

Adoption of the Runnymede Parking Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Planning Policy and Economic Development Services, Mike Corbett)

Synopsis of report:

To support the implementation of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, it is important that up to date parking guidance is adopted to support the delivery of sustainable development in the Borough.

Parking guidance for the Borough as a Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared based on national, sub regional and local policies, and also taking into account the opinions of Councillors and local residents. The draft SPD has also undergone a period of public consultation, during which representations have been received. These representations have now been considered by officers. The Draft SPD has been the subject of screening in respect of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which have concluded that neither a SEA nor HRA is required.

A total of 16 representations were received during the course of the public consultation which ran from Friday 1st July to Friday 12th August 2022. A copy of the Consultation Statement which summarises these representations and how they have been taken into account is set out at Appendix B. In summary, following the consideration of the comments made during the period of public consultation, the following key amendments below are recommended to be incorporated into the SPD prior to its adoption:

- Updating of title page and addition of document footer throughout to refer to the name of the document and adoption date;
- Addition of a Version Control table at the start of the document;
- Deletion of the text regarding the public consultation;
- Splitting chapter 2 into two separate chapters-the first focussed on the planning and transport policy background to the document (Chapter 2) and a new chapter (chapter 3) focussed on transport statistics. The latter chapter has been added to include more information on expected trends in car ownership, as well as more information on cycling (including e bikes and cargo bikes);
- References to Local Transport Plan 4 updated following its adoption;
- Amendment of the minimum measurements for garages where cycle storage is proposed from 3 x 7m or 4 x 7m to 3.3 x 7m or 6x 4m as contained in chapter 4;
- Addition of further text to encourage the provision of electrical sockets adjacent to any secure cycle parking in chapter 4;
- Confirmation that in non-residential development where disabled parking spaces are required, at least one of these spaces should incorporate EV charging facilities.
- a new chapter has been added (chapter 5) to set out the review process for the SPD.
- Deletion of prescribed visitor parking standards for new residential development (Appendix 2) and replacement with some general text to confirm that proportionate, well integrated visitor parking is encouraged in residential schemes as appropriate;
- Amendment of parking standard for 4+ bedroom units from 3 to 2 spaces (Appendix 2);
- Addition of notes to the table at Appendix 2 confirming how town centres are defined for the purpose of the guidance and to confirm how accessibility of a site to alternative sources of sustainable transport and key services may alter the amount of parking provision considered necessary at a site;
- Confirmation in Appendix 3 (EV charging standards) that the guidelines are for minimum provision.

Other minor changes are also recommended. All changes made can be viewed in full in the tracked change document contained at Appendix A.

None of the amendments proposed are considered to change the general purpose of the SPD in that it continues to set out appropriate parking standards across the Borough for new development. Therefore, as the amendments are relatively minor in nature, it is considered that no further consultation is required prior to the adoption of the SPD.

The modified SPD as recommended for adoption is attached at Appendix A. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration for the purposes of the determination of planning applications.

Recommendation(s):

The Planning Committee is asked to:

- 1. APPROVE the Runnymede Parking Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as modified and as set out at Appendix A for adoption with an implementation date of 16th November 2022.**
- 2. Give delegated authority to the Local Plans Manager, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Authority to update the SPD on receipt of the updated EV charging standards published by Surrey County Council (expected imminently).**

1. Context of Report

- 1.1 The Borough Council's extant parking guidance was adopted over 20 years ago in October 2001. The standards are significantly out of date and are given limited weight by the Development Management team in the decision taking process for this reason.
- 1.2 Since adoption of the current guidance, much has changed, including national planning guidance, the requirement to deliver sustainable development, the encouragement of more sustainable forms of travel such as walking and cycling and the increased use of electric cars.
- 1.3 In November 2021, Surrey County Council (SCC) also updated its Vehicle, Cycle and Electric Vehicle Parking Guidance for New Development to provide updated guidance for parking across the county, to help the Borough and District councils across Surrey develop their own updated standards. Runnymede Borough Council also adopted its Runnymede 2030 Local Plan in July 2020.
- 1.4 The 2030 Local Plan is part of the wider Development Plan that guides development decisions in the Borough of Runnymede. Relevant policies include:
 - Policy SD3 – Active and Sustainable Travel
- States that the Council will support development proposals which enhance the accessibility and connectivity between people and places by active and sustainable forms of travel.
 - Policy SD4 – Highway Design Considerations
-States that relevant design and parking standards for vehicle and cycle parking within development proposals will be assessed against the Council's current adopted guidance.
- 1.5 The Runnymede Design SPD was approved for adoption in July 2021. It seeks to provide design guidance to supplement policies within the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan so that applicants are clear about the Council's expectations for development and high-quality design.
- 1.6 The SPD provides design guidance on parking in 'Design Standard 23: Providing for Vehicle and Cycle Parking'. The SPD states that;

"The dominance of parking can be unattractive and compromise the quality of the public realm and can deter other forms of movement, like walking and cycling, which can in turn undermine social interaction and any sense of community. Poor layouts are achieved when the needs of cars are put before the needs of people. A balance needs to be found where sufficient parking can be accommodated, but where it does not result in negative or unintended consequences."
- 1.7 Officers commenced work on the production of updated parking guidance for the Borough in 2019. The replacement guidance once adopted will replace the Borough Council's extant parking guidance from October 2001.

- 1.8 Draft revised parking standards were brought before the Planning Committee in June 2022 and approved for public consultation. All comments made during this period of consultation have now been taken into account and the Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD has been finalised.
- 1.9 The Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD will help to support Local Plan policies which relate to the design and layout of new development, and parking considerations related to this. The SPD also provides developers and other interested parties with guidance, best practice and signposts to advice and other stakeholder strategies related to relevant matters associated with parking and transport.

2. Report

- 2.1 A significant amount of time has been spent preparing the Runnymede Parking SPD. During its development, discussions have been held with elected members, Royal Holloway University of London and the Surrey Transport Development Planning Team at the County Council. A specialist consultancy firm (Project Centre Ltd) was also appointed to carry out further detailed work in relation to Office and Purpose Built Student Accommodation in the Borough, with bespoke advice being given on appropriate locally derived parking standards for these two uses.
- 2.2 Local people and other stakeholders have also been consulted on the draft SPD and given the opportunity to comment between Friday 1st July and Friday 12th August 2022. Sixteen representations were received during the period of consultation. The Statement of Consultation summarises the comments made as part of the informal consultation with the Surrey Transport Development Planning team and through the representations received on the draft SPD. The Statement of Consultation can be viewed at Appendix B.
- 2.3 As part of the public consultation, a presentation and Q and A session was arranged to allow an opportunity for local people to attend and ask questions about the parking standards developed for offices and student parking, however only 1 individual expressed an interest in attending this event, who was then unable to attend. A separate telephone call was arranged with this individual to respond to his queries.
- 2.4 In light of the representations received during the period of public consultation, a number of modifications are proposed to the Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD. The modifications are shown within the SPD attached at Appendix A to this report.
- 2.5 Aside from the modifications shown in Appendix A (and as also described in Appendix B), the key elements of the SPD remain unchanged from the draft iteration which was approved for public consultation by the Planning Committee in June 2022. Therefore, as the amendments are relatively minor in nature and do not change the general thrust or substance of the SPD, it is considered that further consultation is not required and therefore the Planning Committee is asked to adopt the Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD with the modifications set out in Appendix A.

3. Policy framework implications

- 3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) do not form part of the Development Plan for Runnymede but are a material consideration in decision taking. The adoption of this SPD would support the following Local Plan objectives, in particular:
 - 4) To ensure Runnymede's communities are supported by new or enhanced community and other infrastructure services and facilities, including a range of sustainable and active travel choices;
 - 5) To deliver a garden village at Longcross which achieves a sustainable community capable of meeting its own day to day service needs and which offers a choice of sustainable and active travel modes;
 - 6) To increase resilience to climate change, including flood risk, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote water efficiency and the use of renewable and low carbon energy;
 - 13) To support projects which improve the integration of road and rail to reduce congestion and improve accessibility to a range of sustainable and active travel choices.

- 3.2 Once adopted, this SPD will support the Council's draft Climate Change Strategy, particularly action reference PPAT 2.0 which seeks to, 'Facilitate & encourage active transport in the Borough: Reduce traffic congestion; Improve air quality; Improve health & wellbeing; and reduce vehicle emissions'. It will also support priorities 5 and 6 from the draft Economic Development Strategy as reproduced below:

Priority 5: Better infrastructure for sustainable growth: Improve the Borough's competitive performance through provision of improved infrastructure to support mobility, communications, health and well-being.

Priority 6: Developing a low carbon economy

Support and encourage businesses to be more sustainable. This could mean aiding businesses to become more energy efficient or to develop more sustainable business practices within their own operations and those of their supply chains. The council will share good practice in sustainability and will encourage and support businesses to develop green products and services.

4. Resource implications (where applicable)

- 4.1 The costs associated with this work have been met through the Council's approved 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 budgets for Planning Policy, and additional funding was secured specifically for this project following approval by Corporate Management Committee. Remaining project costs are expected to be minimal but would be met through the Council's 2022/23 budget for the Planning Policy team.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Officers are not aware of any legal implications as a result of the adoption of this SPD. Following adoption however, Members should be aware that in accordance with Regulation 11(2)(c) & (d) of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), any person with sufficient interest in the decision to adopt the Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of that decision. Any such application must be made promptly and, in any event, not later than 3 months after the date on which the SPD is adopted.

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2020 to have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share those characteristics;

in relation to the 9 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.

- 6.2 The draft Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD was screened to establish whether there may be an impact, whether positive or negative, on any of the nine protected characteristics (namely, age, disability, race/ethnicity, pregnancy and maternity, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment and marriage/civil partnership). The conclusion of the screening assessment confirmed that the draft SPD complies with the Council's duty under S149 of the Act and that subject to a further review following the conclusion of the consultation process, a full Equalities impact Assessment was not required. The EqIA screening assessment has been reviewed and updated in light of the modifications proposed to the draft SPD and is attached at Appendix C for information. The conclusion of the updated EqIA screening assessment remains that a full EqIA assessment is not required, and that there are no known negative equality implications which are expected to arise as a result of the adoption of the SPD.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 7.1 A detailed Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was carried out upon the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The draft Parking Guidance SPD is supplementary to the Local Plan and therefore does not require a separate SA.
- 7.2 The SPD has however undergone Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening. That screening has concluded that there will be no likely significant effects on designated habitats or any other significant environmental effects as a result of the guidance included in the SPD. This conclusion was confirmed by the three statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 7.3 Appropriate parking standards have the potential to help meet the Local Plan's aims to reduce travel by private car and encourage more active and sustainable travel by encouraging less use of vehicle transport and more walking and cycling. The revised parking guidance will, when adopted, make a contribution towards the Borough's actions on climate change. Please see comments in section 3 above in terms of how adoption of the SPD has the potential to support the Council's draft Climate Change and Economic Development Strategies.

8. **Conclusions**

- 8.1 The revised Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD has been prepared to reflect the up-to-date guidance set out in the NPPF and to support the policies contained in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The guidance has been prepared taking account of national planning guidance and the updated parking guidance published by Surrey County Council in November 2021. The additional consultancy work undertaken by Project Centre Limited has also been fed into the draft SPD and has been used to set the recommended parking standards for new office developments and PBSA schemes. The guidance drafted seeks to provide a degree of certainty for developers and communities in respect of the levels of vehicular and cycle parking that will be required in association with new development but also provides flexibility to assess individual schemes where a different parking solution may be more appropriate given the nature of development proposed. The draft revised guidance also seeks to take account of the locational characteristics and the ability to travel by walking, cycling and use of public transport where those modes of travel are convenient options, the need to plan for greater use of electric vehicles in the future and the potential need to control on-street car parking in certain locations through the use of controlled parking zones (CPZs).
- 8.2 The SPD is now recommended to the Planning Committee for adoption, with an implementation date of 16th November 2022. Once adopted, the new guidance will then become an important material consideration for planning decisions and will be published on the Council's website. Applicants and promoters will be advised of the guidance through the pre-application and planning application processes.

(To resolve)

Background papers

Appendix A-Runnymede Parking Guidance SPD (as modified)

Appendix B-Statement of Consultation

Appendix C-EqIA Screening Assessment Update