

# LOWER SUNBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## 2019 AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



[www.losra.org](http://www.losra.org)

### Local Plan proposed development sites and policies published and public consultation begins as Spelthorne challenges Government housing need assessment

Spelthorne Council's process of creating a new Local Plan has reached the next stage with the publication of the draft policies for the new plan and proposed sites across the borough to be allocated for development.

Based on the processes of establishing levels of projected housing need, which were ultimately dictated by central government, Spelthorne is obliged to plan for 603 new homes per year over a 15-year period as part of the Government's aim to see more housing built.

The first consultation on the Local Plan was in May and June last year and asked the public to consider options for how Spelthorne will meet its need for housing, gypsy and traveller pitches, employment sites and other uses.

#### Site strategy

The selection of sites follows the preferred strategy, following that consultation, to maximise building on land in urban areas such as town centres, particularly Staines upon Thames, and to consider releasing some 'weakly performing' Green Belt for development. This will enable the protection of the borough's most important green spaces. If Spelthorne does not have a viable Local Plan it is much more difficult to control future developments.

#### Sites in Lower Sunbury

As far as sites in Lower Sunbury are concerned, there are no huge surprises. There are 3 sites proposed for release from local Green Belt. They are:

- Land between Stratton Rd. and Bishop Wand School, providing 230-260 houses
- The land bounded by Lyndhurst Avenue, Croysdale Avenue, School Walk and Hazelwood, now owned by Angle Properties, who plan 65 dwellings.
- The old nursery site on the corner of Nursery Road and the A244, with a capacity for 55-68 houses.

These would provide a total of about

400 houses. (See map on the next page).

Outside our immediate area, there is provision for a 15-pitch traveller site on the Ashford Common water treatment site between Cedar Way and Windmill Close.

#### Kempton Park

Thankfully, Kempton Park, which is classified as "strongly performing" Green Belt, was not regarded as a likely prospect for development during the duration of the Plan. This was confirmed in Arup's Stage 2 detailed Green Belt assessment where they said: "*Kempton Park strongly meets the purposes of Green Belt land, and makes an important contribution to the wider strategic Green Belt. Not recommended for development.*"

We understand also that traffic studies carried out by Surrey County Council rated it the worst option of four such possible sites identified. However, we should still regard it as at risk, since these circumstances don't mean it could not still be challenged at the public examination.

However, Spelthorne's Planning Officer also states that "The loss of this site from the Green Belt would risk the merging of Spelthorne with Greater London and this would also significantly alter the character of the area....The racecourse is a historic and established asset in the area and it should be explored whether its loss is inevitable on viability grounds or if a large housing scheme is simply more economically appealing to the landowner."

More than 49 Green Belt sites were submitted across Spelthorne, with just 19 of those identified as weakly performing.

#### Urban sites

In addition to those Green Belt sites, there are some 'urban' sites in our area which are seen as potential development sites in the period covered by the plan. These include the Adult Education Centre in The Avenue, the Travis Perkins builders merchant site on Staines Rd. East, and the BT building/site on the junction of

Staines Road East and Sunbury Cross. There are a few others which look a bit odd at first glance so we will be looking at these more closely.

#### LOSRA's stance

The LOSRA Committee has not met since these details were published to establish its stance on the proposals, but it is well-known that our long-established policy is to oppose development on Green Belt as a matter of principle.

However, we have to bear in mind that, as noted, in the Issues and Options consultation the agreed strategy involved "*Releasing some weakly performing Green Belt land for development where its release would not adversely affect the integrity of the strategic Green Belt*". The reality is that in terms of the percentage of Lower Sunbury's Green Belt that has potentially been earmarked for development, Lower Sunbury has probably done rather better than other parts of the borough.

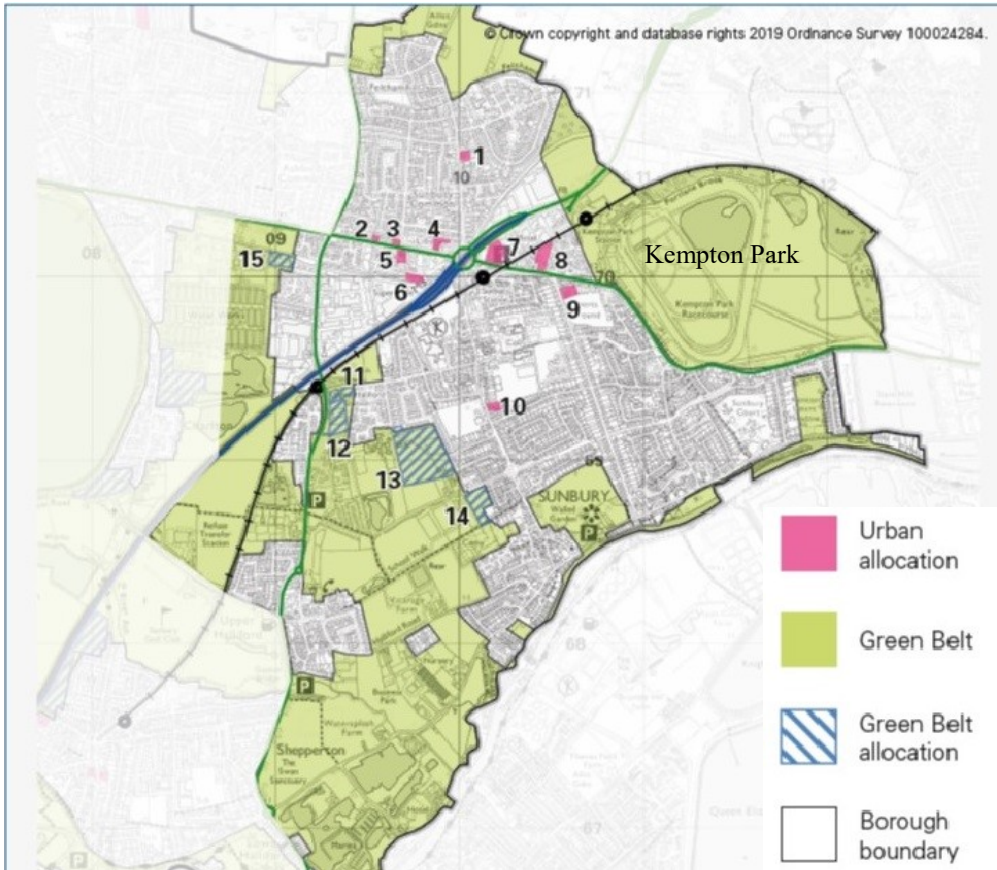
It goes against the grain to accede to the possibility that Green Belt might be built on, but in the Local Plan everyone is likely to feel pain, and if weakly performing Green Belt isn't released, Spelthorne stands no chance of getting their Local Plan accepted, which would potentially expose Kempton Park further.

#### Possible precedents

The problem would remain that the moment we conceded that it might be OK for any sites which are 'weakly performing' when judged against Green Belt criteria to be made available for development, the planning consultants would treat it as the green light to quote such a move as a precedent which undermined any opposition we might express to development on other sites.

We also appreciate that residents near the proposed development sites would rightly expect us to oppose their release for housing, but we will maybe some-

# Sites in Sunbury & Halliford proposed for potential development



## KEY TO SITES

1. Sunbury Social Services Centre
2. 147 Staines Rd. West
3. 115 Staines Rd. West
4. RMG Warehouse 47-79 St. Rd. W.
5. Sunbury Fire Station, St. Rd. W.
6. Sunbury X Ex-Services Assn. Club
7. Annandale House, 1 Hanworth Rd.
8. 77 Staines Rd. East
9. Sunbury Adult Education Centre, The Avenue
10. Telephone Exchange, Green St.
11. Old Nursery Land south of Nursery Rd.
12. Land East of Upper Halliford, Nursery Rd.
13. Land to the south and west of Stratton Rd.
14. Land at Croysdale Avenue
15. Land at Windmill Close

times need to be a bit circumspect about what stance we take.

However, the news which we outline below that the Council is challenging the housing need assessment might encourage us to maintain a stronger stance to support their approach.

### Consultation details

The public consultation on these plans will run from Tuesday 5 November 2019 to Tuesday 7 January 2020 and there are a number of ways that information is being made available.

The December edition of the Bulletin, delivered to all Spelthorne households, will contain a special 8-page section on the Local Plan including detail of the sites with maps.

The full Local Plan Policies & Sites documents are available to read on the Council website at [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/localplan) along with supporting research and evidence.

Copies of all the documents will be available at local libraries as well as at the Council Offices in Knowle Green.

### How to respond

You can respond to the consultation in several ways. You can do it on-line at <https://consult.spelthorne.gov.uk>, or e-mail [local.plan@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@spelthorne.gov.uk), or write to Strategic Planning, Spelthorne Borough Council, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames, TW18 1XB.

Feedback from the consultation will be analysed and fed into the final version of the Local Plan, which will be consulted on before it is submitted for examination by an independent inspector. The inspector will recommend if the Plan can be adopted but the final decision will rest with the Council.

It is important residents register their opinions. This includes welcoming things

like the non-inclusion of Kempton Park, as well as opposing any proposals you feel are inappropriate, because you can be sure that the likes of the Jockey Club and Redrow will certainly be protesting at the exclusion of Kempton Park.

One thing to note is that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifying what additional infrastructure (e.g. schools, health centres etc) will be required, will only be prepared post consultation, so there is an opportunity to contribute to that through consultation responses.

Please make this consultation a thorough reflection of local opinion. We will post any updates as far as our views are concerned on the LOSRA web site.

### Spelthorne challenges Govt.

There was a very interesting development on the eve of the consultation opening, which was that Spelthorne announced their intention to challenge the Government assessment of housing need in the borough on which the identification of potential development sites in the Local Plan is predicated.

The Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council, Councillor Ian Harvey, a Sunbury East councillor, has met senior officials from the Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government to ask for the assessed need of 603 dwellings per annum to be reduced because our Green Belt is under unique pressure.

More than 17% of Spelthorne is covered by open water, and 26% of its Green Belt comprises reservoirs. Much of the rest of land is at risk of flooding or subject to other planning constraints which make it unusable. The scale of development demanded will irrevocably

change the face of Spelthorne.

### The Council view

Cllr. Harvey said: "We need a Local Plan that protects our Borough from development of our most important green spaces but have been left with no choice as a result of the Government imposed target but to propose releasing some of these sites to help meet the demand it has identified. We will continue to push the Government to bring this figure down so we can deliver a Plan that is acceptable to our communities."

Our Green Belt is precious to us and our residents, and we have always fought very hard to protect it from development. As part of our Local Plan we have commissioned a review of the Green Belt that has identified some land that is 'weakly performing' against the purposes of the designation. Whilst officers will understand that a weakly performing Green Belt site without any overriding planning constraints means it should be considered for development, our residents will see this as the obliteration of its open spaces, its 'green lungs'. This is in combination with pressure from airport development related to Heathrow Expansion and further urban intensification of our towns and villages means we are being pressed from all sides."

This is admirable stuff, and it's good to see our Council being bold enough to confront central government and take an environmentally-driven approach to the Local Plan.

It remains to be seen whether the initiative succeeds, but it can do no harm and the Council are to be commended. We will keep you posted about developments.

# Spelthorne Council adopts tougher stance on Heathrow third runway development

At a Cabinet meeting in September Spelthorne Council decided to adopt a changed stance on the issue of a third runway at Heathrow. Until now, the Council has been generally supportive of the concept on the basis of the importance of the airport to the borough's economy and the future job provision.

However, as the details of the development have become clear, and with some noticeable shifts in public attitudes on environmental considerations, the Council has had a substantial rethink.

Their subsequent statement said that: "Cabinet agreed that whilst a third runway could bring significant benefits for Spelthorne's economy, the expansion proposal in its current form presents a number of problems for the Borough."

The Council said it could only support a third runway and related expansion if these 16 conditions could be met:

1. Capped growth of 740,000 Air Traffic Movements per annum by 2040 and no additional 25,000 flights before the third runway is built.
2. Expansion should only include Heathrow T5X and T2, with consideration given to the Heathrow West scheme.
3. Any new car parking must only be at Northern Parkway or along Bath Road.
4. No Southern Parkway, no Truck Park, no HGV filling station or associated lorry movements to Crooked Billet, and new and re-aligned roads moved further away from Stanwell Moor.
5. Deliver a genuine integrated compensation and mitigation package, including Wider Property Offer Zone for Stanwell

Moor and part of Stanwell village.

6. Provide enhanced multi-purpose community halls for Stanwell Moor and village as a positive community legacy
  7. Commitment to 1,500 new apprenticeships for local colleges in the borough.
  8. Controlled Parking Zones funded by HAL for Stanwell Moor, Stanwell village, and Ashford north of A308 and other areas deemed appropriate by the Council, ready by the time the third runway is operational
  9. Southern Light Rail (SLR) built before the third runway is operational, and Council to work with HAL to ensure delivery.
  10. No construction sites at CS10 (Southern Parkway) or CS11 (Horton Rd, Stanwell Moor) operating 24/7 365 days a year north of Stanwell and Stanwell Moor.
  11. Deliver continuous improvement and enhanced mitigation to neutralise air quality impacts to below legal limits.
  12. Comply with Climate Change Further Ambitions Scenario to deliver reduction to 30m tonnes CO2 in 2050.
  13. Deliver continuous improvement by actively and directly reducing aircraft and airport noise levels (using 2013 baseline).
  14. Night flights banned for 8 hours nightly except for emergencies.
  15. Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) must be outside the borough.
  16. Protect Staines Moor in perpetuity and ensure no changes to the River Colne upstream which might have an adverse impact on SSSI biodiversity.
- Obviously, some of this does not directly impact Sunbury, but the airport has such significance that we need to be aware of things that could affect us in the future.

These conditions are so numerous and tough that it seems unlikely that they will be met by HAL, so Spelthorne are quite likely to end up opposing the scheme.

It is obviously significant that another of the borough councils adjoining the airport might oppose a third runway. However, it is questionable whether this will make a huge difference if central government remains committed to the development, supported by a considerable weight of corporate vested business interests.

We know opinion is divided among residents, some in favour of the runway based on economic factors, some against, based mainly on environmental considerations. On this basis, LOSRA has adopted a neutral stance, but as the likely impact becomes clearer, as Spelthorne's shift has indicated, those environmental concerns come into sharper focus.

Apart from industrial sprawl with freight industry expansion, and the potentially alarming pressure of extra demand for housing in the context of the Local Plan, it's clear that HAL's plans for the southern side of the airport in terms of parking etc. would involve losing around 25% of Stanwell Moor Green Belt - about 6% of Spelthorne's entire Green Belt.

No doubt there will be many who think the potential advantages of airport expansion is worth the negative impact, but it's significant that Spelthorne has reassessed the circumstances so thoroughly.

Given the febrile atmosphere surrounding central government at the moment, it's hard to see where this might all end up.

## Sunbury Embroidery Group receive Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Early this year HRH Princess Alexandra made a visit to the Embroidery Gallery when she was in Sunbury to present Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service to two local organisations.

Just a few months later, in July, she came back to present such an Award to the Embroidery itself. It's very unusual for a member of the Royal Family to visit somewhere twice within such a short space of time, so it was a great privilege to welcome her back.

The Award was based on the fact that the Embroidery itself was the work of a large number of local volunteers, that the Gallery was developed through the work of a volunteer group, and that in its ten years of successful and self-sustaining operation, volunteers have comprised a substantial proportion of its workforce in both the café and gallery.

A significant number of the people who have been involved in the project through its entire life were able to attend the ceremony, and, blessed by good weather, it was a very enjoyable occasion, with the Princess finding time to speak to everyone there. Extraordinarily, she remembered individuals and details about them from her first visit.

In the context of the fund-raising campaign which is getting under way for the development of the Gallery into a national centre of excellence, the kudos associated with the Award can only be a positive factor. Congratulations to the Embroidery on their achievement in being presented with the Award.

If you want to know more about the plans for the Gallery, there is information available there.

## THE LOSRA COMMITTEE

Shirley Agar (Membership Sec.)	87 Manor Lane 765517
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Colleen Cuthbert (Secretary)	8 Maryland Way 783606
Iain Findlay (Treasurer)	58 Thames Street 783739
Rashpal Gill	4 Roper Crescent 07889 439519
John Hirsh (Vice-Chairman)	21 School Walk 07515 637474
Neil Huntingford	Summer House, Wheatleys Ait 783761
Chris Hyde	29 Queensway 07854 147935
Alan Lacey	19 The Pines 07733 003169
Oliver Parr	Orchard House, Thames Street 765229
Nigel Spooner	36 Kingsmead Avenue 07887 898874
Paul Thompson (Chairman)	12 Brackenwood 07788 107500
Paul Watts (President)	87 The Avenue 788449

## Christmas Market Thurs. 5th Dec.

This year's Lower Sunbury Christmas Market, organised by the Business Community, is on Thurs. 5th Dec. from 17.00-20.00 in Avenue Parade as usual. LOSRA will have a stand there, so come and see us. With luck it will be slightly less windy than last year!

# Charlton Lane “EcoPark” still not fully commissioned or generating power

Those of you who have driven past the vast Charlton Lane incinerator complex, and been incensed by the large three-dimensional “EcoPark” sign erected outside, will be even more apoplectic to know that Suez, the operators, put it up without getting planning permission.

Spelthorne Council took them to task, and they are trying to get retrospective permission, but for local residents it remains as a symbol of Suez and Surrey County Council effectively sticking two fingers up to the residents of Spelthorne with their egregious development.

Meanwhile, SUEZ are still trying to get the plant into commission. We understand from the Charlton Lane Liaison Group and other sources that the Anaerobic Digester, which processes food and some other organic waste, is working, although it’s well behind schedule. It has processed 4,000 tonnes of food waste since May, but not yet exported power.

The RDF (Refuse Derived Fuel) sorter is apparently working and commissioned - this is the plant that sorts the combustible material from the unusable stuff, so it’s not part of the generating process. The gasifier, which is the kit that burns the RDF to generate power, has been tested for the last four months by the burning of RDF assisted by fuel oil injection, gradually increasing the proportion of waste being burned, a crucial test of economic viability.

The problem is that burning low energy content RDF is also a notoriously inefficient process. No waste gasifier anywhere in the world has successfully generated electricity on a long-term basis. Gasification is fine for intense fuel sources like coal or wood, but it has never worked successfully with RDF, hence the need to inject energetic fuel oil to ensure fuller combustion of the waste. Think paraffin on the bonfire, only continuously. We also hear that the gasifier reportedly suffered a fire in the controls during commissioning tests, when already two years late.

Another key fact is that this experimental design is also not a gasifier - it is a single chamber stratified combustion device that burns all the fuel in one chamber and produces no

syngas fuel for use in a subsequent process, as a gasifier is required to do. Hence its “gasinerator” designation by objectors. But the powers-that-be voted to claim it’s a gasifier to exercise the permission they had given themselves in their Waste Plan, and claim higher gasifier related subsidies. In technical fact it can only ever be an extraordinarily inefficient EfW (energy from waste) incinerator, that generates power at no more than about 50% of the efficiency of larger and more proven conventional EfW incinerators, like the one at Colnbrook. And far more expensively than a real power station. Hardly “eco”, not a park.

We also understand that DEFRA recently rescheduled, or maybe even suspended, the balance of their supporting PFI payments because of the delay in commissioning. SCC were due to receive lifetime PFI payments to the tune of £200m for improved waste treatment - a primary reason for their relentless pursuit of a dud project. Of this £200M they have so far received something over £100M. If the gasinerator proves to be a white elephant, they will presumably have to whistle for some or all of the rest, which would cause some twitching at County Hall, and significant cost to taxpayers, likely to be tens of millions.

As we have observed before, this project stands as one of the most appalling litanies of bad governance by SCC, with both officers and elected representatives consistently refusing to accept expert independent scientific advice, while serially misrepresenting advice from their own “experts”, and with councillors obliged to keep quiet, toe the party line and vote for the charade, to protect their political lives. The decision never had to be decent, honest or truthful, just passed by appropriate legal process against strong opposition from the people and council of Spelthorne, so a successful judicial review was impossible.

Whether it will ever be possible to hold those responsible to account is unlikely, as most have retired, but those involved should all be thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

## LOSRA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2019 PAYMENT OPTIONS

### By Standing Order

We have introduced the convenient option to pay by Standing Order (you can download the form from the web site). This will save you the trouble of renewing each year as it will automatically be done for you until you request it to be stopped. Once we see that your Standing Order has gone through, we will confirm it. We hope this will make the process easier for everyone. You can also set up your own Standing Order if you use internet banking. If you do this, please put your postcode and house number as the reference.

### By cheque or cash

The annual subscription is still just £5 per household and voluntary donations are always welcome. For payment by cheque or cash, please use the form below and deliver to Shirley Agar, Membership Secretary, 87 Manor Lane, TW16 6JA, or drop into Skinners Newsagents/Post Office in Avenue Parade, or Twirltour Travel in Green Street. Please make cheques payable to LOSRA.

Via web site at [www.losra.org](http://www.losra.org) using Via Paypal or debit/credit card

### Life Membership

There is also the option of Life Membership of £100 with a one-off payment.

If you are not sure that you are up to date with your payments or you need further information about membership, please contact Shirley Agar, Membership Secretary, on 01932 765517 or by email [shirleyagar1@aol.com](mailto:shirleyagar1@aol.com) and we will be pleased to advise. Thank you very much for your continued support.

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### Membership payment slip 2019 for CHEQUES OR CASH

I wish to pay the annual subscription to LOSRA for £5.00 per household and a donation for £..... (please enter amount, if you would like to make a voluntary donation)

Name/s. ....  
Address .....  
.....Post Code.....  
email .....  
Telephone..... Date .....

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