

Minutes of the Community Planning Panel meeting from Thursday 18th May 2023 – 6.30 pm on Microsoft Teams to discuss the Runnymede proposals for a Design Code

In attendance:

Mike Corbett – RBC

Judith Orr – RBC

Nigel Rowe - Friends of The Hythe Residents' Association

Jean Parry - New Haw Residents Association

Annie Wade - Franklands Drive Residents Association

Terry Bennett – Englefield Green Neighbourhood Forum

Aurelie Bunodiere-Pudney - Chertsey South (Save Chertsey Now)

		Actions
MC	Gave a short presentation about the Runnymede Design Code. This work will build on the work that is already contained in the relatively recently adopted Design SPD for Runnymede (2021) so needs to capture areas relevant to the 10 particular settlement areas identified in the borough. Mike asked for comments/ issues to be sent to him by 30 th May (if possible) but emphasised that this isn't a 'hard' deadline and comments can arrive a few days after this if it causes issues.	All
NR/ TB	Asked about how the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) work on Design will feed into the borough-wide Design Work.	
MC/ JO	MC highlighted that the work on the Design Codes would be undertaken by settlement areas, and these tended to be based around NP areas. He illustrated this using rMaps (the Council's online mapping system) and showing the proposed settlement area boundaries. As far as NP Design Codes and the Borough-wide Design Code - this issue has not yet been resolved and will need to be picked up/ resolved by the consultants who will be procured to undertake the Design Code work for the borough.	MC to pick up this point with the consultants once appointed.
NR	Asked to have a link to rMaps and the settlement areas sent to him.	Agreed to send this through to NR (done 18/05/2023)
NR/ AW	A discussion followed about local authority boundaries and the need to look at what is happening beyond them i.e., it impacts on the setting of an area if the design just beyond the boundary is very different to that within it. Places discussed included the developments proposed in Staines across the river from Runnymede, Elmbridge and Woking and the need to work closely together on this with them.	
MC/ JO	The Design Code will apply in RBC area only. However, it was suggested that, as part of the specification for the Brief, it might be possible to include a section in the context for the Design Code that requires the consultants to liaise with neighbouring authorities on what their plans are for design in their areas and to reflect this in the Runnymede Design Code.	MC to pick up this point in the specification for the Design Code.
AW	Raised the issue of a telephone mast in her area which she considers has had a big impact. A number of residents objected to an earlier proposal but weren't informed when a new mast proposal was put forward so missed the opportunity to object to it.	

MC/ JO	JO stated that only masts above a certain height (30 metres) would require planning permission but may still require prior approval. MC felt that normally only 'neighbours' immediately adjacent to an application would be directly consulted on it. (A site notice would have been put up in the area too to inform local residents of the proposal as well as letters sent out. JO investigated the issue in more detail and noted that the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks (PDF), including of 5G mobile technology. For mobile masts under 30 metres, the main condition is that their siting and appearance must be such that their visual impact on the surrounding area is minimised. Factors that the LPA might consider include: a mast's height in relation to the surrounding land and buildings, and the materials, design and colours used. The LPA will not assess whether a new mast is needed.)	JO (added more detail to this following an investigation into the issue).
TB	Felt that it was important that any consultants appointed to do the Design Code for Runnymede had local knowledge of the area.	Point noted.
JP	Stated that she had attended a recent exhibition hosted by SCC. In her view they had included too many graphics which didn't add much to the exhibition. Asked that if we include graphics in the Design Code that they provide meaningful information and not there just for the sake of it.	Point noted. MC agreed to take this point on board when working with the consultants
A B-P	Asked whether the Design Code could influence existing developments such as the Bittams Lane developments?	
MC	The Design Code would influence developments in the reviewed Local Plan but existing developments, such as the Bittams developments being referred to here, have already been allocated in the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan.	
A B-P	Asked if it would be possible for the DC to set limitations / bans on certain types of materials to give greater control over this. One specific example given was to specify that, for example, developments should not use purple cladding on new buildings as it was out of keeping with the area and residents did not want / like it.	
MC	Advised it was unlikely that a DC would be able to completely ban certain materials, but it could give greater control than what currently exists.	
AW	Asked about the A320 works and whether these needed to be in place prior to the allocated sites in the Local Plan proceeding?	
JO	Mentioned receiving an email about the A320 works but couldn't recall exactly what it contained. On checking this email, it related solely to the delivery of the Veterinary Laboratories site B DEFRA site in Addlestone. Some sites, included as allocations in the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, need to undertake a site specific transport assessment, assessed by Surrey County Council (SCC), in their role as the Highway Authority. SCC determine whether all or some of the housing on allocated	

	sites near to the A320 can come forward prior to the delivery of the road improvements.	
NR	What can be an exception to DC rules? Parameters for exceptions are important and need to be clearly set as otherwise they do not mean much in reality, and everything ends up being an 'exception'.	Point noted. This is something that will need to be developed / thought through as part of the DC process.

The meeting ended just after 7.30 pm.