate Adaptation Climate change impacts may increase flood risk.	6	To reduce the risk and minimise the harm from flooding	Will it reduce the number of properties at risk from all forms of flooding? Will it reduce the severity of a flood event?	Number of properties at risk from flooding Number of properties with flood mitigation installed

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to avoid/reduce flood risk.			Will it increase the number of properties linked to sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)? Will it improve resilience to climate change impacts including overheating, drought and flooding?	Number of properties built with SuDS installed Number of developments incorporating climate adaptation measures Area of development in Flood Zones 2 and 3
Land Use & Previously Developed Land Development pressures may reduce amount of development coming forward on Previously Developed Land. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to prioritise the efficient re-use of previously developed land.	7	To make efficient use of land, prioritising previously developed land where appropriate.	Will it reduce the amount of derelict and/or underused land and/or vacant/unfit properties? Will it promote higher density development in appropriate locations?	Percentage of development built on previously developed land Average density on sites with 10 or more dwellings (Dwellings per Ha.)
Soil Resources Potential to impact soil quality/structure. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to protect	8	To reduce land contamination and safeguard soil quality and quantity	Will it maintain the area of grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land? Will it remediate contaminated land and/or improve soil quality?	Amount of contaminated land remediated Area of grade 1, 2 and 3 agricultural land permanently lost to development (ha)

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
soil quality especially best and most versatile agricultural land.			Will it improve soil health and reduce soil sealing?	
Air Quality New development exacerbates air quality. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to improve or have a neutral impact on air quality and promote sustainable transport choices.	9	To ensure air quality improves and pollution is reduced	Will it improve air quality, in particular concentrations of NO₂ and PM2.5? Will it reduce the number of properties or sites affected by poor air quality? Will it reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to poor air quality?	Annual average of NO₂ and PM2.5, within AQMAs relative to national standards The number of properties and land affected where levels of NO_x or PM2.5 exceed national targets Number of new homes within areas affected by poor air quality
Noise Potential third runway at Heathrow changes numbers affected by aircraft noise. Sustainability objectives should be developed which reduce or ensure neutral noise impacts.	10	To minimise noise pollution	Will it reduce the number of residential properties affected by noise Will it ensure development minimises exposure to noise pollution?	The monitoring of LEQ noise levels around airports Number of non-airport related noise complaints received per annum

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
			Will it minimise exposure of sensitive receptors to aviation noise?	
Biodiversity & Nature Recovery Impact to biodiversity through loss or damage to protected and/or unprotected sites/habitats. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek protection/enhancement of designated sites and biodiversity more generally, support Nature Recovery Areas, provide for net gains in biodiversity.	11	To conserve and enhance biodiversity	Will it maintain or enhance designated sites? Will it maintain/enhance numbers of priority species or the extent and condition of priority habitats identified in Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and the Borough as a whole? Will it avoid the fragmentation of designated and priority habitats? Will it protect the Borough's green/blue infrastructure and enhance connectivity? Will it contribute toward Biodiversity Net Gain?	Population of wild birds Extent and condition of SPA/Ramsar sites Extent and condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) meeting favourable or unfavourable recovering condition Extent and condition of priority species and habitats identified in Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in Spelthorne Number, area and condition of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) and Local

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
			Will it support the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy? Will it improve ecological connectivity and nature recovery networks? Will it ensure existing ecological networks are maintained and enhanced and avoid habitat fragmentation?	Nature Reserves (LNRs) within Spelthorne Extent and condition of ancient woodlands Number of Biodiversity improvement/enhancement schemes implemented per annum Net biodiversity units delivered Area of habitat created or enhanced Length of habitat corridors established Number of planning permissions resulting in adverse effects on designated biodiversity sites Percentage of major developments delivering biodiversity enhancement

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
				Hectares of habitat delivered through strategic allocations
Historic Environment Development could affect heritage assets or their setting. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and protection/enhancement of valued landscapes.	12	To conserve the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings	Will it conserve or enhance heritage assets, the historic environment and their settings? Will it improve the quality of the historic environment? Will it provide increased access to and enjoyment of the historic environment?	Number of listed buildings, ancient monuments and conservation areas Statutory or locally listed buildings or structures at risk Statutory or locally listed buildings or structures demolished Scheduled ancient monuments at risk Number of archaeological finds

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Landscape & Townscape High density development could affect townscape character. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek high quality design and protection/enhancement of valued landscapes and townscapes.	13	To protect, enhance and manage the character of the most valued landscapes and townscapes and achieve high quality design	Will it protect or enhance landscape/townscape character? Will it promote high quality and inclusive design of the built environment? Will it maintain or enhance the quality of buildings, spaces or the public realm? Will it protect or enhance buildings or structures of high architectural merit?	Change in amount of identified landscape areas (ha) % of conservation areas with up-to-date character appraisal or management proposals Number and % of conservation areas at risk

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Transport & Accessibility Higher levels of in-commuting and car dependency contribute to congestion on the local highway network. Public transport connectivity to some employment destinations, including Heathrow Airport, remains limited and the private car continues to dominate many journeys. Sustainability objectives should be developed which encourage sustainable modes of transport, improve transport accessibility and improve congestion.	14	To promote sustainable modes of travel, improve accessibility to public transport and reduce road congestion	Will it avoid contributing to congestion on the highway network? Will it promote more sustainable modes of travel? Will it provide improved access to public transport services and facilities? Will it provide opportunities for integrated Transport? Will it promote travel to work/school by foot, cycle or public transport? Will it provide for disabled access to all transport options? Will it reduce the need to travel by private car? Will it support electric vehicle infrastructure and low-emission transport?	Traffic counts Travel to work by mode Number of schools/businesses with travel plans implemented Number of highway/cyclist/pedestrian improvement schemes implemented Percentage of journeys undertaken by sustainable modes Number of public EV charging points

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Employment & Skills Reduction in working age population and potential future labour supply pressures. Sustainability objectives should be developed which support business growth, skills development and access to employment opportunities. Sustainability objectives should be developed which support business/economic growth/inward investment	15	To maintain high levels of inclusive and sustainable employment and economic activity.	Will it help support a stable labour market and contribute towards employment opportunities or improve access to employment opportunities? Will it contribute to the provision of opportunities to improve educational attainment and skills development? Will it support or promote inward investment and business growth? Will it help to balance in/out commuting ratio? Will it support access to employment opportunities by sustainable modes of transport?	IMD employment and education rankings Working age population which are economically active Percentage of economically active people that are unemployed Educational attainment levels NVQ level 3 and above The net change in the number of VAT registrations and de-registrations Percentage of vacant non-retail commercial floorspace

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Economic Development Need to support economic growth, business investment and retention of employment land in sustainable locations.	16	To provide appropriate commercial development opportunities to meet the needs of the economy.	Will it retain the most sustainably located employment sites and/or premises? Will it maintain or increase the total quantity and/or quality of commercial floorspace? Will it promote mixed use development?	Amount of non-retail commercial floorspace implemented by type (sqm) Area of employment sites lost to other uses (ha)
Town Centres Continued support is required to maintain the vitality and viability of town and local centres and respond to changing retail patterns.	17	To support and enhance the viability, vitality and attractiveness of town and local centres	Will it promote or enhance the viability, vitality and attractiveness of town or local centres? Will it support mixed-use centres, and a diverse range of town centre uses?	Amount of retail/commercial leisure floorspace implemented (sqm) Amount of retail/commercial leisure floorspace lost to other uses within town/local centres (sqm) Footfall numbers % of vacant retail premises

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Climate Change & Resource Efficiency Climate change may increase the risks associated with flooding, overheating and water stress. Carbon emissions remain a significant contributor to climate change and there is an ongoing need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and improve resource efficiency. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to reduce carbon/greenhouse gas emissions, deliver renewable energy and reduce demand for aggregates/encourage recycling.	18	To promote the efficient use of natural resources, support climate change mitigation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	Will it promote energy efficiency and/or renewable or low carbon technologies? Will it promote sustainable methods of construction and design? Will it promote the reuse and recycling of demolition waste? Will it support the transition to net zero carbon emissions? Will it increase renewable and low-carbon energy generation? Will it improve resilience to climate change impacts?	CO₂ Emissions (total and per capita) Number of commercial premises built to BREEAM 'Very good' or better Installed renewable/low carbon energy capacity (MW) Amount of demolition waste reused or recycled per annum (tonnes) Renewable energy generation capacity (MW) Number of developments incorporating renewable or low-carbon technologies Carbon emissions from transport and buildings
Water Resources & Water Quality Water quality declines or fails to improve and increased demand on water resources. Sustainability objectives should be developed which seek to	19	To maintain and improve water quality and promote the efficient use of water	Will it protect and improve the quality of all water sources? Will it increase water efficiency? Will it promote greywater recycling/rainwater harvesting?	Percentage of water bodies achieving Good Ecological Status, Good Ecological Potential or Good Chemical Status

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
protect/improve water quality and aquatic ecosystems and promote water efficiency.			Will it protect and improve hydrogeomorphology and the overall ecological status of the watercourses? Will it help address water stress? Will it reduce demand for potable water supplies?	Household consumption of water per day Number of dwellings completed which exceed Building Regulations standards for water efficiency Commercial consumption of water per day Number of commercial developments completed with water efficiency measures implemented Average household water consumption (litres/person/day) Number of developments meeting enhanced water efficiency standards Percentage of water bodies achieving Water Framework Directive objectives

Issue/Problem/PPP	No.	Objectives	Decision Aiding Questions	Indicators
Waste & Circular Economy Population growth is likely to increase waste arisings and place pressure on waste management infrastructure. Sustainability objectives should seek to minimise waste generation and promote reuse, recycling and circular economy principles.	20	To minimise waste generation and support reuse, recycling and circular economy principles.	Will it increase and promote the reuse and recycling of all types of non-hazardous waste? Will it minimise waste generated during construction and operation? Will it promote resource efficiency and circular economy principles?	Total household waste % of waste reused/recycled by type Household recycling rate (%) Waste arising per household Construction and demolition waste reused or recycled

5 Next Stages

- 5.1 The Draft SA/SEA Scoping Report was consulted upon between 23 July 2026 and 11 September 2026. Responses received from Natural England and Historic England have been reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated into this Final SA/SEA Scoping Report. The Sustainability Framework established through this report will be used to inform the assessment of reasonable alternatives, draft policies and the preparation of future stages of the SA/SEA alongside the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.2 In accordance with the SEA Directive and Regulations and in line with good practice as set out by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), upon adoption of the Local Plan a statement will be published which summarises how sustainability (including environmental) considerations have been integrated into the adopted Local Plan and how the SA/SEA report has been taken into account, including the reasons for choosing the Local Plan over any alternatives (options) considered.

Monitoring

- 5.3 A framework for monitoring the significant effects of the Local Plan will be developed as part of future stages of the Sustainability Appraisal process. The monitoring framework will be linked directly to the sustainability objectives and indicators set out in Table 29 and will be used to identify any significant effects arising from implementation of the Local Plan.

Appendix A - List of Relevant Plans & Programmes

Plan or Programme	Objectives, Targets or Key Messages
Population & Community	
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026) CLG</i>	The NPPF promotes strong, healthy and inclusive communities through the provision of community facilities, public service infrastructure and accessible places which support social, cultural and community wellbeing. Development plans should plan positively for future growth and community needs. Policies HC1-HC4 place considerable importance on providing sufficient community facilities and public service infrastructure.
<i>Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) CLG</i>	The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers whilst facilitating their traditional and nomadic way of life and respecting the interests of the settled community. Local planning authorities should assess accommodation needs and set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople. Policies should promote integrated communities, access to health and education services, avoid undue pressure on infrastructure and services and steer development away from areas at risk of flooding.
<i>Community vision for Surrey in 2030</i>	Priorities include: • improve learning, health and employment outcomes for children and young people, particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged • improve public confidence in the ability of public services to keep Surrey safe, prepare for emergencies, and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour • strengthen local communities through targeted public and voluntary sector activity, active citizenship and work to tackle inequalities

<i>Spelthorne Safer Stronger Partnership Community Safety Partnership Plan & Priorities 2024-2026</i>	Priorities include: • Serious Violence • Violence Against Women & Girls • Domestic Abuse • Hate Crime • Town Centre Acquisitive Crime • Anti-Social Behaviour • Exploitation & Vulnerability • Water Safety • Counter Terrorism (Prevent)
Human Health & Well Being	
<i>Assessment & Management of Environmental Noise (2002) Directive 2002/49/EC</i>	The aim of the Directive is to define a common approach intended to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. The Directive focuses on three action areas: The determination of exposure to environmental noise; Ensuring that information on environmental noise and its effects is made available to the public; Preventing and reducing environmental noise where necessary and preserving environmental noise quality where it is good;
<i>Progress Report by the Ministerial Working Group on Tackling Inequalities Experienced by Gypsies & Travellers (2013)</i>	Para 4.13 One of the Government's aims in respect of traveller sites is to enable provision of suitable accommodation, which supports healthy lifestyles, and from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure. Local planning authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally and should, therefore, ensure that their policies promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services. Commitment 13 The Government will continue to promote improved health outcomes for travellers through the planning system.

<i>Noise Policy Statement for England (2010) DEFRA</i>	Vision is to promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development. Noise policy aims include • avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life; • mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and • where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026) CLG</i>	Policies HC1-HC4 promote healthy communities, provision of healthcare and community infrastructure, reduction of inequalities and creation of healthy places. Policy P3 requires development proposals to consider the effects of pollution, noise and air quality on human health and living conditions.
<i>Planning Practice Guidance Note: Noise (2019) CLG</i>	Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location considering the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should: • mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life⁷²; • identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and • limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
<i>Surrey's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026-30 Update, Surrey Health & Wellbeing Board</i>	Overarching prevention principles: • Investing in and building thriving communities, fostering cohesion and reducing inequalities. • Supporting people to lead physically healthy lives, to have good mental health and emotional well-being. • Targeting investment to have the most positive impact on people's well-being. • Managing cost and demand sustainably, and anticipating future challenges • Creating a healthy, safe and sustainable environment, both natural and built, for the well-being of all

<i>Strategic Commissioning Plan 2026 to 2031, Surrey and Sussex ICB</i>	Priorities include: • Reducing the growth and progression of ill health, through scaled prevention and early intervention programmes targeting the conditions driving nearly half of future demand, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, obesity, chronic kidney disease and anxiety and depression. • Transforming models of care by redesigning pathways around people and populations – expanding digital first access, integrated neighbourhood teams, proactive care for those with serious mental illness, reformed planned care and re-imaging outpatient models, and high-quality community-based palliative and rehabilitation services. • Improving care for our most disadvantaged communities through targeted, place-based commissioning that narrows the widest gaps in access and outcomes, including paediatric hubs, community-based screening and outreach, and strengthened neighbourhood mental health support in areas of highest deprivation. • Delivering structural change and system reform, rebalancing investment from acute to community and prevention, reshaping the estate, modernising digital infrastructure, and aligning workforce, financial and commissioning levers to support long-term transformation.
<i>NHS Long Term Plan</i>	The NHS Long Term Plan sets out a programme of reform focused on prevention, reducing health inequalities and improving population health outcomes. Priorities include: • Improving healthy life expectancy and reducing inequalities in health outcomes; • Strengthening prevention and early intervention, particularly in relation to obesity, smoking, cardiovascular disease and mental health; • Supporting integrated care systems and more joined-up services; • Improving access to mental health services for children, young people and adults; • Delivering more care closer to home through community-based services.
Economy & Employment	

<i>Pride in Place (2025), MHCLG</i>	High street and town centre revitalisation – Revitalising high streets makes them more attractive and welcoming, encouraging people to come together and boosting local pride Improvements to buildings, streets and public spaces support footfall, help small businesses thrive and create opportunities for social and cultural activity By investing in these areas, communities can shape vibrant, inclusive places that support local economies and strengthen community identity.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026) CLG</i>	Policy E1 requires development plans to support long-term economic growth through a clear economic vision and strategy, meeting business needs and allocating sufficient employment land. Policy E2 gives substantial weight to proposals supporting economic growth, inward investment and business expansion.

<i>Surrey Skills Plan (2024), Business Surrey</i>	Priorities include: • Help businesses prosper by making our skills system more responsive – both to immediate needs and those presented in the medium-longer term. • Support inclusive access for Surrey’s residents to improved careers education, information and guidance, linked to clear learning, work and training pathways. • Deliver a step change in our skills system through enhanced and purposeful collaboration between and across businesses, anchor institutions and skills providers. • As part of a thematic focus on skills of the future, strengthen the pipeline of priority skills to meet employer demand, recognising the needs of both SMEs and larger businesses.
<i>Surrey’s Economic Growth Strategy 2025-35, Surrey County Council</i>	Priorities include: • Ensuring Surrey’s residents can support the workforce and skills demands of Surrey businesses • Creating the right conditions for Surrey businesses to start, grow and thrive • Enabling economic infrastructure to unlock growth through place-based approaches
<i>Corporate Plan 2024-2028, Spelthorne Borough Council</i>	Priorities: • Community - To place the needs of the Borough at the heart of everything we do; supporting residents to live healthy and fulfilling lives and empowering communities so they feel included, valued, supported and safe. • Addressing housing need - To support the delivery of high-quality housing and solutions to allow residents to live independently which meets the needs of all sections of the community at every stage of life, addressing the challenges around availability, affordability and homelessness. • Resilience - To ensure prudent management of our finances and resources and create a climate in which businesses and individuals can thrive. Work with our partners to maintain our preparedness for emergencies. • Environment - To work with our residents, suppliers and partners to minimise our impact on the environment and achieve our Council goal of ‘net zero’ carbon emissions by 2030. To maintain a clean and attractive Borough which supports biodiversity. • Services - To deliver a wide range of high-quality community focused and accessible services for everyone who lives and works in Spelthorne, striving for continuous improvement in all aspects of our work and providing excellent customer care.

Spelthorne Economic Strategy (2023 - 28) Spelthorne Borough Council	Vision is: To secure sustained growth of the local economy for the benefit of businesses and residents whilst protecting the Borough's environment and character. The vision is delivered through four themes: • Growth and Competitiveness - Spelthorne to become a stronger economy through a range of initiatives including access to training and business coaching • People - More quality jobs and greater earning power as well as enhanced access to skills via the Apprenticeship Levy gifted to small businesses. • Infrastructure and Places - To complete and deliver the Local Plan and Staines Development Framework to make best use of our assets including Bridge Street carpark, Thameside House and Ashford multi story carpark. • Supporting Business - To provide one of the best mechanisms of business support in Surrey via the Economic Development Team and the best place to start and grow a business
Transport	
<i>Budget 2025, HM Treasury</i>	Provided over £120 billion in additional capital investment for roads, rail and energy, including £15.6 billion for major city-region transport. Transport costs represent 14% of household spending. To bear down on the cost of travelling by rail, the government is freezing all regulated rail fares in England for one year starting from March 2026, saving the average passenger £300 per year on the most expensive routes. The government is making rapid progress in enabling the delivery of an operational third runway at Heathrow by 2035. In October, the Department for Transport launched a review of the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) and in November identified the scheme promoted by Heathrow Airport Ltd as the scheme to take forward to inform the ongoing review of the ANPS.
<i>Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon White Paper: Making sustainable local transport happen (2011) Department for Transport</i>	Our vision is for a transport system that is an engine for economic growth, but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life in our communities.

<i>Aviation Policy Framework (2013)</i> <i>Department for Transport</i>	Objectives include: • To ensure that the UK's air links continue to make it one of the best-connected countries in the world. This includes increasing our links to emerging markets so that the UK can compete successfully for economic growth opportunities; • To ensure that the aviation sector makes a significant and cost-effective contribution towards reducing global emissions. • To limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise.
<i>Door to Door: A strategy for improving Sustainable transport integration (2013)</i> <i>Department for Transport</i>	We want to see improvements to the walking environment on strategic routes to transport interchanges, educational establishments and major employment hubs. We want to make it easier for people to travel to and from railway stations by sustainable means. It is important that transport planning is integrated with land use planning so that transport facilities can be developed to meet the future needs of the community. We will continue to strongly encourage local transport authorities to integrate effectively with local planning authorities when they are drawing up their local plans.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policy TR1 requires a vision-led approach to transport planning and integration with land-use planning. Policies TR3 and TR4 promote sustainable patterns of movement, accessibility, active travel, public transport use and transport infrastructure necessary to support growth.
<i>Surrey Local Transport Plan 4 (2022 - 32), Surrey County Council</i>	Vision – A future-ready transport system that allows Surrey to lead the UK in achieving a low-carbon, economically prosperous, healthy and inclusive county with excellent quality of life for all residents, whilst seeking to enhance the built and natural environments. Objectives: • Minimising carbon and local pollutant emissions from vehicles; • Supporting strong and equitable economic growth and access to jobs and skills, helping to improve equality in the community; • Supporting social mobility and connected communities; and • Improving quality of life through improved air quality, health and accessibility Relevant LTP Strategies include:

	Congestion – target is to ensure congestion - both delay and journey time reliability - does not deteriorate beyond current levels. Includes objectives to: • Improve the reliability of journeys; • Reduce delays for all transport modes on key routes and at congestion hotspots; Improve the provision of journey planning information for travel in Surrey. Freight – Aim is to assist in the effective transportation of goods whilst minimising the impact of large goods vehicles on Surrey’s environment and its residents. Objectives include: • To continue to provide up-to-date information to the freight industry to enable more effective, reliable, safe and sustainable deliveries; • To reduce the adverse impact of lorries on congestion, air quality and road safety in urban areas; and, • To reduce incidences of lorries diverting along unsuitable lower category roads when not being used for access. Parking – Vision for parking is ‘Provide parking where appropriate, control parking where necessary’. Objectives include: • Reduce congestion caused by parked vehicles • Make best use of the parking space available • Enforce parking regulations fairly and efficiently • Provide appropriate parking where needed Local Bus – Aim is to deliver and maintain an effective, safe and sustainable bus network in Surrey. Objectives include: • To provide reliable and punctual bus services • To maintain a sustainable network of financially supported bus services • To improve the accessibility of bus services for passengers
<i>A New Rail Strategy for Surrey (2021), Arup on behalf of Surrey County Council</i>	Identifies five strategic aims which the rail network can assist in delivering over the next 30 years: • Achieving transport decarbonisation • Responding to change in the rail sector • Encouraging good growth and a sustainable economy • Increasing access for all • Developing an attractive, high-quality rail network

<i>Surrey Cycling Strategy 2014-2026, Surrey County Council</i>	Aim is: More people in Surrey cycling, more safely. Objectives include: • Surrey County Council and its partners will work together to deliver improvements for cycling; • Surrey Local Committees will oversee development of Local Cycling Plans that reflect local priorities and issues; • We will work with partners to ensure that Surrey's economy benefits from more people cycling for everyday journeys and from Surrey's role as a centre for cycling; • We will seek funding to improve infrastructure to make cycling a safe, attractive and convenient mode of transport for people of all ages and levels of confidence; • We will encourage cycling as an inclusive, healthy and affordable means of travel through the provision of information, promotional activities and practical support; • We will promote and encourage cycling for health and leisure; • We will encourage the provision of off-road cycle trails and activities while managing the impacts on Surrey's countryside; • We will take action to minimise the impacts of high levels of sport cycling on some roads and communities in Surrey;
Material Assets	
<i>Homes England strategic plan 2025 – 30, Homes England</i>	Our focus will be on tackling many of the barriers that the housing and regeneration sector faces, as well as injecting greater pace into the delivery of new homes and communities. This includes unlocking the potential of small and medium-sized builders, whilst also deepening collaboration and supporting further major developers to become master developers. It means unlocking more land for housing and mixed-use schemes and busting through bureaucratic barriers. It means playing our full part, alongside partners and places, to deliver a once-in-a-generation boost to the number of social and affordable homes being built. It also means bringing even greater amounts of institutional investment into the housing and regeneration sector via new investment platforms and opportunities.

<i>UK Infrastructure: A 10-Year Strategy (2025), HM Treasury</i>	The government is funding at least £725 billion of economic and social infrastructure over the next decade . • Housing: supporting delivery of 1.5m new homes this Parliament, through the 10-year Affordable Homes Programme and with investment from the National Housing Bank. • Transport: Transport for City Regions (TCR) settlement, capital funding to progress work on the Lower Thames Crossing and a new Structures Fund to repair major structures on the road network. • Water: water companies to quadruple investment in new water infrastructure over the next five years, including developing 9 new reservoirs. • National Wealth Fund: helping crowd in private investment and drive growth across the UK. • Clean Energy: including investment by GB Energy, the UK's first regional hydrogen transport network and store, strategic electricity transmission network investment and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. • Nuclear energy: investment to enable one of Europe's first Small Modular Reactor programmes and for nuclear fusion, alongside Sizewell C. • Schools: deliver rebuilding projects at over 500 schools within the existing School Rebuilding Programme and provide funding certainty out to 2034-35, enabling a further 250 schools to enter the programme. • Hospitals: delivering 35 hospitals in England via the New Hospital Programme. • Essential maintenance: providing funding certainty up to 2035 for schools, colleges, prisons, courts and hospitals maintenance programmes. • Digital connectivity: continuing investment in high-speed internet access via Project Gigabit. • Flood resilience: ensuring long term readiness via the 10-year flood defence investment programme. • Justice: three new prisons in England by 2031. • Defence: committing to 2.6% of GDP by 2027 on NATO qualifying defence spending
<i>Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)</i>	Regulations make provision for the setting out of a charging schedule for local authorities to charge developers monies towards local or sub-strategic infrastructure.
<i>Surrey Minerals Plan: Core Strategy (2011) Surrey County Council</i>	Vision is: - Exploitation of mineral resources and other mineral development in Surrey should be efficient, environmentally responsible, adequate, as far as possible; to meet the needs of the economy and should not impose significant adverse impacts on the community and this is encompassed in the following: -

	Reducing demand for primary minerals by encouraging efficient use of resources and recycled materials, where appropriate, in preference to excavating new resources;
<i>Corporate Plan 2024-2028, Spelthorne Borough Council</i>	Key Area – Council Assets Key objectives: • Make the best use of our assets and effectively prioritise our resources, work with partners to deliver sustainable delivery models and operate under an effective governance structure. • Develop a new Asset Management Strategy ensuring the management of our investment, regeneration and municipal portfolio will achieve best value, maximise income and minimise vacancy rates
<i>Spelthorne Housing Strategy 2020-2025, Spelthorne Borough Council</i>	Vision statement: ‘Ensuring best quality homes in a thriving and sustainable community’ Strategic priorities 2020-2025 1 Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of more private rented accommodation. 2 Improve the quality of existing homes. 3 Prevent homelessness. 4 Support residents to access affordable, well-managed market rent and social rented properties.
Cultural Heritage & Historic Environment	
<i>World Heritage Convention (1972) UNESCO</i>	Defines the scope of cultural heritage and calls for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage sites.
<i>European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1987) EC</i>	The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage.
<i>European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Revised)(1992) EC</i>	Makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. Concerned with arrangements to be made for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage.

<i>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)</i>	Provides for nationally important archaeological sites to be statutorily protected as scheduled ancient monuments (now Scheduled Monuments)
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policies HE1-HE10 require development plans to include a positive strategy for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance and opportunities should be taken to secure their long-term conservation and enjoyment.
<i>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990):</i>	Provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest
Landscape/Townscape	
<i>European Landscape Convention (2000) Council of Europe</i>	Article 3 - Aims The aims of this Convention are to promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues. Article 5 – General Measures (a) To recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people’s surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity; (b) To establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6; (c) To establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mentioned in paragraph b above; (d) To integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape
<i>European Landscape Convention Guidance Pt2: Integrating the intent and the ELC into Plans, Policies & Strategies (2009) Natural England</i>	An understanding of landscape is vital to embed spatial plans and policies in their locality. This is essential for developing a clear ‘vision’ for an area and ensuring that the generic policies set out in national statements and guidance can be translated into policies that are meaningful at the local level for the particular plan area. Guidance interprets the text and intent of the ELC into seven generic principles: Ensure clarity in the use of terms and definitions

	Ensure clarity in the use of terms and definitions Recognise landscape in a holistic sense Apply to all landscape Understand the landscape baseline Involve people Integrate landscape Raise awareness of the importance of landscape
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policies DP1-DP4 promote high-quality design and place-making. Policies N1-N5 require conservation and enhancement of landscapes, green infrastructure and natural beauty, including within Protected Landscapes
Planning Practice Guidance Note: Natural Environment (CLG) 2014	Local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.
Climate	
Climate Change Act 2008	Sets a target to reduce the UK carbon account by 80% from a 1990 baseline by the year 2050 and by 34% by 2020.
Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2008 (as amended)	Section 19(1A) requires local planning authorities to include in their Local Plans, policies designed to secure the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
Fixing the Foundations: creating a more prosperous nation (HM Treasury) 2015	Reliable and low-carbon energy, at a price we can afford The government will: Continue the long-term decarbonisation of the UK's energy sector through a framework that supports cost effective low carbon investment.
<i>Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget (2020), Committee on Climate Change</i>	The Sixth Carbon Budget can only be achieved if Government, regional agencies and local authorities work seamlessly together. Four key things are needed to achieve this vision of collaborative delivery: - Framework: An agreed framework for delivery for Net Zero incorporating local and national climate action - Financing: Appropriate long-term financing to support local authorities in delivering Net Zero - Flexibility: Local operational flexibility around how local areas address climate change

	Facilitation: coherent policy and powers for the facilitation of delivery.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026) CLG</i>	Policy CC1 requires development plans to take a proactive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Policies CC2 and CC3 support the transition to net zero, renewable and low-carbon energy, climate resilience, nature-based solutions and adaptation to flood risk, overheating and water scarcity.
<i>Planning Practice Guidance: Climate Change (MHCLG)</i>	Planning should support the transition to a low-carbon future and help shape places that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are resilient to climate change. Local plans should: - Plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation; - Support renewable and low-carbon energy; - Promote energy efficiency; - Address overheating, flooding and water scarcity risks; - Take account of local climate evidence and carbon reduction ambitions.
<i>Surrey Climate Change Strategy (2020), SCC</i>	Deliver and promote an integrated, accessible, affordable and reliable public and active (walking or cycling) transport system across the County. Reducing journeys and improving local air quality for improved health and wellbeing of our residents. 60% emissions reduction by 2035 against BAU as a minimum. Strategic priorities: - Strategic priority 1 (SP1) - Taking forward our place-based approach to development that creates well-connected communities close to high quality places, spaces and services that reduces journeys or journey length. - Strategic priority 2 (SP2) - Promote and encourage a shift away from private transport vehicles to an increased uptake of accessible public and active transport (walking and cycling). - Strategic priority 3 (SP3) - Encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles amongst partners and residents for journeys that cannot be made on foot, by bicycle or public transport through innovative policy supported by adequate funding.

<i>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener 2021</i>	Sets out the Government's strategy for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Key priorities include: • Decarbonisation of electricity generation through renewable and low-carbon energy sources; • Improving energy efficiency across homes and businesses; • Accelerating the transition to zero-emission vehicles and sustainable transport; • Supporting low-carbon industry and green economic growth; • Enhancing climate resilience and adaptation across sectors.
<i>Natural England Climate Change Adaptation Manual</i>	Provides guidance on using the natural environment and nature-based solutions to help communities and ecosystems adapt to climate change. Key objectives include: • Improve resilience to climate change. • Support habitat restoration and connectivity. • Promote nature-based solutions. • Reduce risks from flooding, drought and overheating. • Integrate climate adaptation into planning decisions.
Biodiversity	
<i>The Birds Directive 79/409/EEC as amended (2009) EC</i>	Creates a comprehensive scheme of protection for all wild bird species naturally occurring in Europe. Directive recognises that habitat loss and degradation are the most serious threats to the conservation of wild birds and places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered as well as migratory species (listed in Annex I), especially through the establishment of a coherent network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).
<i>The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC as amended (2013) EC</i>	Forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy and is built around the Natura 2000 network of protected sites and the strict system of species protection. The directive protects over 1.000 animals and plant species and over 200 so called "habitat types" (e.g. special types of forests, meadows, wetlands, etc.), which are of European importance. Establishes the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

<i>Ramsar Convention</i>	The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world". Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: • work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; • designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management; • cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.
<i>EU biodiversity strategy to 2030 (May 2020), European Commission</i>	Target 1 To halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status so that, by 2020, compared to current assessments: (i) 100% more habitat assessments and 50% more species assessments under the Habitats Directive show an improved conservation status; and (ii) 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show a secure or improved status.
<i>The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature (June 2011), DEFRA</i>	Established the Government's strategy for protecting and enhancing the natural environment through landscape-scale conservation, ecological restoration, Nature Improvement Areas and improved recognition of ecosystem services. Key objectives: • Protect and improve the natural environment. • Restore ecological networks. • Improve biodiversity. • Promote ecosystem services. • Support landscape-scale conservation.

<i>Blueprint for Halting and Reversing Biodiversity Loss: the UK's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2030 (2025), DEFRA</i>	The Global Biodiversity Framework's (GBF) mission for the period up to 2030 to achieve the 2025 vision is to: take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation
<i>Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006</i>	Section 40(1) Every public authority must in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Section 40(3) Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policies N1-N6 require development plans and decisions to protect and enhance biodiversity, support nature recovery, strengthen ecological networks, deliver biodiversity net gain and take account of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Particular protection is afforded to designated sites, irreplaceable habitats and important ecological assets.
<i>Planning Practice Guidance Note: Natural Environment (CLG) 2014</i>	Local planning authorities and neighbourhood planning bodies should seek opportunities to work collaboratively with other partners, including Local Nature Partnerships, to develop and deliver a strategic approach to protecting and improving the natural environment based on local priorities and evidence. Biodiversity enhancement in and around development should be led by a local understanding of ecological networks, and should seek to include: - habitat restoration, re-creation and expansion; - improved links between existing sites; - buffering of existing important sites; - new biodiversity features within development; and - securing management for long term enhancement.

<i>Circular 06/05: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation</i>	Potential effects of a development on habitats or species listed as priorities in the UK BAP...are capable of being a material consideration in the preparation of regional spatial strategies and local development documents.
<i>Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan, Surrey Wildlife Trust</i>	Contains Habitat Action Plans covering: Chalk Grassland Farmland Floodplain Grazing Marsh Lowland Heathland Lowland Unimproved Meadows Open Water & Large Reedbeds Wetland Woodland Wood Pasture & Parkland Urban
<i>Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework (February 2009), Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board</i>	Objectives of the Framework are to recommend: - A consistent approach to the protection of the SPA from the significant effects of residential development; The type and extent of residential development that may have a significant effect either alone or in combination on the SPA; Key criteria for the delivery of avoidance measures
<i>Environment Act 2021</i>	The Environment Act establishes a new framework for environmental governance and nature recovery in England. Relevant provisions include: • A mandatory minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement for most new development; • Preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies; • Legally binding environmental targets; • Strengthened biodiversity duties for public authorities; • Measures to improve habitat connectivity, species recovery and ecosystem resilience.

<i>Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025/26)</i>	The Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies priorities and opportunities for nature recovery across the county. Key objectives include: • Restoring, expanding and connecting wildlife habitats; • Recovering priority species and improving biodiversity; • Increasing the resilience of ecological networks to climate change; • Supporting Biodiversity Net Gain delivery; • Integrating nature recovery into planning, land management and development decisions.
<i>Green Infrastructure Framework for England (Natural England)</i>	Provides a national framework for planning, delivering and improving green infrastructure to support nature, climate resilience and healthy communities. Key messages: • Promote Accessible Greenspace Standards. • Improve access to nature. • Deliver multifunctional green infrastructure. • Integrate GI into health, climate and biodiversity planning.
Soil & Land	
<i>Soil Strategy for 2030 (2021), European Commission</i>	The EU Soil Strategy is designed to achieve the following goals by 2050: • Ensure that all EU soil ecosystems are healthy and more resilient, enabling them to continue delivering essential services. • Achieve no net land take and reduce soil pollution to levels healthy for humans and ecosystems. • Establish the protection of soils, sustainable management practices, and restoration of degraded soils as common EU standards.
<i>Environmental Protection Act (1990) HMSO</i>	To provide an improved system for the identification of land that is posing unacceptable risks to health or the environment and for securing remediation where necessary.
<i>The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature (June 2011), DEFRA</i>	By 2030 we want all of England's soils to be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully, in order to improve the quality of soils and to safeguard their ability to provide essential ecosystem services and functions for future generations.

<i>Fixing the Foundations: creating a more prosperous nation (HM Treasury) 2015</i>	Planning freedoms and more houses to buy The government will: introduce a new zonal system which will effectively give automatic permission on suitable brownfield sites
<i>Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England (2009) DEFRA</i>	By 2030, all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully. This will improve the quality of England's soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations. Our vision will mean that: - agricultural soils will be better managed and threats to them will be addressed; - soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to manage its impacts; - soils in urban areas will be valued during development, and construction practices will ensure vital soil functions can be maintained; and - pollution of our soils is prevented, and our historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: - protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); - preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, considering relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
<i>Planning Practice Guidance Note: Natural Environment (CLG) 2014</i>	Soil is an essential finite resource that provides important 'ecosystem services. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.
Water	
<i>Revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (2025), EC</i>	The revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, which entered into force on 1 January 2025, protects human health and the environment from the effects of untreated urban wastewater. It requires EU countries to ensure that towns and cities properly collect and treat wastewater cost-effectively.

	It aims to:- • Improve water quality through stricter water treatment and the inclusion of new pollutants; • Strengthen the EU's polluter-pays principle by ensuring that those responsible for pollution bear the costs of remediating it; • Advance circularity through water reuse and the recovery of valuable resources from wastewater; • Address climate change through GHG emission reduction of treatment plants and urban adaptation to heavy rainfall; • Ensure access to sanitation for all, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalised.
<i>Water Framework Directive (2000) EC</i>	Objectives of the Directive include: • Enhance and prevent further deterioration of aquatic and wetland ecosystems. • Promote the sustainable use of water. • Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority hazardous' substances; and • Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.
<i>Groundwater Directive (2006) EC</i>	In order to protect the environment as a whole, and human health in particular, detrimental concentrations of harmful pollutants in groundwater must be avoided, prevented or reduced.
<i>Floods Directive (2007) EC</i>	The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods.
<i>A New Vision for Water: White Paper (2026), DEFRA</i>	Relevant objectives include: • Reforms to set clearer long-term direction – including reforms to Strategic Policy Statements, rationalising plans, better joined-up regional water planning function, and a long-term stability objective. • Establishing a new integrated water regulator to provide greater stability, transparency, and an integrated view of both economic and environmental performance. • Making water a more attractive and reliable sector for investors seeking stable and fair returns. • Creation of a new independent water ombudsman.

	• Building on record investment in storm overflows and wastewater treatment, taking action to tackle sewer misuse and introducing a single set of stronger and clearer standards and enforcement for agricultural pollution. • Improving asset health through new mapping and statutory resilience standards, while cutting leakage and increasing water efficiency with more water reuse, smart metering, and innovative regulation. • Committing to publish a Transition Plan this year to lead the water sector through transformative reforms.
<i>Statement on the strengthened biodiversity duty (2025), DEFRA</i>	Defra is responsible for the government's biodiversity policy. Through the Environment Act 2021, Defra set 4 legally binding targets for biodiversity in England, legislating to: • halt the decline in species abundance by 2030 and reverse species decline by 2042 • reduce the risk of species extinction • restore or create more than 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat by 2042
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policies F1-F9 require a risk-based approach to flood risk management, application of the sequential and exception tests where appropriate, and incorporation of sustainable drainage systems. Policy W1 requires early consideration of water supply, drainage and wastewater infrastructure.
<i>Thames River Basin District River Basin Management Plan (2015) Environment Agency</i>	The environmental objectives of the WFD are: • to prevent deterioration of the status of surface waters and groundwater • to achieve objectives and standards for protected areas • to aim to achieve good status for all water bodies or, for heavily modified water bodies and artificial water bodies, good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status • to reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater • the cessation of discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances into surface waters • progressively reduce the pollution of groundwater and prevent or limit the entry of pollutants

<i>Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009) Environment Agency</i>	CFMPs aim to promote more sustainable approaches to managing flood risk. The policies identified in the CFMP will be delivered through a combination of different approaches. For areas of Heavily Population Floodplain (which includes Spelthorne) the proposed actions are: • Deliver the actions recommended in Flood Risk Management Strategies for Oxford, the Lower Lee, the Wey and Lower Thames once they are approved; • In the short-term, encourage partners to develop policies, strategies and initiatives to increase the resistance and resilience of all new development at risk of flooding. Protecting land that may be needed to manage flood risk in the future, and work with partners to identify opportunities for this and to recreate river corridors in urban areas; • In the longer-term, land and property owners to adapt the urban environment to be more flood resilient. This includes the refurbishment of existing buildings to increase resilience and resistance to flooding; • Promote the management of flood consequences. By working with our partners, we will improve public awareness and local emergency planning, for example identifying critical infrastructure at risk and producing community flood plans.
<i>River Thames Scheme: reducing flood risk from Datchet to Teddington (2016)</i>	This is a programme of projects and investment to reduce flood risk in communities between Datchet and Teddington. The scheme consists of: the construction of a new flood channel between 30 to 60 metres wide; improvements to 3 of the existing weirs on the River Thames; installation of property level products for up to 1,200 homes to make them more resistant to flooding; improved flood incident response plans creation of over 40 hectares of biodiversity action plan habitat; working with communities to raise flood awareness and support them in flood preparedness, response and recovery;
<i>Environment Act 2021</i>	Introduces legally binding environmental targets and measures relating to water quality, biodiversity and environmental protection. Relevant objectives include: • Improving the ecological condition of rivers, lakes and groundwater; • Reducing pollution from wastewater and diffuse sources; • Supporting sustainable water management; • Enhancing environmental resilience to climate change; • Establishing long-term targets and monitoring for environmental improvement.

<i>Affinity Water, Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP24)</i>	Sets out Affinity Water's long-term strategy for maintaining a secure and sustainable water supply. Key objectives include: • Reducing per capita water consumption through water efficiency measures; • Addressing water resource deficits in areas of serious water stress; • Reducing leakage from the water supply network; • Protecting and enhancing water resources and the environment; • Ensuring future growth can be accommodated while maintaining water supply resilience.
<i>Water Resources South East Regional Water Resources Plan (2024), Water Resources South East</i>	Sets out a long-term strategy for securing sustainable water supplies across South East England in response to population growth and climate change. Key objectives: • Ensure long-term water supply resilience. • Reduce water demand and leakage. • Protect and enhance the water environment. • Support sustainable growth. • Deliver new water infrastructure where required.
Air	
<i>Ambient Air Quality & Cleaner Air for Europe (2024) Directive 2024/2881, EU</i>	Directive lays down measures aimed at... Defining and establishing objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole; Maintaining air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases.
<i>Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil (2021), EC</i>	The zero-pollution vision for 2050: a Healthy Planet for All Air, water and soil pollution is reduced to levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems and that respect the boundaries our planet can cope with, thus creating a toxic-free environment. Under EU law, Green Deal ambitions and in synergy with other initiatives, by 2030 the EU should reduce: • by more than 55% the health impacts (premature deaths) of air pollution; • by 30% the share of people chronically disturbed by transport noise; • by 25% the EU ecosystems where air pollution threatens biodiversity;

	• by 50% nutrient losses, the use and risk of chemical pesticides, the use of the more hazardous ones, and the sale of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture; • by 50% plastic litter at sea and by 30% microplastics released into the environment; • significantly total waste generation and by 50% residual municipal waste.
<i>The Air Quality Strategy for England (2023), DEFRA</i>	This document sets out a framework to enable local authorities to deliver for their communities and contribute to our long-term air quality goals, including our ambitious new targets for fine particulate matter (PM2.5). Our priorities are: 1. Planning reforms helping to deliver on air quality. 2. Building capacity in local councils through training, guidance and knowledge sharing. 3. Reducing emissions from industrial sources through improved enforcement of environmental permits. 4. Reducing pollution from domestic burning through smoke control areas and cleaner fuels. 5. Raising awareness within local communities of air quality impacts and how to reduce them. 6. Boosting active travel and public transport to improve air quality.
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (2026), MHCLG</i>	Policy P3 requires development proposals to avoid unacceptable impacts from air pollution and support compliance with national air quality objectives and targets. Development should minimise exposure to poor air quality and take opportunities to improve environmental conditions.
<i>Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023</i>	Establishes legally binding targets for reducing concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and reducing population exposure to air pollution. Objectives include: • Reducing annual mean PM2.5 concentrations nationally; • Reducing population exposure to PM2.5 by 2040; • Improving public health outcomes associated with poor air quality; • Supporting action at national and local levels to improve air quality.
Waste	

<i>Waste Framework Directive (2008) EC</i>	Requires that waste is managed without endangering human health and harming the environment and without risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals and without causing a nuisance through noise or odours and without adversely affecting the countryside or places of special interest. Sets out the waste hierarchy of: - Prevent – Reuse – Recycle – Recover – Disposal. Sets targets of: • 50% of waste for reuse and recycling of certain waste materials from households by 2020; and • 70% of construction and demolition waste reused or recycled by 2020.
<i>National Planning Policy for Waste (2014) CLG</i>	Positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering this country's waste ambitions through: • Delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy; • ensuring that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognising the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities; • providing a framework in which communities and businesses are engaged with and take more responsibility for their own waste, including by enabling waste to be disposed of or, in the case of mixed municipal waste from households, recovered, in line with the proximity principle; • helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment • ensuring the design and layout of new residential and commercial development and other infrastructure (such as safe and reliable transport links) complements sustainable waste management, including the provision of appropriate storage and segregation facilities to facilitate high quality collections of waste.
<i>Surrey Waste Plan (2020), Surrey County Council</i>	The Plan sets out the planning framework for the development of waste management facilities and is used in determining planning applications for waste management facilities. The Plan is intended to make sure that land is available to be developed so that there are enough waste management facilities to handle the equivalent amount of waste arising in Surrey.

<i>SEP Strategy Document (2025), Surrey Environment Partnership</i>	SEP 2025 has been developed to bridge the gap between our existing out-of-date JMWMS and further clarity from central government. It will reflect the vision of SEP and provide clear strategic direction for the partnership for the next three years to 2025 and a longer-term vision that will allow SEP to continue to follow the waste hierarchy and work towards zero waste.
<i>Resources and Waste Strategy for England</i>	Sets out the Government's long-term approach to resource efficiency and waste management. Key objectives include: • Maximising resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy; • Reducing avoidable waste generation; • Increasing recycling rates and the reuse of materials; • Improving producer responsibility and waste collection systems; • Reducing the environmental impacts associated with waste management.

Appendix B - Consultation Responses and Schedule of Amendments

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report was issued for consultation to the statutory environmental bodies between 23 July 2026 and 11 September 2026. The statutory consultees were:

- Natural England
- Historic England
- Environment Agency

Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England. No response was received from the Environment Agency. Comments received have been reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated into this Final SA/SEA Scoping Report.

Consultee	Summary of Representation	Council Response / Action
Natural England	Welcomed the key sustainability issues identified within the report and supported the Environmental/Sustainability Protection Objectives and Sustainability Framework. Recommended stronger consideration of ecological connectivity, protection of ecological networks, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and access to nature. Suggested additional monitoring indicators relating to biodiversity and green infrastructure.	Comments noted and incorporated where appropriate. References to ecological connectivity, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions have been strengthened within the Sustainability Framework. Additional biodiversity and green infrastructure monitoring indicators have been included.
Historic England	Confirmed that the Scoping Report adequately covers issues relating to the historic environment and the potential effects of development on heritage assets. No amendments requested.	Noted. No changes required. Historic England confirmed that the report adequately addresses historic environment matters.
Environment Agency	No response received during the consultation period.	No action required.

Amendments Made Following Consultation

The following amendments have been made to the Final SA/SEA Scoping Report in response to consultation comments:

Biodiversity

- Additional emphasis placed on ecological connectivity and the protection of ecological networks.
- Recognition of the importance of avoiding habitat fragmentation.
- Strengthened references to nature recovery and habitat enhancement

Green Infrastructure

- Additional references included regarding the role of green infrastructure in supporting biodiversity, climate resilience, health and wellbeing.
- Stronger links made between green infrastructure and access to nature.

Climate Change

Additional reference included regarding the use of nature-based solutions to support climate change

Monitoring Framework

- Additional monitoring indicators included relating to:
 - Biodiversity enhancement.
 - Habitat creation.
 - Ecological connectivity.
 - Accessibility of green infrastructure and natural greenspace.

Conclusion

The consultation responses confirmed that the overall scope, baseline evidence and Sustainability Framework provide an appropriate basis for undertaking SA and SEA of the emerging Spelthorne Borough Council Local Plan. Amendments made following consultation have primarily strengthened consideration of biodiversity, ecological connectivity, green infrastructure and associated monitoring arrangements.