

Statement of Common Ground

Constituent parties to the Statement of Common Ground

-Elmbridge Borough Council

-Runnymede Borough Council

-Spelthorne Borough Council

Geographical area covered by this Statement of Common Ground

This is an annex Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) which should be read in conjunction with the primary Runnymede-Spelthorne SoCG and any primary SoCG subsequently produced by the Kingston and North East Surrey Housing Market Area (HMA) grouping.

The Runnymede-Spelthorne SoCG provides detailed information on the Runnymede-Spelthorne HMA and its linkages with the wider area including with Elmbridge Borough. Specifically, this primary SoCG concludes:

- That the Runnymede-Spelthorne HMA has particularly strong links with a number of adjoining local authorities including Elmbridge.
- The Functional Economic Area analyses carried out by Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils conclude that both Local Authorities have the strongest links with each other followed by Elmbridge.
- The Runnymede retail work had found that Weybridge (both in and out of centre locations) is a retail destination for Runnymede residents.

A review of the evidence base prepared by Elmbridge Borough Council to underpin its emerging Local Plan supports these links with Runnymede and Spelthorne with the evidence base drawing the following key conclusions:

- The SHMA for Kingston upon Thames and North East Surrey Authorities (June 2016) concludes that the four authorities of Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Kingston and Mole Valley form a coherent and self-contained Housing Market Area (HMA), as identified from strong migration linkages and supported by evidence on house price patterns and commuting links. Migration and commuting data suggests that beyond the HMA, the strongest relationships beyond are with Richmond and Merton, and to a lesser extent with Sutton, Reigate and Banstead, and Runnymede.
- The Elmbridge Baseline Review and Functional Economic Area analysis (April 2016) concludes that the primary authorities that Elmbridge will need to work with in relation to its policies on employment land based on functional economic links are Runnymede, Spelthorne and the London Borough of Kingston upon Thames. However, engagement with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Woking, Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley and Guildford was also noted as being important as part of a wider economic area when seeking to secure sufficient floorspace to meet business needs.

- The Elmbridge Retail Assessment (April 2016) shows that Kingston Town Centre is by far the most popular destination for comparison goods spending for its residents. Other key competing locations beyond the borough boundary are Woking, followed by Staines upon Thames and then Guildford.

These linkages are considered to warrant the production of a Statement of Common Ground between Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils to confirm where agreement has been reached to date through the Duty to Cooperate on strategic cross boundary matters relevant to this grouping of Local Authorities and to provide an effective mechanism for future engagement.

Appendix 1 of this Statement of Common Ground reproduces the map appended to the primary Runnymede-Spelthorne SoCG which this annex agreement was produced in connection with and which shows the geographical area of interest.

Key strategic cross boundary matters between the constituent parties to this agreement

This section of the Statement of Common Ground sets out the key specific strategic cross boundary matters of relevance between Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils and the agreed position between the three authorities.

Housing

The three parties agree that:

1-Runnymede and Spelthorne Boroughs form a HMA and that Elmbridge Borough Council is located in the Kingston and North East Surrey HMA with the London Borough of Kingston, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Mole Valley District Council.

2- In this part of the South East, HMAs tend to be overlapping in nature due to the density of transport networks, both road and rail. This results in localised links across HMA boundaries. It is agreed that there are localised cross boundary links between Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils for housing matters.

3- In the first instance, and in line with paragraph 47 of the NPPF, each of the parties to this SoCG should work collaboratively with their HMA partners, and leave no stone unturned in seeking to meet the identified housing needs of each HMA within the relevant HMA boundaries.

4-If it becomes apparent that there is an oversupply of housing in either the Runnymede-Spelthorne HMA or in the Kingston and North East Surrey HMA, this oversupply could help meet unmet needs, where they exist, in the surrounding HMAs (including in Elmbridge Borough) depending on the location of housing and the existence of local connections.

5-As the housing supply evidence base is completed by both Elmbridge and Spelthorne Borough Councils, the findings will be shared and discussed with each other and Runnymede at key milestones.

6-Elmbridge Borough Council supports the process undertaken by Runnymede Borough Council through its housing supply work to maximise the delivery of housing within Runnymede Borough.

The economy

The three parties agree that:

1-The conclusions drawn in each of the Functional Economic Area analyses carried out by Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils are robust. These three reports conclude that there are

strong functional links for economic purposes between the boroughs of Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne.

2- Once Runnymede has completed its latest update of its pipeline supply information for economic floorspace, if it becomes apparent that the Council is anticipating an oversupply of economic floorspace in the Borough over the period of its Local Plan, in the first instance, the expectation is that this oversupply would assist in meeting any unmet needs which may exist in Spelthorne Borough given the strength of the links between these two local authority areas. However it is agreed that in some limited instances, an oversupply in Runnymede could assist in meeting unmet needs in Elmbridge depending on the location of the economic floorspace being delivered and the existence of local connections. This is considered to be particularly relevant in the locality of the Brooklands area.

3-Once Elmbridge and Spelthorne Borough Councils have completed their Employment Land Reviews and spatial strategy work, further discussions regarding the supply of economic floorspace and unmet needs across the Functional Economic Area can be progressed.

4-It is important to continue to engage through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group on matters associated with growth at Heathrow Airport and its impacts on the economy in the wider sub region.

Retail

The three parties agree that:

1-Staines upon Thames is the largest and most dominant of the centres within the three boroughs and has the largest catchment area. Its influence extends into both Elmbridge and Runnymede. The remaining centres in the three authorities are much smaller in scale, and attract a much more limited market share.

2-None of the three Local Authorities is looking to significantly alter the position of its centres in the wider retail hierarchy through their Local Plans. Elmbridge Borough Council is seeking to retain its market share and Runnymede Borough Council is actively pursuing regeneration opportunities in its Town Centres to improve their offer and choice but is not seeking for its centres to challenge the position of Staines upon Thames in the retail hierarchy.

3-Neither Runnymede or Spelthorne Borough Councils are requesting that Elmbridge Borough Council assists in meeting any unmet retail needs from either Runnymede or Spelthorne Borough Council at the current time.

Gypsies and Travellers

The three parties agree that:

1-The evidence base produced by Elmbridge and Runnymede Borough Councils to assess the level of need for traveller (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) accommodation in both Local Authority areas is robust.

2- Spelthorne Borough Council will consult Elmbridge and Runnymede Borough Councils on their draft GTAA findings (currently being prepared) once completed.

3-Each Authority will endeavour to meet their identified accommodation needs of Travellers in full within their individual borough boundaries over the periods of their Local Plans.

Infrastructure

The three parties agree that:

1-Elmbridge Borough Council is exploring options to provide sufficient SANGs to support the housing growth in its Borough over the period of its Local Plan. Elmbridge is not currently seeking assistance

from either Runnymede or Spelthorne Borough Councils to assist with the provision of adequate SANG land to support growth in its Borough.

2- Runnymede Borough Council is exploring options to provide sufficient SANGs to support the housing growth in its Borough over the period of its Local Plan. Runnymede is not currently seeking assistance from Elmbridge Borough Council to assist with the provision of adequate SANG land to support growth in its Borough at the current time.

3-They will keep each other updated as infrastructure evidence is produced and as discussions with infrastructure and service providers evolve if relevant cross boundary matters/projects are found to be necessary. At the current time however no specific cross boundary infrastructure issues between Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge which require engagement have been identified.

Transport

1-Runnymede and Elmbridge Borough Councils agree that the stretch of road made up by the A320 and A317 between M25 junction 11 and Weybridge Town Centre is of cross boundary interest to both Authorities. The route serves both Weybridge Town Centre and the Weybridge and Bourne Business Park but is congested in both directions at peak times. Once the strategic highway modelling which will underpin the Elmbridge Local Plan has been completed, it is agreed that Runnymede and Elmbridge Borough Councils will determine whether a joint route based study along this corridor should be progressed to support the cumulative growth proposed in the Local Plans of both Local Authorities (estimated timeframe for the completion of this modelling is Q3 2018/19).

2- Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils agree that Walton Bridge and the A244 is of cross boundary interest to both authorities. The route connects the two Boroughs and is the only vehicular crossing-point; serving the immediate areas of Walton-on-Thames and Shepperton and the wider community beyond. The route is congested in both directions at peak times. In Elmbridge Borough vehicular movement can be restricted / decreased from the bridge, through the town centre and out towards Walton Half-Way. In Spelthorne, traffic congestion extends back from the bridge to Marshalls Roundabout and backs up on approach roads to the roundabout at peak times, as far back as the roundabout with Green Lane on the A244 and to Felix Lane on Fordbridge Road. This is exacerbated especially during the Hampton Court Flower Show every July and other occasions when traffic levels are higher. Once the strategic highway modelling for both Local Authorities' Local Plans is complete, it is agreed that both Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils will determine whether a joint route based study along this corridor should be progressed to support the cumulative growth proposed in their respective Local Plans (estimated timeframe for the completion of this modelling is late 2018).

3-The three parties agree that they will continue to work collaboratively through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group and Transport for the South East in relation to matters associated with strategic cross boundary transport schemes.

Green Belt

The three parties agree that:

1-Each Authorities' Green Belt Boundary Review has been undertaken in a broadly consistent manner and is a robust piece of evidence to underpin their individual local plan preparation.

2- As part of their evidence base and wider Local Plan preparation process, each local Authority will take into consideration the importance of the Green Belt within its area as part of the integrity of the wider Metropolitan Green Belt, with particular reference to Green Belt land that acts as the

strategic arc preventing the continued outward sprawl of London and the merging of London with Surrey towns.

3-Consideration will be given as to how a more strategic approach can be taken to future Green Belt boundary reviews.

Flooding

The three parties agree that:

1-There are several watercourses which run through more than one of the Local Authority areas covered in this SoCG, including the River Wey, the River Wey Navigation the River Thames.

2-They will continue to work collaboratively through the River Thames Scheme partnership project to support the delivery of the River Thames Scheme.

Governance arrangements

It is agreed that informal discussions will occur between the three authorities on the cross boundary issues referred to in this SoCG in the form of Officer level meetings at least once every 6 months with escalation of matters to Member level where necessary.

It is agreed that this Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed by the three authorities at a joint Duty to Co-operate meeting which will be held on an annual basis. Until otherwise agreed Spelthorne Borough Council will act as the Chair and Secretariat for this meeting.

Where any one of the parties to this SoCG is undertaking a Regulation 18 consultation, Regulation 19 publication or submitting a Local Plan to the Secretary of State, it will be the responsibility of that party to co-ordinate the review and updating of this SoCG for that event (as necessary).

Signatories



.....
Councillor Tim Oliver
Leader of Elmbridge Borough Council



.....
Councillor Nick Prescott
Leader of Runnymede Borough Council



Councillor Ian Harvey
Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council