

Question for Local Area Committee 19th March 2012 from Mr. John Hirsh,

Hon. Chairman, Lower Sunbury Residents' Association (LOSRA) www.losra.org

The following developments have now been approved or are in prospect for the Lower Sunbury/Shepperton area.

- The new Walton Bridge;
- Gravel Extraction at Watersplash Farm, Fordbridge Road;
- The Eco Park at Charlton Lane;
- Approx. 50 new homes at the Environment Agency Site in Fordbridge Road, Lower Sunbury;
- Approx. 50 new homes in Green Street/Thames Street, Lower Sunbury;
- Approx. 200 new homes in The Avenue, Lower Sunbury;
- The construction of rugby pitches on the Hazelwood Golf Course, Green Street, Lower Sunbury.

The cumulative effects of some or all of these developments will be considerable with predictable increases in traffic congestion and environmental pollutants.

The Surrey Transport Plan; Congestion Strategy 2011 -2026, Page 8 (Aims and Objectives) states: *"In all cases, Surrey's target is to ensure congestion – both delay and journey time reliability – does not deteriorate beyond current levels."*

The Surrey Transport Plan, Air Quality Strategy 2011 -2026 states: *"Surrey County Council, as the highways authority for the County road network has a statutory duty to bring forward proposals to help meet the national air quality objectives in declared AQMAs (Air Quality Management Areas)".* It continues: *"partnership working with the boroughs and districts, the Highways Agency and with the wider Transport for Surrey partnership is essential to the delivery of this strategy"*. Para. 6.1 Focus on AQMAs states: *"The County Council will work with the borough or district council to consider air quality issues in planning and other processes and areas of responsibility"* whilst recognising their own as the minerals and waste planning authority.

The Air Quality Modelling for Spelthorne draft report, 2nd August 2011 prepared by Cambridge Environmental Research Consultants (CERC) is also relevant.

My questions are these:

1. What active steps will be taken to ensure that the policy objectives outlined above are met and that full account of the cumulative effects (traffic congestion and environmental) of these proposed developments are fully addressed, given that the whole of the Borough is an Air Quality Management Area with particular hotspots close to the sites in question?

Answer given by Strategy Group Manager – Environment & Infrastructure Directorate, SCC:

The policy objectives of the Surrey Transport Plan are, of necessity, high level aims. In an area like Surrey, where development frequently tends to be focussed on already developed areas, in part to protect the Green Belt, further development may lead to intensification in the use of sites. Whilst this may be capable of management in the near vicinity, given current methods of travel and communication it can increase pressures in the wider environment over a period of time. Surrey's role is to minimise these impacts where they can be defined at the local level, and to seek to mitigate them on a case by case basis.

Local Planning Authorities such as Spelthorne Borough Council, may seek to address these impacts by seeking contributions from developers towards mitigating the impacts of development locally. Spelthorne Borough Council is currently able to do this utilising the S.106 mechanism (under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Moving forward the borough is able to consider adopting the Community Infrastructure Levy (introduced through recent planning legislation) as a means of enabling wider consideration and resolution of these issues.

Surrey County Council and Spelthorne Borough Council work closely on air quality matters, sharing data and information in this area. These will also be taken into account as we develop an updated transport strategy for the borough to address wider travel demands, both now and in future, and the attendant problems.