

Statement of Common Ground between the Environment Agency and Spelthorne Borough Council – October 2024

This statement of common ground between the Spelthorne BC and the Environment Agency (EA) follows the preliminary statement of common ground which was agreed on 22 May 2023 and is mainly in relation to flood risk.

The EA provided comments on other matters within their remit for the Spelthorne Local Plan. Flood Risk, drainage capacity and impact of development on water bodies has been considered throughout the preparation of the Spelthorne Local Plan.

Modelling

Spelthorne BC and The Environment Agency have agreed the most appropriate modelling to be used in the SFRA Level 1 and Level 2 documents. Section 3.2 of the SFRA Level 1 document (July 2024) sets out the modelling used. In summary it comprises:

- Lower Thames Flood Modelling Report. WSP, Binnies. November 2023. Covering the Lower Thames from Datchet to Teddington. This model is referred to as Thames (Datchet to Teddington) 2023 Tributary Dominated’.
- River Ash Modelling Update, JBA Consulting 2019¹.
- Lower Colne Modelling and Mapping Study, Mott MacDonald, April 2012².

Spelthorne BC commitment

Spelthorne BC will obtain new modelling as soon as available and review the outputs to determine whether an update to the SFRA documents are required. Spelthorne BC commit to updating the SFRA documents promptly when required.

SFRA Versions

Specifically, the following studies have been used to support evidence on flood risk:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Draft Interim Report, Feb 2018
- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, May 2022
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report, July 2022
- Spelthorne Water Cycle Study 2019
- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update (30 Nov 2022) (dated 2023 on website Spelthorne Takes Shape (spelthornelocalplan.info)
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, Feb 2023
- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, October 2023
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, October 2023
- Spelthorne Strategic Sequential Test, October 2023
- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, March 2024
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, March 2024
- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, May 2024
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, June 2024

¹ The Thames 2023 (Tributary dominated) modelling incorporates the Ash 2019 model with some improvements. In time, the 2023 River Thames (Tributary dominated) model outputs will be used for decision making along the River Ash, however at the time of preparing this SFRA, the Ash 2019 modelling is still being used by the Environment Agency for decision making. Therefore, the Environment Agency have requested that the River Ash 2019 model outputs be included in this version of the SFRA as well.

² The Environment Agency are currently updating the Lower Colne model.

- Level 1 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, July 2024
- Level 2 – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update, July 2024
- Spelthorne Strategic Sequential Test, July 2024

List of dates of key revisions to the SFRA documents and reasons for these revisions

Date	Details
May 2022	Revised with reference to updated peak river flow climate change allowances
November 2022	Revised with reference to the latest PPG and DRAFT modelling outputs for River Thames (Windsor to Teddington) provided by the Environment Agency
June 2023	Updated following comments from Environment Agency and SCC, and reverting to the PUBLISHED River Thames modelling (Hurley to Teddington, 2019/2020)
March 2024	Updated following comments from Environment Agency and using PUBLISHED River Thames modelling 2023 (Datchet to Teddington)
May 2024	Updated following comments from Environment Agency
July 2024	Amended regarding points raised in EA letter dates 21 June 2024

Spelthorne BC commitment

Spelthorne BC commit to updating the SFRA documents when appropriate. This includes

- Publication of new hydraulic modelling
- Significant updates to national planning guidance on flooding

Spelthorne BC commit to producing a Supplementary Planning Document/Guidance or Supplementary Plan (as appropriate) on flood risk and safe access and egress

- SBC commit that work on this will begin immediately after the Local Plan is adopted. SBC will follow the most up to date policy and guidance from central government regarding if it should be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or Supplementary Plan (SP) and this will influence the exact timescale, but it will be a priority for the Council's Strategic Planning Team.
- We welcome the opportunity to work with the Environment Agency (and Surrey CC as the LLFA) on the SPD/SPG/Supplementary Plan.
- Timeline – If the Council are able to return to Local Plan Examination in January/February 2025, they are then likely to consult on modifications in April 2025 and hope to hear from the Inspector and then adopt the Plan summer 2025. Work could then begin on the Flooding SPD/SPG/Supplementary Plan in early autumn 2025. SBC will follow the most up to date policy and guidance from central government regarding if it should be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or Supplementary Plan (SP) and this will influence the exact timescale however we would hope to begin work late summer/early autumn 2025, consult in early 2026 and adopt late spring/early summer 2026.

The SPD/SPG will guide applicants and developers to demonstrate and ensure that **all** allocated sites have safe access and egress.

Site Allocations

Source	Request	Action
Letter from the EA dated 21 June 2024	Requested removal of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST4/002 Bridge Street Car Park ST4/010 Riverside Car Park 	At a meeting of the Council on 18 July, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to remove two sites. Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July 2024.
Information from the EA dated 13 September 2023 and previously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST4/011 Thames Lodge Hotel, Thames Street 	At a meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 29 February 2024, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to remove the site from the Local Plan. Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July.
Information from the EA dated 13 September 2023 and previously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST1/029 Surrey CC Buildings, Burges Way ST1/030 Fairways Day Centre, Knowle Green 	Proposed to remove from the Local Plan prior to start of Examination due to flood risk and confirmed at a meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 29 February 2024, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to remove the sites from the Local Plan. Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July.
Information from the EA dated 13 September 2023, 2 May 2024 and 21 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST4/019 35-45 High Street, Staines (Former Debenhams Site) 	At a meeting of the Council on 18 July, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> move the site to Years 6-10 of the Plan Period and add the following wording to the site allocation <i>"The site will not be available for development until a safe route for access and egress can be provided and maintained during a flood event (ie the 1% AEP fluvial flood event and surface water event including an appropriate climate change allowance)".</i> Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July.
Information from the EA dated 13 September 2023, 2 May 2024 and 21 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST4/026 Communications House, South Street, Staines ST4/028 William Hill / Vodafone/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 29 February 2024, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to move the site to Years 11-15 of the Plan Period

	<p>Monsoon, 91-93 High Street, Staines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SH1/010 Shepperton Library, High Street, Shepperton (Years 11-15) • ST1/028 Leacroft Centre, Leacroft, Staines (Years 11-15) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a meeting of the Council on 18 July, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to add the following wording to the site allocation <i>“The site will not be available for development until a safe route for access and egress can be provided and maintained during a flood event (ie the 1% AEP fluvial flood event and surface water event including an appropriate climate change allowance)”.</i> <p>Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July.</p>
Information from the EA dated 13 September 2023, 2 May 2024 and 21 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST4/004 96-104, Church Street (Years 6-10) • ST4/023 Two Rivers Retail Park Terrace, Mustard Mill Road (Years 6-10) • ST4/024 Frankie & Benny’s/Travelodge, Two Rivers (Years 6-10) • SH1/015 Shepperton Youth Centre (Years 11-15) • SH2/003 Shepperton Delivery Office (Years 11-15) • ST1/028 Leacroft Centre (Years 11-15) • ST4/025 Land at Coppermill Road (Years 11-15) 	<p>At a meeting of the Council on 18 July, the Council resolved to request a main modification to the Inspector to add the following wording to the site allocation:</p> <p><i>“The site will not be available for development until a safe route for access and egress can be provided and maintained during a flood event (ie the 1% AEP fluvial flood event and surface water event including an appropriate climate change allowance)”.</i></p> <p>Cllr Beecher wrote to the Inspector on 23 July.</p>
Information from the EA dated 8 July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>ST1/037 – Thameside House (Years 1-5)</u> 	<p>The south-western part of the site is at a higher risk of flooding than the rest of the site. Within the area which falls within flood zone 3a (1% AEP), the built footprint of the new development should not exceed that of the existing building and where possible should be reduced.</p> <p>The SFRA Level 2 states: “Pedestrian access shown to be available at Low hazard beneath railway line, through to George Street and Kingston Road”.</p>

		<p>The Council will request a main modification to the Inspector to add the following wording to the site allocation:</p> <p><i>“Within the area which falls within flood zone 3a (1% AEP), the built footprint of the new development should not exceed that of the existing building and where possible should be reduced.</i></p> <p><i>The site layout will be required to be designed to ensure all development is able to access the safe route for access and egress (shown within the SFRA Level 2) during a flood event (i.e. the 1% AEP fluvial flood event and surface water event including an appropriate climate change allowance)”.</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>ST4/009 The Elmsleigh Centre and adjoining land South Street (Years 11-15)</u> 	<p>The Council will request a main modification to the Inspector to add the following wording to the site allocation:</p> <p><i>“In order to ensure that future development does not increase the risk of flooding to the surrounding areas, the built footprint of the new development should not exceed that of the existing building and where possible should be reduced.</i></p> <p><i>The site layout will be required to be designed to ensure all development is able to access the safe route for access and egress (shown within the SFRA Level 2) during a flood event (i.e. the 1% AEP fluvial flood event and surface water event including an appropriate climate change allowance)”.</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>RL1/011 Land at Staines and Laleham Sports Club, Worple Road (Years 6-10)</u> 	<p>No action required</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>Site is included SFRA Level 2 which states:</p> <p>Site is at Low and Moderate hazard. Access/egress that is dry or at low hazard during the 1% AEP event including 35% climate change allowance is available for the site, along Worple Road north to Kingston Road, and then east to the A308.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>AT1/012 Ashford Community Centre, Woodthorpe Road (Years 1-5)</u> 	<p>The Council will request a main modification to the Inspector to add the following wording to the site allocation:</p> <p><i>“In order to ensure that future development does not increase the risk of flooding to the surrounding areas, the built footprint of the new development should not exceed that of the existing building and where possible should be reduced.</i></p> <p><i>The site layout will be required to be designed to ensure development is set back from the River Ash”.</i></p>
Letter from the EA dated 21 June 2024	<p>EA queried hazard information for three sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staines Telephone Exchange • Ashford Community Centre • Thameside Arts Centre 	<p>Aecom emailed EA on 3 July 2024 with an explanation that the issue was regarding the colour palette of map legends. EA emailed 6 August 2024 to state:</p> <p><i>We have checked our data, and we agree that there was an issue with how the hazard information was classified. We are now looking to address this issue. As you have stated in your email your maps are using the latest modelling and are following the FD2320 guidance, so the maps do not require amendment.</i></p>

Policy E3 wording

Spelthorne Borough Council, Surrey CC and the Environment Agency have agreed amended wording of policy E3. Upon agreement of this Statement of Common Ground, the Council will request a main modification to the Inspector to agree the revised wording. The wording is attached in appendix 1.

Outstanding issues/Areas of disagreement

1. In letter dated 21 June 2024 the EA requested an updated Sequential Test document. This was sent by Aecom on 6 August 2024 along with updated SFRA Level 1 and Level 2 documents. The Council are waiting for feedback.
2. We understand the Sequential Test has been updated and would be submitted with the updated SFRA Level 1 and 2 to the EA for review.

Signed

Date 13 August 2024



Councillor Malcolm Beecher
Chair of Environment & Sustainability Committee

Signed

Date 14 October 2024



Judith Montford
Planning Specialist | Sustainable Places | Thames Area
Environment Agency