CHAPTER 4

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

4.1. The main settlements in Spelthorne are Staines, Ashford, Sunbury, Shepperton and Stanwell. After the substantial residential development which took place between the 1930's and 1950's, the introduction of Green Belt designation in Spelthorne in 1956 led to most new development being largely confined to existing urban areas. This chapter firstly describes the national, regional and county policy background to built environment issues. It goes on to consider principles of design for all new development, for residential development and for shop fronts and advertisements. Issues of heritage conservation are next addressed, followed by various general considerations and constraints.

4.2. Further guidance on design matters for residential development is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance "The Design of New Residential Development and Extensions". The production of this guidance was recommended by the Inspector who conducted the Local Plan Inquiry. The guidance sets out matters previously contained within the Deposit Draft of this Local Plan and has therefore been subject to public consultation. This guidance will be a material consideration when determining planning applications.

POLICY CONTEXT

4.3. National policy background on built environment issues is set out in various Planning Policy Guidance documents and Circulars and also in the White Paper "This Common Inheritance". PPG1 "General Policy and Principles" emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing the environment, of preserving heritage sites and of creating sustainable development. It refers to the need for environmental assessment for certain classes of planning applications and gives particular emphasis to the importance of design considerations in considering proposed development (paras. 13-20 and Annex A). It also highlights the importance of the accessibility of land and buildings (paras. 33 and 34) for those with movement difficulties which is dealt with mainly in Chapter 10 of this Plan. PPG3 "Housing" (revised in March 2000) also refers to relevant considerations in the design of residential development, (paras. 54-56). PPG12 "Development Plans" makes clear the role of local plans in making proper provision for sustainable development and effective protection of the environment. PPG15 and PPG16 set out government policy on planning and the historic environment and the preservation of archaeological heritage. PPG23 gives guidance on planning and pollution control and PPG24 on planning and noise. The government White Paper "This Common Inheritance" emphasises the importance of energy and water conservation, and air quality.

4.4. Regional policy background is set out in RPG9 "Regional Planning Guidance for the South East", issued by the Department of the Environment in March, 1994[1]. A major objective of this is for planning to achieve sustainable development which avoids damage to or helps to improve the environment. Guidance is also given on co-ordinating land use and transport planning to meet environmental objectives, on encouraging a mix of urban uses and energy efficient transport, thereby reducing CO_2 emissions, and on making the most of opportunities for the redevelopment of urban land. The importance of trees, of securing high quality building design and improvements to the pedestrian environment are also highlighted.

4.5. The Surrey Structure Plan (1994) seeks to secure sustainable development, water and energy conservation, protection from pollution and the creation of an attractive and secure environment. Its guidance requires development to be compatible with transport infrastructure and encourages environmental enhancement, including the reclamation of derelict land. It also sets out requirements for the conservation of heritage and the conservation and enhancement of the character of urban areas.

4.6. There is public concern at what is often referred to as 'town cramming'. It is the aim of the Plan as a whole and the specific guidance in this chapter to ensure that whilst the best use is made of urban land, the quality of the built environment is maintained and wherever possible improved. It is important in applying the policies in this Plan, which set out specific criteria or standards for development, that these are taken as the minimum and not a maximum from which the Council is prepared to relax its approach. There will be cases where the character of a site and/or surrounding area is such that standards will be required above those stated.

DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

NEW DEVELOPMENT

4.7. This section of the Plan sets out design principles against which all types of development proposals will be assessed, including residential, commercial and industrial development. Supplementary Planning Guidance "The Design of New Residential Development and Extensions" gives more detailed advice on issues associated with residential development.

4.8. The careful design of new buildings, alterations and extensions to existing buildings is important to the quality of the built environment. The impact of any new development depends on its size, the details of its design and materials, location, its prominence and its relationship with the surrounding environment including open space. Compatibility with existing nearby development and ensuring a positive contribution to the character of an area will be important factors in the Council's requirement of high standards of design and materials for new development. Where extensions are proposed, attention to such details as the matching of window styles and fenestration generally will be important. Small extensions and alterations do not

[1] RPG9 was revised in March 2001. The comments in this paragraph are also applicable to the revised RPG.

always require planning permission, however, the Council will still seek to encourage high standards of design. The Council's annual Design Awards scheme is a means of promoting good design and layout in all forms of development and environmental enhancement.

4.9. Any mature trees of amenity value and other significant landscape features should normally be retained and incorporated into the design of new development. Detailed tree surveys and protection proposals will be required where appropriate to accompany planning applications. In many locations it will be vital to secure appropriate boundary treatment and both hard and soft landscaping to ensure that new building can be satisfactorily accommodated. The Council requires all landscaping schemes to be maintained and any plants which die in the first five years after planting to be replaced. The issue of tree cover is addressed in point (b) of Policy BE1 below and also in Policy RU1(a) and RU18 and paragraph 3.54 in the Rural Environmental Chapter.

4.10. It is particularly important that, wherever possible, existing attractive views and vistas are not removed or harmed by new development. This will include not only the immediate surroundings of a proposal, but sometimes areas at some distance, particularly in the case of larger developments close to or on the edge of the urban area. In some circumstances, it will be desirable to incorporate views of adjoining features such as the River Thames, an open space or building of architectural merit in a development proposal. Policies RU5, RU6 and RU7 within the Rural Environment chapter provide further detail of the requirements to protect the views, character and setting of the River Thames and its tributaries, also identified in part in Policy BE1(d). Through both the design of new buildings and associated landscaping works, the Council will expect new development proposals to contribute to an improvement of the surrounding townscape environment. Proposals should also take account of the needs of disabled people and facilitate the creation of convenient pedestrian routes, where appropriate. The needs of those with disabilities, referred to in Policy BE1(f) are considered in more detail in Chapter 10 - Social and Community Facilities, at paragraphs 10.20-10.24 and in Policy SC3. Specific reference to crime prevention considerations in the design of new development is made in paragraph 4.79 and Policy BE28 later in this chapter.

4.11. It is also important for new development to promote energy efficiency and conservation. As encouraged by Government guidance contained in "This Common Inheritance", the Council will use its influence to this end particularly through its building control and planning functions. Planning controls can encourage efficiency by suitable building orientation, layout and window size. The Council also supports energy efficiency by direct promotion and campaigns locally. The promotion of water conservation in the context of development proposals is also important. Paragraphs 4.92 to 4.94 of this chapter and Policy BE38 deal specifically with the subject of renewable energy.

4.12. The following Policy BE1 is a general development control policy setting out the Council's overall approach to development proposals. Other Policies in both this

Chapter and other chapters of the Plan and the Supplementary Planning Guidance provide more detailed guidance on the issues identified.

POLICY BE1

The Borough Council will expect new development to be of a high standard in terms of design and materials and to:-

(a) respect the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land

(b) retain any mature trees and other significant landscape features that are of merit

(c) provide and maintain suitable boundary treatment and landscaping

(d) protect the quality of important views and/or create attractive new views and vistas, taking account of nearby features of interest or open land in particular of listed buildings and other buildings of local interest and the River Thames

(e) contribute to an improvement to the townscape and/or environment

(f) take account of the needs of disabled people

(g) enable the creation of convenient pedestrian and cycle routes, where appropriate

(h) promote energy efficiency and conservation, including through suitable building orientation, layout and window size, and water conservation.

Particular care must be taken where any form of commercial development is proposed in or adjoining residential areas. Further guidance on this is given in Chapter 6 - Employment paragraph 6.22 and Policy EM3.

4.13. The Council will expect the height of new buildings to be comparable with that of adjoining buildings which are predominantly two storey in residential areas. Some existing tall buildings in Staines and Sunbury Cross detract from the surrounding area with a dominant and adverse effect on the skyline. For new proposals, the height of existing buildings will not be taken as a precedent if they are already out of context with their surroundings and demonstrable harm to the immediate or wider area would result from a proposed new building. Particular regard will be had to the impact of any proposal on any listed building, conservation area, Area of Special Landscape

Character, the River Thames Area of Special Character or the Green Belt. Certain additional constraints on the height of new buildings apply in the airport public safety zone in the northern part of the Borough (see Chapter 7 on Aviation).

POLICY BE2

The Borough Council will refuse any application for new development whose height is out of character with surrounding buildings or which would cause demonstrable harm to the immediate or surrounding area. Existing tall buildings considered by the Council to have an adverse effect on an area by reason of their height will not be taken as a measure of the appropriate height for any given area.

Percent for Art

4.14. Special design features and the incorporation of works of art and special craft features into development can contribute significantly to the quality and interest of the visual environment. The Percent for Art movement promoted by the Arts Council advocates that in the design and landscaping of all development, an allowance should be made for its artistic contribution. This can include a broad range of works of art, artistic features and detailing, street furniture and works to land surrounding new built development. The Borough Council supports this approach and will be pleased to discuss with developers the provision of appropriate artistic elements, particularly but not exclusively within the context of major development proposals. The Council has published a leaflet "Public Art in Spelthorne" providing further guidance on this subject.

POLICY BE3

Where appropriate development proposals will be encouraged to include an artistic element or work of art in their design or landscaping and which makes a contribution to the amenities of the area.

Demolition

4.15. During the development of sites in areas of important townscape, residential or other sensitive areas, considerable disturbance can occur to the amenities of an area. The Borough Council will seek to minimise the impact of demolition on neighbouring residential properties and seek to reduce visual damage by requiring the appropriate screening of such sites during any demolition, prior to and during construction. The demolition of most residential buildings will require prior notification to the Council which will, where appropriate, require the submission of detailed redevelopment proposals. It may also request a legal agreement to ensure that redevelopment takes place within an agreed timescale.

Lighting Proposals

4.16. Lighting proposals can cause significant harm to the amenities of an area particularly in residential and other environmentally sensitive areas. They may also be hazardous to highway safety, rail and air traffic. The advice of the Council's Environmental Health Officers, the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and the Civil Aviation Authority will be sought as appropriate in assessing any such proposals. The DETR will be consulted on all floodlighting proposals near trunk roads.

POLICY BE4

The Borough Council will only permit lighting proposals which would not adversely affect:-

(a) safety, including highways, railways and aviation

(b) a residential area

(c) a Conservation Area or the setting of a Listed Building

(d) an Area of Special Landscape Character

(e) the River Thames Area of Special Landscape Character

(f) the Green Belt or

(g) nature conservation interests

Where lighting proposals are approved, lights should be appropriately shielded, directed to the ground and sited to minimise any impact on adjoining areas, and be of a height and illumination level of the minimum required to serve their purpose.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.17. This section of the Plan sets out design principles against which various types of residential development proposals will be assessed, including new dwellings, extensions and conversions. These are in addition to the general principles set out in the preceding sections. Whilst not all extensions and alterations require specific planning permission because of 'permitted development' rights, the principles against which any development proposal which does require consent, will be assessed are set out below. The aspirations of property owners and developers need to be assessed in the context of the importance of protecting the environment in the wider public interest. The text and policies which follow represent minimum criteria, which the Borough Council will expect developers to follow in development proposals, and amplify Policy BE1. Experience has shown that where layouts have been designed to merely comply with these minimum standards, an unsatisfactory result will occur. It is important to create a high quality environment with character and interest, and to do

so will often require higher standards than the minimum. In addition, where new development adjoins existing properties it will be appropriate to exceed the Plan's minimum standards, in order for the new development to sit satisfactorily alongside the existing dwellings. Occasionally, in order to secure the suitable development of a site, it may be appropriate for the standards to be applied with a degree of flexibility to allow for appropriate individual design solutions, for example in conservation areas. Where appropriate this section contains cross references to other relevant sections of the Plan and to supplementary planning guidance.

4.18. Nearly all new residential development in Spelthorne will be in the form of infilling in existing urban areas. The general approach of seeking to make the best use of urban land for housing development is set out in Chapter 5 on Housing, together with reference to size and type of dwellings. There is growing recognition by developers of the importance of individuality, interest and variety in housing design, which is encouraged by the Council.

Privacy, Outlook, Natural Light and Separation of Dwellings

4.19. The provision of appropriate privacy, outlook, natural light and garden space in new residential development and extensions are important planning considerations in ensuring the amenity of residents in both existing and new housing is protected. Two storey development by its nature has the potential to cause more problems than single storey development.

4.20. Where properties have smaller gardens and buildings are therefore closer together the distance between buildings and their orientation to each other, and the effect of subsequent extensions is more critical given the greater scope for overshadowing or loss of privacy. The aspect, design, layout and fenestration of new and existing properties will all affect the extent of these potential problems.

4.21. In assessing proposals the Council will consider whether or not the proposed development will significantly affect the prevailing conditions and the outlook in habitable rooms, including kitchens, of adjoining dwellings. The outlook from windows of adjoining dwellings can be seriously affected by single storey development close to the boundary and by any adjoining development of two or more storeys. Problems of overshadowing and loss of outlook are reduced where new buildings and extensions are set back from the boundary.

4.22. The provision of obscured glazing can assist in overcoming potential problems of loss of privacy and when appropriate, planning applications may be approved subject to conditions requiring such glazing. Alterations at roof level including the provision of accommodation with dormer windows or roof lights can lead to particular problems of overlooking. Generally roof terraces or balconies are not acceptable where these would enable direct overlooking of neighbouring habitable rooms or gardens.

4.23. Sunlight and daylight is required not only inside buildings but also in gardens, especially the area close to the house. It will also be necessary therefore to assess the degree of overshadowing of adjoining outdoor areas. Guidance on the appropriate

minimum distances between dwellings and size of rear gardens in residential development is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Such provision will be part of the adequate space about and between buildings required by Policy BE6 and the general requirement for high standards of development required in Policy BE1.

4.24. In addition to the potential impact on amenity, side extensions can, by closing the gap between dwellings, create a terracing effect which may be harmful to the character of an area, by virtue of a dominating and detrimental effect on the street scene, particularly in the case of semi-detached and higher density housing. In such cases development will not be permitted.

4.25. Although there is often physically scope for single storey residential development to extend up to the side boundary with an adjoining property, without detriment to amenity, in order to avoid legal problems caused by foundations encroaching on adjoining land and overhanging eaves and gutters, it should be set back so that it would be wholly within the boundary. In order to allow for a possible later first floor extension without creating an unacceptable terracing effect, single storey side extensions should be set back 1 metre from the boundary, except where this would prevent the provision of an integral garage, though any subsequent first floor extension would still need to be set back 1 metre from the boundary and 2 metres for three storey development.

4.26. The following policies will be applied when determining proposals for residential development. Both will require careful on site assessment as there will be a wide variety in the juxtaposition of buildings. Further guidance on the application of Policies BE5 and BE6 is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance "The Design of New Residential Development and Extensions".

POLICY BE5

Development will not be permitted which would result in a significant loss of privacy, outlook, daylight or sunlight to a habitable room or garden of an adjoining dwelling. Single or two storey extensions which incorporate a balcony or terrace at first floor level or above may be acceptable where there is no overlooking of neighbouring properties or gardens.

POLICY BE6

Proposals for residential development will be expected to provide adequate space about and between buildings to protect the amenity of existing dwellings, and to avoid development out of character with the existing locality. Where development faces the back of existing development, particular care is required in layouts, to avoid any adverse impact of the access, parking and manoeuvring areas.

Roofs

4.27. It is important that both residential infill development and extensions are integrated satisfactorily with existing property, including in their roof profile and detailing and that adverse impact on visual amenity is avoided. Pitched roofs which follow adjoining roof profiles will be required for all residential development which will be clearly visible to the public. The provision of habitable rooms in the roofspace where subject to planning control will be acceptable, provided there is no significant adverse impact on the street scene, character of the area or public views. In this respect, dormer windows should not dominate the roof by extending beyond the existing roof profile or along the whole width of a house, and in the case of existing two storey development, dormers for third floors should not front a highway. The conversion of hipped to gable ended semi-detached or end of terrace properties can create an unbalanced, disharmonious appearance, and for this reason applications to convert hipped to gable ended roofs in these circumstances will be resisted. Applications to alter both of a pair of semi-detached or end of terrace properties in this way will be considered on their merits.

POLICY BE7

On two-storey extensions which will be clearly visible from a public highway or other public open land, or single storey extensions which are particularly prominent, a full pitched roof will be required.

POLICY BE8

The creation of additional habitable rooms in the roofspace and roof extensions will be acceptable provided:-

(a) no dormer windows are constructed in the elevation of the roof which fronts a highway where there would be a detrimental impact on the street scene

(b) that any dormer window is constructed within the existing roof profile

(c) that any dormer does not take up the whole width or height of the roof and is not a dominant feature of the roof

(d) that it does not give rise to undue problems of overlooking adjoining residential dwellings

(e) that it does not result in an unbalanced appearance of the roof design of a pair of semi-detached or end of terrace properties.

Restriction of Permitted Development Rights

4.28. Considerable care and skill is required in designing schemes in the Green Belt and higher density residential developments on restricted sites. Subsequent extensions or alterations to such buildings can have a serious and potentially damaging visual impact or result in unacceptably small gardens, overlooking or overshadowing of adjoining properties. The General Permitted Development Order permits a range of minor development particularly domestic extensions to be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission. It is the practice of this Council to restrict these 'permitted development rights' by the use of conditions where the exercise of such rights would have an adverse effect.

POLICY BE9

Where it is considered necessary for stricter control on future development in the interests of maintaining the Green Belt, residential amenities or the environmental quality of a scheme itself, planning permission for new residential development will have conditions imposed to restrict permitted development rights.

Vehicular Access and Design Considerations

4.29. Most infill sites are usually bounded by an existing highway on at least one frontage. The character, function and use of that highway will determine whether or not frontage development, including direct access to individual dwellings, would be appropriate and will dictate the layout and spacing criteria to be applied to any side road junctions. The DETR will be consulted and require traffic impact assessments for development proposals affecting a trunk road. Reference should be made to Department of Transport Circular 6/91 on necessary highway improvements. Once the principle of access to the highway network has been agreed the design of the internal layout can be considered. The main objective of any residential road is to create a safe and convenient means of access to residential areas whilst retaining an attractive environment in the vicinity of the dwellings. Criteria for the design of new residential estate roads are set out in the Surrey County Council Design Guide on Roads and Footpaths.

4.30. In view of the impact on existing street scenes, new dwelling frontages should wherever possible face onto adjoining existing highways. In the case where development fronts onto a classified road direct vehicular access onto the road may not be possible and appropriate rear access to the properties will need to be designed. In these circumstances all elevations facing a public highway must be attractively designed. A suitable means of enclosure should also be provided at the sides of rear gardens adjoining roads, paths or open spaces; brick walls and planting will be preferred to 2 metre high fences, as they are more durable and attractive.

4.31. Existing dwellings with large rear gardens but insufficient space to allow frontage infill development may occasionally provide the opportunity for 'backland' development. PPG3 at paragraph 26 emphasises that care is needed with the layout and design of such backland development, to ensure that access to other potential

development land is not precluded, and that a satisfactory access to current highway standards is provided.

POLICY BE10

Development precluding access to a potential development site or unreasonably prejudicing the amenities enjoyed by existing properties will not normally be permitted. A separate access meeting currently adopted highway standards should be provided for any development site not having a main highway frontage.

Parking Provision[1]

4.32. Car parking must be provided in accordance with the Council's currently adopted standards for the various forms of residential development, including new dwellings, extensions, flat conversions and development on sub divided plots. The latest parking standards are set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is important that existing available or potential garage or on site parking spaces on a site are not reduced below this parking standard level as a result of any extensions to a property, as this may increase problems of on-street car parking or affect highway safety. Where a property has no on-site parking and the front garden area is converted to provide a parking space it is important that a balance is maintained between the hard-surfacing required for the vehicle and the area set aside for planting. The character of a street may be destroyed by the insensitive design of on-site parking spaces and the loss of boundary walls and hedges. No more than 50% of the front garden area should be used as hardstanding nor more than half of the available width of the garden. (The standard size of a parking space is 4.8 metres by 2.4 metres).

4.33. A satisfactory relationship between off-site parking spaces and carriageways and the dwellings which they serve must also be provided in new development proposals, to avoid harm to residential amenity. Two metres minimum separation will be required between the footway or shared carriageway surface, and any elevation of a dwelling with a habitable room. This minimum separation distance, as required in BE11(b), should include a landscaped area. Parking spaces should be located at the front or side of houses, and only at the rear if the criteria set our in Policy BE11(c) below are met. They must be within 15 metres of the main entrances of dwellings served, in order to avoid under-usage problems of spaces provided further away from houses and consequent obstructive parking on the carriageway or footway closer to the desired destination. However, no unassigned parking space should be provided within 5 metres of a window to a habitable room of any dwelling.

[1] The Council reviewed its Parking Standards in 2001 and which are published in a separate document. This section should be read in conjunction with the revised standards which are published as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

POLICY BE11

Any residential development including extensions which would result in available or potential garage or on-site car parking spaces below the parking standards currently adopted by the Borough Council, will not be acceptable. In addition the following criteria concerning the relationship of parking spaces and carriageways to dwellings should be met:-

(a) a development should require no more than half the width or area of a front garden to be used for parking

(b) a minimum separation distance of 2 metres, which includes some landscaping, will be required between the front building line of any dwelling or other elevation with a window to a habitable room, and the footway or shared carriageway surface

(c) parking spaces should be located at the front or side of dwellings and will only be accepted at the rear of new or existing dwellings if:

(i) a satisfactory buffer of garden and/or landscaping is provided between any parking space or garage, including the associated access, and the adjoining residential property

(ii) a garden area in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance is maintained

(iii) there is no adverse impact in terms of visual intrusion, loss of privacy or through high activity levels

(d) parking spaces must normally be within 15 metres of the main entrance doors of the dwellings which they serve (exceptions will only be considered to the extent necessary to secure appropriate amenity space for flat developments)

(e) no unassigned parking space should be provided within 5 metres of a window to a habitable room of any dwelling.

Special Accommodation Annexes

4.34. Occasionally extensions are sought to provide additional accommodation for use by elderly or other relatives. Some allow the occupants to live largely independently from the family, but completely self-contained 'flats' will not be acceptable unless they comply with all other relevant Council policies. Extensions to provide such

accommodation as an annex to the existing dwelling will be assessed against the criteria applied to all residential development and will only be acceptable where the accommodation can eventually form an integral part of the original house without further adaptation. It is particularly important that special accommodation annexes should be easily accessible for elderly and disabled people. Unless garden areas and parking provision can be provided in accordance with the Council's standards, special accommodation annexes cannot be considered as appropriate for occupation as separate dwellings once their original use is no longer required. In order to avoid the possible creation of substandard dwellings, the future use of this type of extension which provides self-contained accommodation, will be controlled by the use of planning conditions or where necessary, by legal agreement. Extensions to provide self-contained annexes to large detached houses will be considered on their merits but would still be required to form part of the main dwelling when no longer required for their original purpose.

POLICY BE12

An extension to provide annexe accommodation for relatives should be capable of being included as part of the main dwelling house and should not be completely self-contained.

Flat Conversions

4.35. In areas characterised mainly by family housing, flat conversions may have an adverse effect on the character of the area, either individually or cumulatively in conjunction with other conversion or redevelopment schemes for flats. The character of an area will need to be carefully assessed to consider whether a proposed conversion scheme can be successfully accommodated without harming its overall quality. In all cases the additional criteria referred to in this section will have to be satisfied.

4.36. In order for a flat conversion scheme to be acceptable, there should be no material adverse impact on neighbouring properties. Flats should be laid out to ensure no overlooking from living room windows at first floor level and above and with staircases away from party walls. Any extensions should be acceptable in terms of design, scale and impact on neighbours. Adequate sound insulation should be provided both to party walls with other dwellings and between flats within the converted dwelling. Sufficient off-street parking should be provided for the new units created by conversion proposals to comply with the Borough Council's currently adopted parking standards. The provision and use of garages and parking spaces to the side of properties will provide the most appropriate location for parking. Use of rear gardens for parking will only be acceptable where the parking can be provided without an adverse effect on neighbours and sufficient amenity space can be retained.

POLICY BE13

The conversion of a single dwelling into two or more self-contained units of accommodation will only be permitted where:-

(a) there will be no detrimental impact on the character of the area

(b) there will be no adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties by reason or noise, disturbance or overlooking

(c) the Borough Council's parking and rear garden area standards are met.

URBAN OPEN SPACE

4.37. In recent years Government policy, in giving greater weight to protecting the environment, has also identified the importance of retaining open space in urban areas for its amenity value. This is explained in PPG 17 "Sport and Recreation" in paragraphs 25-27. This is also reflected in Structure Plan Policy PE11. Open space in urban areas has a vital role to play in breaking up the continuity of built up areas and contributing to their character. This is in addition to any recreational value or nature conservation interest it may have. The retention of open land can also safeguard the urban environment from over intensive development, and it is important that key local open spaces are not sacrificed in order to meet other policy objectives, to the detriment of the urban area. Positive action may be necessary to enhance such areas and any development proposals will be expected to facilitate the open recreational use and amenity value of the site as a whole. The Policy is not intended to prevent the essential expansion needs of schools onto their own playing fields.

POLICY BE14

The Borough Council will seek to protect and enhance areas of open space within the urban area which contribute to the character or environment of the locality. Permission will not be granted for development which would result in the loss of such areas other than for essential educational or outdoor recreational needs. Exceptionally a small amount of development may be permitted on larger sites where the recreational and amenity value as a whole is enhanced and the future of the site secured.

4.38. In addition to the importance of protecting areas of urban open space for their contribution to the environment, many areas also perform an important recreational and/or nature conservation role and in these cases Policies R2, RU14 and RU15 of this Plan will also apply.

4.39. Appendix 3 and the Proposals Map identify specific urban open space sites for protection, as well as residential estates where open space was an integral feature of the original layout and will be retained. The inclusion of sites on this list or otherwise protected as areas of urban open space will take account of their:-

a) amenity value, including appearance, visibility and relationship to the surrounding area

b) nature conservation value, including any local or statutory designation and any feature which might indicate nature conservation value

c) recreational value, including the extent of public access, facilities available and the importance of those facilities.

Generally sites of less than 0.1 hectares (.25 acre) have not been included in the list in Appendix 3 but this should not be taken as implying such sites may be developed, as they may still make an important contribution to the character of the urban area and be important to keep.

4.40. To ensure that the Council's efforts to meet existing deficiencies in urban open space is not undermined it will be important for new larger housing developments to make appropriate provision. The cumulative adverse effect of a number of separate developments in one area can be significant, therefore open space will be required in all schemes with 30 or more family dwellings (those with 2 bedrooms or more). The minimum size of the open space must be 0.1 hectares and be increased in proportion to the size of the development. Such provisions should be in one parcel of land. In larger schemes the Council will expect the open space to incorporate an equipped playground provided at the developer's expense with a contribution toward its maintenance.

POLICY BE15

New housing development of 30 family dwellings and above will be required to incorporate a minimum of 0.1 ha of public open space increased proportionally according to the size of the scheme.

SHOPFRONTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

4.41. Well designed shopfronts and advertisements can greatly improve the appearance of shopping areas and enhance the success of business. Inappropriate or out of scale designs can severely detract from areas of otherwise good townscape. The Borough Council wishes to encourage good design and encourage proposals which accord with the following principles:-

a) shopfronts should be in keeping with the host building in design and materials. Fascia, window and stallriser proportions should relate in scale to the host building and adjoining properties

b) advertisements should be limited in scale and number. Proposals within or adjacent to residential areas and open spaces will not be acceptable

c) projecting signs should relate to the building and area where they are displayed in terms of design, scale, illumination and position

d) special regard will be given to proposals within conservation areas and on or near listed buildings. Advertisements on listed buildings are to be modest in design and normally non-illuminated

e) entrances should be accessible to people with disabilities, in accordance with the Council's Policy and published Guidance Notes.

The policies which follow are based on these principles and amplification is given in a leaflet entitled "Shopfronts and Associated Signs", which is reproduced in Appendix 4.

4.42. One feature of some shopfronts which requires particular care is that of shutters. Government advice makes clear that all new external shutters require planning permission. Solid shutters in particular can have a significant adverse impact on the environment through poor appearance and a deadening and hostile effect, and in these cases will be resisted by the Council. Possible alternative security measures to solid shutters include the use of toughened glass, good internal grilles (neither requiring planning permission), stallrisers and, where appropriate, the use of bollards or external grille or perforated shutters of suitable design and colour.

POLICY BE16

Proposals to alter shop fronts should respect the buildings and area of which they are part in the proportions of fascia boards, windows and stallrisers, and in the use of materials. Special attention should be given to good design on or near to Listed Buildings and within Conservation Areas. Entrances should be accessible to people with disabilities, in accordance with the Borough Council's published Access Guidance Notes.

POLICY BE17

The Borough Council will oppose any external shutters which are considered detrimental to Conservation Area or Listed Building character, or where there will be a significant adverse impact on the environment of the relevant shopping parade when the shutters are closed.

4.43. The Council's level of control over advertisements is limited by statutory regulations, and a wide range of advertisements do not require formal consent from the Local Authority, although listed building consent will still be required on listed buildings. Government advice on advertisements is published in:-

a) Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992

b) Department of Transport Advice Note TA57/87 "Roadside Features"

c) Department of Environment Circular 5/92

d) Planning Policy Guidance Note 19 'Outdoor Advertising Control'.

4.44. Within the limitations of its powers the Council will exercise strict control over the type, size and numbers of advertisements displayed on any particular building or site. As a general rule advertisement displays will be restricted to shopping, commercial, industrial or transport locations. The Council will take steps to remove existing signs which are identified as being detrimental to highway safety or the amenities of an area, including free standing pavement advertisements which are generally best avoided. In considering proposals for new advertisements or in deciding whether to take action to remove existing signs the Council will have regard to the following criteria:-

a) advertisements should be well designed, in terms of size, colour and degree of illumination, and be compatible with and complementary to the buildings or areas where they are located

b) no advertisements will be permitted which would have an adverse effect on road traffic conditions or public safety

c) high level, brightly illuminated or flashing advertisements will not be permitted, especially where they would affect residents in adjoining buildings.

4.45. Greater control in areas of open land in the Borough is maintained by it being designated as an Area of Special Advertisement Control, where further restrictions apply on the types of advertisement that may be displayed without consent. The erection of free standing hoardings and advertisements can be particularly damaging to open areas especially with the Green Belt. Where signs are necessary they must not be unduly prominent and particular care must be exercised with regard to size, design, colour and siting. An Area of Special Advertisement Control for Spelthorne (replacing previous orders covering the Staines and Sunbury areas) was adopted in 1993 and is shown on the Proposals Map.

POLICY BE18

The Borough Council will seek to control the adverse effect of signs on amenity and safety by:-

(a) maintaining an area of Special Advertisement Control

(b) preventing the proliferation of advertisements

(c) exercising strict control over the design, siting, materials and method of illumination of advertisements and advertisement hoardings to ensure that the character of individual buildings, groups of buildings and open areas is not damaged and that highway safety is not impaired

(d) not allowing any advertisement within or adjacent to a residential area or open space, unless the Council is satisfied that the location of a sign in such areas is essential, the sign is not illuminated, and special attention has been paid to its size, design and colour

(e) not giving consent for the display of advertisements or advertisement hoardings situated in open land unless they relate to the use of the land or buildings on which they are displayed, the Council is satisfied that the sign is essential and special attention has been paid to siting, size, design and colour

(f) using statutory powers to seek to remove existing signs which are identified as being seriously detrimental to the amenities of an area and/or highway safety.

POLICY BE19

All advertisements on listed buildings will be expected to be of a modest nature and complementary to the character of the building. Illuminated advertisements on listed buildings will not be allowed where this would adversely affect the character of the listed building.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

LISTED BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

4.46. There are over 200 buildings and structures in the Borough statutorily listed by the Secretary of State as being of special architectural or historic interest. The Council will seek to preserve these and will resist proposals which would adversely affect such buildings and structures or their setting. It is an offence to demolish any listed building or to alter or extend it in any way which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised. This applies to internal as well as external features, to any object or structure fixed to the building, and also to any structure within its curtilage since before July 1948.

4.47. The Council will seek the preservation of listed buildings firstly by negotiation, advice and grant aid. Advice on appropriate work to historic buildings is available in a Borough Council leaflet "An Owners Guide to Listed Buildings" and also in a series

of leaflets entitled "Building Conservation in Surrey", produced jointly by the Surrey local authorities. Some flexibility in the application of planning policies in order to secure the preservation of a listed building may be appropriate, in line with Government guidance contained in PPG15.

4.48. Generally the original use for which an historic building was designed and built should be continued and any unjustified change will be resisted. However the Council may allow change to another use where this is the only realistic means of ensuring the preservation of a listed building. It has been necessary on occasions to permit uses which reflect the high cost of restoring historic buildings, in principle the aims should be to identify the optimum viable use that is compatible with the fabric, interior and setting of the historic building. It is important however that listed buildings are not used for purposes which would detract from, or be detrimental to, their character, appearance or setting, or the amenities and character of the area, and also that changes of use should not be detrimental to the preservation of the building or features of special architectural or historic interest.

4.49. The character of historic buildings and their contribution to the townscape can be severely damaged by insensitive alteration, extension or adjoining development. When considering proposals for work to, or adjoining a listed building, special regard shall be paid to the desirability of:-

a) preservation of existing features of architectural or historic interest

b) minimal disturbance of historic fabric

c) use of appropriate scale, materials and design

d) preservation of the setting of the historic building.

4.50. The structure of older buildings can often be sensitive to disturbance. Prior to the approval of proposals for alteration, therefore, it may be necessary to agree with the Borough Council the best method of ensuring the support, stability and safety of the structure during the progress of the works. There may also be a need for archaeological recording. In cases of major reconstruction or of demolition it will be necessary to record, by means of plans or photographs, those features of particular interest which may be lost by alterations or demolition work. Consent for the demolition of a listed building will not be granted without evidence that every possible effort has been made to continue the present or find an alternative appropriate use for the building. Detailed plans for the future of the site will be required to accompany any listed building consent application for demolition.

4.51. Where a listed building is unoccupied and is not being properly preserved in a weatherproof and secure condition, the Council has the power to serve a notice on the owner, requiring works necessary to rectify the situation to be carried out. Where a listed building is not being properly preserved the Council may also serve on the owner a 'repairs notice' specifying works necessary for the proper preservation of the

building. If the specified works are not carried out the Borough Council may commence compulsory purchase proceedings. These measures will only be used as a last resort and the Council will normally seek to ensure the proper maintenance of listed buildings by persuasion backed up by grant aid, where appropriate.

POLICY BE20

The Borough Council will seek to preserve its listed building heritage by:-

(a) negotiation with and advice to listed building owners, together with the use of available statutory powers and grants, and as appropriate application of the policies of this Plan in a more flexible way

(b) seeking to retain listed buildings in the use for which they were designed and built, and normally only allowing changes of use where necessary to achieve the restoration or preservation of a building and which will not detract from the character of the building or the amenities and character of the area

(c) requiring alterations and extensions to respect the host listed building in scale, design, the use of materials, and the retention of the external structure and any features of special historic or architectural importance

(d) requiring development proposals for any sites affecting the setting of a listed building to have special regard to the need to preserve its setting

(e) refusing consent for any alteration or extension to a listed building that will not preserve the building or its setting

(f) refusing consent for the demolition of a listed building unless it has been conclusively demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Borough Council that there is no acceptable alternative future for the building

(g) where consent is exceptionally granted for the demolition or, where appropriate, for the alteration of a listed building which would destroy features of historic or architectural importance, requiring an adequate record of existing character, to be funded by the developer.

BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

4.52. As well as its buildings which are statutorily listed and those within designated Conservation Areas, Spelthorne contains other buildings of local architectural or historic interest. Whilst of insufficient age or merit to warrant the fuller protection of statutory designation, the Council will nonetheless seek to retain the historic interest and character of such buildings and where appropriate other policies may be relaxed to assist proposals which seek to retain them. At the time of adoption of this Plan the Council was in the process of preparing a formal List of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest.

POLICY BE21

The Borough Council will encourage the retention of buildings of local architectural or historic interest and, as appropriate, apply the policies of this Plan in a more flexible way to assist this.

CONSERVATION AREAS

4.53. A conservation area is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance." There are seven conservation areas in the Plan area which were designated as follows:

Laleham	December1970	
Lower Halliford	December 1973	
Lower Sunbury	July 1969	(extended in November 1992)
Shepperton	February 1970	
Staines	September 1975	
Stanwell	October 1972	(extended in January 1992)
Upper Halliford	February 1993	

Every local planning authority has a duty to periodically consider the designation of further conservation areas where there are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Borough Council has considered this duty and at present proposes no additions to the above list.

4.54. Conservation area status provides additional controls over most demolition, the size limit of extensions to non-listed dwellings for which no planning application need be made, illuminated advertisements on business premises, satellite dishes and other telecommunications operations and work to trees. Legislation also exists to enable local authorities to secure necessary repairs to an unoccupied non-listed building in a conservation area which is not being preserved in a weatherproof and secure condition.

4.55. All buildings, trees and any feature contributing to the special character of an area should be retained. Any proposal to demolish any building or structure should be accompanied by detailed plans for the future of the site, showing how the area will be

preserved or enhanced. Any new development proposal should contain detailed plans in order to fully assess the impact on the area. Outline planning applications will not be appropriate for development proposals on sites within conservation areas. Where demolition takes place well before the commencement of construction the presence of a vacant site in a conservation area can have an adverse effect. In the case of larger and/or prominent sites the Council will usually require the applicants to enter into a legal agreement prior to the issue of planning permission undertaking not to commence demolition until contracts for the proposed construction work have been signed. For all development proposals, the Council will seek to protect or enhance any important views and vistas of a conservation area. In appropriate circumstances, where development normally not requiring specific planning permission under the General Permitted Development Order would be detrimental to conservation area character, the Council will seek the restriction of these 'permitted development' rights through the use of a direction under Article 4 of this Order.

4.56. The Borough Council has a statutory duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. All seven of its areas are already covered by proposals documents, with many of the proposals already implemented. Both the preparation and implementation of these Preservation and Enhancement Plans have involved liaison with local groups. Character assessments, which form a part of these documents, are summarised in this section of the Local Plan, together with the most significant proposals, including some references to implemented schemes. The effect on a particular conservation area's character and the proposals for that area (as summarised below for each area and amplified in the individual Enhancement Plans) will be taken into account in assessing development proposals. The Council intends to review its Conservation Area Enhancement Plans periodically. Under section 72 of the Act, the Borough Council has a general duty, in exercising its planning functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

4.57. The Borough Council will maintain its own land in conservation areas in a positive manner, including by providing appropriate new or replacement street furniture and surfacing details. Private owners of land and buildings will be encouraged to maintain and improve them in an appropriate manner by the use of advice and, where necessary, statutory powers. In order to limit the potentially harmful impact of traffic and parked cars in conservation areas, suitable car parking, traffic calming and other traffic management measures will be promoted, using appropriate methods and landscaping. In accordance with government advice in PPG15, the Council will where appropriate, apply the policies of this Plan in a more flexible way.

POLICY BE22

The Borough Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas by:-

(a) requiring retention of buildings, trees and other features which are important to the character of the area

(b) requiring detailed plans for the future of the site to be submitted with any proposal for demolition, showing how the area will be preserved or enhanced, and controlling by legal agreements the timing of demolition and commencement of construction of the replacement building

(c) requiring full planning applications to be submitted for new development proposals including details of materials and full elevational drawings, showing where appropriate the relationship with adjoining buildings

(d) protecting and seeking to enhance important views and vistas within, from and towards conservation areas

(e) maintaining open spaces in an appropriate manner

(f) providing or seeking appropriate new or replacement street furniture and floorscape surfaces

(g) encouraging private owners to carry out appropriate improvements to buildings and land in conservation areas, by the use of advice, guidance and statutory powers, where appropriate

(h) seeking to limit the harmful impact of traffic and parked cars on the environment, by the use of suitable car parking, traffic calming and other traffic management measures, using landscaping and materials appropriate to the character of the area

(i) as appropriate, applying the policies of this Plan in a more flexible way.

4.58. In addition to the above Policy BE22, other policies of this Plan will be relevant in assessing particular proposals in conservation areas, e.g. Policy BE1 which applies to all new development. The following assessments of the character of particular conservation areas and the specific enhancement measures from the Enhancement Plans will also be taken into account.

Laleham Conservation Area

4.59. The special character of Laleham Conservation Area arises from its surrounding environment, street pattern, historic buildings, trees and open spaces. Its dominant surroundings are the River Thames, farmland and Laleham Park and Abbey. An historic street pattern is emphasised by many old, mostly high brick walls. Among its many listed and other locally important historic buildings and structures which date mostly from the 18th and 19th centuries, the Grade I listed All Saints Church dates

from the 12th century and provides a central focal point to the village and interesting views. Many attractive trees and open spaces exist at the riverside, allotments, recreation ground, Laleham Park and in private gardens. Evidence of the historically important fruit growing remains including in the Walled Garden of Laleham Park, now the Council Nurseries, and in some private gardens.

4.60. Enhancement measures in Laleham have resulted in traffic calming measures introduced in 1993 and 1994, new roadside planting, open space, boundary and street furniture improvements, improved access from the car park to the riverside opposite and the conversion of disused toilets in The Broadway to a local museum. Other proposed measures are an improved path and enhancement of the open space between Abbey Drive and the riverside.

Lower Halliford Conservation Area

4.61. The meander of the River Thames and associated open space south of Russell Road, the broad open Green and its historic buildings together form the basis of the special character of Lower Halliford Conservation Area. Views both to and from the river are important, and also across Lower Halliford Green to historic buildings and the wider open space of Bishop Duppas Park. Listed buildings date mostly from the late 18th century and all were originally residences, grouped around the Green and Russell Road to the west. Attractive non-listed buildings also add to the special character.

4.62. Enhancement measures in Lower Halliford have resulted in improvements to public open space and street furniture. A traffic calming scheme for Russell Road was completed in 1999. Further environmental improvements are planned including the provision of a small lay by at the junction of Russell Road with Walton Lane (P24) to replace illegal scattered parking on common land.

Lower Sunbury Conservation Area

4.63. The special character of Lower Sunbury Conservation Area is based on the River Thames, its historic buildings and street pattern, and open spaces. Views both to and from the river are important and various premises continue a tradition of serving boating activity. Most historic buildings date from the 18th century but some are later and a few date from the 16th or 17th centuries. These buildings are of varied character and include St. Mary's Church, large former country houses, historic inns and a variety of terraced properties, and these also provide both interesting skylines and particular views. Narrow streets and alleys and old brick boundary walls also help preserve the historic pattern of development and movement. The open spaces of Sunbury Park, the Walled Garden, Orchard Meadow, Flower Pot Green, Kings Lawn, riverside land either side of Turks Boatyard, Rivermead Island and open land between the riverside road and the island, contrast with the tight development form and provide important views, tree cover and represent a further element in the historic character of Lower Sunbury.

4.64. Enhancement measures in Lower Sunbury have resulted in improvements to many public open spaces and new signage. Measures to assist the vitality and viability of retail premises have been identified and pursued by a Working Party involving local

traders and residents, which has sought to attract appropriate new businesses to vacant premises in the area (Chapter 8 discusses the retail situation in Lower Sunbury more fully). A comprehensive traffic calming scheme for the area has been implemented. There are, however, still some outstanding areas where physical improvements are required and opportunities for enhancing the area and amenity exist. The following sites are the subject of two specific proposals of this Plan, details of which are in the schedules at the end of Chapter 12.

Orchard Meadow — this site of 1.46 hectares along with all of Sunbury Park is designated Green Belt. As described above it is one of the areas of open space which punctuate the built area of the village and makes a positive contribution to its character. The site allows views across it to Sunbury Park, Thames Street, Rope Walk and Orchard House. It has been used periodically for fairs and other village activities. The site requires enhancement of its open nature consistent with its designation as Green Belt and position in the Conservation Area, to ensure it contributes further to the character of the Village. See Proposal P5.

Turks Boat Yard — The Council considers this site to have important potential for improving the visual and physical links between the River Thames and Lower Sunbury. Recent planning applications, though subsequently withdrawn, indicate that some redevelopment is being considered by the owner. The Council will encourage the retention of riverside uses on this site unless it is demonstrated they are no longer required or viable. In the circumstances that such riverside uses could not be retained, there is scope to provide a public frontage to the river opposite Sunbury Lock to assist river access to the Village. Under such a proposal, the remainder of the site would be more appropriately put to residential use. See Proposal P6.

Whilst further specific opportunities to extend public access to the River cannot be identified, should opportunities arise these will be taken.

POLICY BE23

The Borough Council will seek to extend public access to the riverside in Lower Sunbury and will normally expect any proposals for development to make provision for this where appropriate.

Shepperton Conservation Area

4.65. Key elements of the character of Shepperton Conservation Area are found in its historic buildings and structures, Church Square, the River Thames and in its tree cover and open spaces. About half of the buildings are listed (all of these except the church being originally residences) and there are many others of local historic

interest. Historic walls are found alongside the old road winding through the village, in the cemetery and in Ferry Square. Church Square is dominated by the Grade II* listed St Nicholas Church and Rectory, a row of 18th century listed buildings on its south side and also by the presence of parked cars. The river is important in the history and character of the area, with formal and informal recreational roles continuing today. Tree cover throughout the area and public open spaces at the riverside and cemetery are fundamental to conservation area character.

4.66. Enhancement measures in the Shepperton Conservation Area have included improvements to areas of public open space, floorscape and street furniture, including lighting. A scheme to reduce the adverse effect of car parking in Church and Ferry Squares, secure an improved pedestrian environment and restore attractive views into and across Church Square was implemented in 1997.

Staines Conservation Area

4.67. The special character of Staines Conservation Area arises from a juxtaposition of historic buildings and structures, old routeways, important vistas, trees, the River Thames and open spaces. Fine examples of Victorian, Georgian and earlier buildings are present, many with particular historic interest, while historic structures include the Staines Bridge. Historic routeways remain in Hale Street, Church Street, Market Square (to a former river crossing), and the approach roads to the present 1832 bridge of Clarence Street and Bridge Street. All of these routeways except Bridge Street provide important vistas today and other important aspects are from the River Thames, riverside and Staines Bridge. Open spaces which contribute to Conservation Area character are the Rivers Thames, Wraysbury and Colne and adjoining land, and St. Mary's Churchyard and adjoining public open space.

4.68. Improvements to Market Square and its pedestrianisation were carried out in the early 1980's. A Planning Brief setting out proposals for the enhancement of the Memorial Gardens and Riverside Car Park was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in March 2000. Planning permission for a detailed scheme was approved in May 2001 and work is to start later in the year. Other enhancements have included changes to the junction of Church Street and Clarence Street. Identified enhancement measures which have been partially implemented are for street furniture improvements, additional tree planting, various building and shopfront improvements. Proposal P21 is for additional traffic calming measures in Church Street (east of Bridge Street) to reduce traffic impact and improve the environment. Proposals P27 for the site of the Staines Cinema and Riverside Restaurant, and P16 for redevelopment adjoining the Conservation Area to the north of the High Street, are contained in Chapters 10 and 8 respectively and in the schedules at the end of Chapter 12.

Stanwell Conservation Area

4.69. The village green and St Mary's Church are key elements of the character and views of Stanwell Conservation Area. Most of the historic buildings are listed and cluster around the Green, some in historic large garden settings, although important outlying buildings include the former Lord Knyvett's School dated 1624. Most listed buildings are 18th or 19th century, although St Mary's Church dates from the 13th century.

Tree cover, the churchyard and the recreation ground to the south also contribute to Conservation Area character.

4.70. Enhancement measures for Stanwell Conservation Area which have been implemented are the restoration of two key historic buildings; the former post office building and Brook Cottage in the High Street, street furniture improvements, tree planting and open space maintenance. A programme to restore the listed tombs at St. Mary's Churchyard has been completed. Traffic calming measures to reduce speeds and improve the environment are proposed for High Street and Park Road. Proposal P7 of this Plan seeks to increase usage of the public car park through a land exchange to make it more accessible, with housing redevelopment to the rear of the present car park (see the schedules at the end of Chapter 12).

Upper Halliford Conservation Area

4.71. The special character of Upper Halliford Conservation Area is based on its historic buildings, structures and old street pattern centred on the village green, together with its trees and open spaces. Its 18th and 19th century buildings and structures include the listed front boundary to Halliford Manor, a number of buildings set in large historic property plots and some old attractive walls. The old street pattern provides important views along Upper Halliford Road and Halliford Road and across the focal point of the Green. Tree cover within the Conservation Area and other open land both within and surrounding it also contribute to its special character.

4.72. Enhancement measures proposed for Upper Halliford include boundary and shopfront improvements, a commitment to investigate highway measures which may reduce unnecessary through traffic and footpath and appropriate street furniture improvements. It is intended to enhance the Green including an increase in the grassed area in front of 29 to 49 Upper Halliford Road. A comprehensive tree planting scheme within and around the edge of the village has been implemented.

ARCHAEOLOGY, ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

4.73. Spelthorne is situated entirely on various alluvial and gravel deposits associated with the Thames, whose river terraces were attractive to ancient settlements. This has resulted in an area rich in archaeological finds and with great potential for further discoveries. From the Neolithic period onwards, significant finds including small settlements have been found across a wide area of Spelthorne with many Roman remains found around the important Roman town of Staines. The Council will seek to protect this archaeological heritage. Government guidance contained in PPG16 paragraph 8 contains a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, and paragraphs 15 and 16 note the need to protect other important sites identified in the development plan. On the basis of currently available information all Scheduled Ancient Monuments are worthy of preservation, their sites are shown on the Proposals Map. Close liaison will be maintained with the Environment Department of Surrey County Council which holds the archaeological Sites and Monuments Record and with the Surrey County Archaeological Unit which conducts archaeological investigation and research. Any new areas of archaeological importance identified through the national

Monuments Protection Programme of English Heritage or local research will be added to the areas covered by the policies which follow. Where archaeological investigation is required in the context of a development proposal, the applicant will be asked to fund the work deemed necessary. Planning conditions or legal agreements will be used where appropriate to secure compliance with policies.

4.74. There are four Scheduled Ancient Monuments which are by definition of national importance within the Plan area (see Appendix 5) and which the Council will seek to preserve from any development adversely affecting site or setting. An application for Scheduled Monument Consent must be made to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions for any proposal affecting these sites. In addition to the scheduled sites and monuments, two others of special local importance have been identified on the basis of current information from the County Sites and Monuments Record which should also be preserved (see Appendix 5). The Council will encourage as appropriate the management and interpretation of these sites and monuments to develop their educational and recreational potential. These sites are identified on the basis of currently available information, and during the currency of the plan, additional sites may be identified to be of national importance following archaeological evaluation, or reassessment of sites on the Sites and Monuments Record.

POLICY BE24

There will be a presumption against any development which would adversely affect a scheduled or other nationally important ancient monument or its setting. Development adversely affecting a site or monument of County archaeological importance will not normally be permitted.

4.75. In addition to the above sites and monuments, other areas exist where there is good evidence for the existence of archaeological remains based on previous finds, maps or aerial photographs. These individual sites and areas of high potential are shown on the Proposals Map and are listed in Appendix 5. Any development proposal affecting such an area should include an initial assessment by a qualified archaeologist of its archaeological potential and what, if any, further field evaluation is required. An evaluation should assess the impact of the development upon the preservation of any archaeological remains. Where possible, remains should be left in situ. Proposals for development should wherever possible avoid damage to or disturbance of the archaeological remains. The Council will encourage the local display of archaeological finds, where appropriate, at the Spelthorne Museum or other suitable location. Developers are advised to refer to the British Archaeologists and Developers Code of Practice, and to Supplementary Planning Guidance produced by Surrey County Council entitled "Archaeology and Historic Landscapes" which gives a fuller explanation of Areas of High Archaeological Importance.

POLICY BE25

In considering proposals for development within areas of high archaeological potential, the Borough Council will:-

(a) require an initial assessment of the archaeological value of the site to be submitted as part of any planning application

(b) expect the applicant to arrange an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out prior to the determination of the planning application, where, as a result of the initial assessment, important archaeological remains are considered to exist

(c) have a preference for preservation in situ, and in such circumstances will impose conditions or seek a legal agreement, where appropriate, to ensure that damage to the remains is minimal or will be avoided

(d) require by planning condition or seek a legal agreement to secure a full archaeological investigation and recording of the site and subsequent publication of results in accordance with a scheme of work to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to the commencement of the proposed development, where important archaeological remains are known or considered likely to exist but their preservation in situ is not justified.

4.76. Work in recent years has resulted in sites of major archaeological importance being discovered in the course of gravel extraction, where no previous specific evidence existed for them. In view of Spelthorne's river gravel base, it is reasonable to assume that any large scale development is likely to affect features of archaeological interest and that discoveries could be made in any size of new development site. Any new development proposal for sites larger than 0.4 hectares and smaller sites where requested should include agreed arrangements for archaeological assessment or evaluation, and where appropriate investigation, and allow for future preservation of remains as deemed appropriate.

POLICY BE26

Outside the defined areas of high archaeological potential, the Borough Council will require an agreed scheme of archaeological assessment or evaluation appropriate for the site concerned to be submitted with any new development proposal for a site larger than 0.4 ha, and for smaller sites if deemed necessary. Where evidence of significant archaeological remains is found then the requirements set out in policy BE25 will apply.

4.77. Where other land is identified as of historic interest but is not covered by historic building, conservation area or archaeological protection policies, the Council will nonetheless seek to preserve the historic and amenity value of such land. This may include landscaped gardens and open landscapes. Where such areas are affected by development proposals it is important to record their historic details. The extent of such areas is to be further investigated by Surrey County Council for the County as a whole but in Spelthorne currently known sites are Sunbury Park and Laleham Park.

POLICY BE27

The Council will seek to ensure that any proposed development within or adjacent to an area of historic landscape value, or garden of special historic interest, does not detract from its character or appearance. An adequate record will be required where development affecting such an area is permitted. Where necessary the Council will encourage the sensitive restoration of gardens of special historic interest within the Borough.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

IMPROVEMENTS TO URBAN AREAS

4.78. In addition to the need to give special consideration to Conservation Areas which is dealt with in the preceding section, the Council recognises that there are a number of urban areas in the Borough, including Sunbury Cross, which might benefit from comprehensive environmental improvement. The means of securing these improvements is not always easy but the Council will undertake studies of such areas and will, as opportunities arise, endeavour to secure improvements.

CRIME PREVENTION

4.79. Government advice contained in PPG1 and Circular 5/94 stresses the importance of the planning system as one important factor in successful crime prevention. It encourages co-operation between developers, planning authorities, the police and the public at an early stage in the design of new development. The Council will liaise with the Crime Prevention Design Advisers of the Surrey Police force, where there is potential to reduce crime by suitable measures at the design stage of proposals. Generally it will be desirable to restrict access to premises, avoid easy escape routes to the rear and areas which are likely to be empty at certain times, and provide good lighting which provides security whilst respecting amenity. For residential areas, easy surveillance of approaches to dwellings, open spaces, parking areas, minor roads and footpaths will be encouraged. Where shopfront security is a potential problem, a range of measures are available but in order to protect the visual amenity of the street scene, not all of these may be appropriate in particular cases.

POLICY BE28

The Borough Council will keep under review appropriate crime prevention measures in public places and will, in considering development proposals and other opportunities to improve security, seek to secure the following features, where appropriate:-

(a) residential estate layout which enables surveillance of visitors, open spaces, parking areas, minor roads and footpaths

(b) restricted access to premises, including avoidance of escape routes to the rear

(c) a range of uses in town centres which increase activity in the evenings

(d) good lighting which provides security whilst respecting amenity

(e) suitable shopfront protection measures which protect visual amenity, e.g. strengthened stallrisers, the appropriate siting of bollards or other street furniture, laminated glass or suitable style shutters

(f) the use of close circuit television monitoring.

FLOOD PROTECTION

4.80. Government advice in PPG 14 "Development on Unstable Land" and Circular 30/92 "Development and Flood Risk"[1] seeks to avoid unacceptable risks of flooding. Within areas liable to flood it is essential to control new development, particularly that which would increase the number of properties which could be subject to flooding or which would reduce the capacity of the natural washlands thus increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. The Environment Agency has a statutory duty under Section 105 of the Water Resources Act 1991 to exercise a general supervision over all flood defence matters nationally. Areas liable to flood are required to be defined by the Agency. The advice of the Environment Agency will be obtained on all development proposals in areas defined as at flood risk on the Proposals Map. The objective of the Agency's advice is to avoid danger to health, life and property from flooding, and avoid heavy and wasteful expenditure in averting those dangers.

4.81. Since 1947 and until 1996 the extent of flood risk from the Thames has been largely based on the extent of the 1947 flood. This event corresponded to a projected 1 in 56 year return period. Whilst it is clear that some of the flooding in 1947 was localised

[1] The Government has subsequently issued PPG25 Development and Flood Risk in draft for consultation. The consultation period ended 9th March 2001.

and was caused by factors which are no longer relevant, such as blocked culverts, development in this area since 1947, including land filling and raising associated with mineral extraction, has also reduced the physical capacity of the flood plain.

4.82. The most recent Government guidance in Circular 30/92 expects flood plains will be defined at a projected 1 in 100 year return period or highest known flood if that is greater. Studies to define a 1 in 100 year flood level for the River Thames from Datchet to Walton Bridge were completed in 1996 and the new level was adopted by the Council in the same year. Studies of the Thames below Walton Bridge are, at the time of adopting this Plan still being undertaken.

4.83. The Environment Agency has almost completed a comprehensive flood alleviation scheme for the River Colne comprising some 30 individual projects to prevent the risk of flooding. This again is intended to provide protection against a 1 in 100 year return event. One outstanding commitment for the Lower Colne Flood Alleviation Scheme within Spelthorne is the Stanwell Moor diversion channel.

4.84. Development is not automatically precluded within the flood plain as there can sometimes be scope to mitigate a scheme's adverse effects. Policy BE29 sets out five considerations which will be taken into account when deciding whether a scheme might be acceptable. These are based on the Environment Agency's guidance "Policy and Practice for the Protection of Flood Plains" published in March 1997. The Council will rely on advice from the Environment Agency on the extent of the areas at risk from flooding and consult it on individual planning applications. The latest flood risk area is shown on the Proposals Map.

POLICY BE29

Within the area liable to flood, as shown on the Proposals Map, development, including land raising, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Borough Council that the proposal would not of itself, or cumulatively in conjunction with other development:-

(a) increase impedance to the flow of flood water, or

(b) reduce the site's contribution to the capacity of the flood plain to store water, or

(c) increase the number of people or properties at risk from significant adverse affects of flooding

(d) obstruct land adjacent to water courses required for access and/or maintenance purposes

(e) adversely affect flood defence structures or other features with the same role.

Measures to mitigate any potential adverse effects of a development on the capacity of the flood plain should ideally enhance its capacity.

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

4.85. Government advice in PPG12 states that planning policies should reflect the need to protect water quality. Maintaining or enhancing the water quality of rivers and other water bodies is important to protect a wide range of uses such as nature conservation and public supply. PPG12 also states that particular attention should be paid in plans to the protection of groundwater resources, which are susceptible to contamination. Guidance on considerations affecting the acceptability of development from a groundwater protection viewpoint was published by the Environment Agency as its "Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater" (1997). The Council will consult the Environment Agency on proposals which could lead to contamination of water courses and sources of drinking water supply.

POLICY BE30

The Borough Council will resist development which in its opinion, after consultation with the Environment Agency, could adversely affect the quality of surface water or groundwater.

NOISE

4.86. Noise and vibration from various sources can be detrimental to the environment and Government guidance on this issue is provided in PPG24 "Planning and Noise". The Borough Council has powers under environmental health legislation to limit and take action to prevent activities and uses which cause nuisance. Under planning legislation the Council will ensure that development likely to generate high levels of noise, such as industrial premises and other fixed installations, is carefully controlled, including where appropriate by a limitation of hours of operation, and that new development is protected from known sources of noise and vibration. The Council will have regard to the effect of noise from Heathrow Airport, motorways, other roads and railways in the siting of new development. Further consideration is given to the effect of noise from Heathrow Airport in paragraph 4.87. PPG24 recommends 'noise exposure categories' for new dwellings near existing noise sources. The categories range from circumstances where noise need not be a determining factor in granting a planning permission to cases where permission should normally be refused. The guidance also recognises that hospitals and schools are also noise sensitive developments. The Council's existing criteria on noise follows that produced by Surrey County Council and includes measures on a wider range of uses and recommendations on appropriate sound attenuation levels, which is not found in the latest Government guidance. The Council's guidance will be applied in these circumstances where guidance is not otherwise found in PPG24. The Council's adopted noise criteria and the noise exposure categories recommended in PPG24 are set out in Appendix 6. In the application of the policy which follows, the Council will seek to apply this specific criteria in determining applications for development affected by or giving rise to significant noise or vibration. The Council proposes to review its noise criteria.

Aircraft are a specific major source of noise affecting this Borough and the subject of Aviation is dealt with in Chapter 7.

POLICY BE31

The Borough Council will seek to ensure that new development does not cause an increase in noise and/or vibration levels which would significantly affect adjoining areas, and that noise levels within developments are within acceptable levels compatible with their use. Any new development proposal which could be affected by excessive noise levels from adjoining sources will either be refused or, where appropriate, required to incorporate appropriate sound attenuation measures.

4.87. Large parts of the Borough are affected by aircraft noise from Heathrow Airport and section 2.0 of Appendix 6 sets out the Borough Council's adopted criteria for determining proposals for development in such areas. However, these criteria will not override the requirements of Policy BE31. Noise contours are based on the Equivalent Continuous Sound Level (Leq) and are annually updated by the Civil Aviation Authority. The latest set of contours prepared by the CAA for the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) in May 2001 is for the year 2000 and is shown on the Proposals Map. The Council's policies will be applied using whatever is the latest published noise contours. The operation of a noise policy in an area like Spelthorne is not easy. Whilst PPG24 allows for a relaxation in the application of noise criteria to new housing development, the Council is satisfied that the housing requirements of the Structure Plan can be met and that no relaxation of the aircraft noise policy is justified.

POLICY BE32

The Borough Council will, in accordance with its adopted noise criteria, control development on sites considered acceptable in principle for housing and require and/or advise on appropriate sound attenuation measures in areas subject to noise from Heathrow Airport.

POLICY BE33

To maintain the character of Stanwell Moor, replacement of family housing on a one-for-one basis will be required in any redevelopment scheme.

HAZARDOUS DEVELOPMENT

4.88. Certain types of development or installation involve the processing or storage of hazardous substances. These include certain gases, liquids and explosive chemicals which, if stored in amounts exceeding specified quantities, require hazardous substances consent from the local council. The Health and Safety Executive is

responsible for ensuring that hazardous installations are operated safely and for advising the local authority on the potential hazards of any proposed installation. In determining an application for any hazardous development the Council will not only have regard to the advice of the HSE but will also consider the land use and policy implications of the proposal. Similarly any proposed development near to a hazardous installation will be assessed in terms of the risks involved. Whilst the HSE has an important role to play in advising on technical matters it is the duty of the local authority to exercise control in relation to hazardous developments. Many potentially dangerous hazards may be reduced or avoided by appropriate design and operating procedures. Any consents granted will be subject to appropriate conditions and any proposals which significantly increase the degree of risk for the resident or working population to an unacceptable level will not be permitted.

POLICY BE34

The Borough Council, in determining any proposals for hazardous developments or development which might be affected by an existing hazardous installation, will have regard to the advice of the Health and Safety Executive. Appropriate conditions will be applied where necessary and there will be a general presumption against any proposal likely to significantly increase the risks associated with any particular hazardous installation.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

4.89. Public utilities of gas, electricity, water, sewage and telecommunications are essential to the functioning of any urban area although their provision can result in damage to the environment. Certain public utilities development is necessary in the Green Belt e.g. water treatment facilities, and this is discussed in Chapter 2. Policies in the Plan are designed to improve the environment and limit the impact of potentially damaging development. The provisions of the General Permitted Development Order mean that not all development carried out by statutory or private undertakers is subject to detailed planning control. However, where permission for work is necessary the Council will seek to minimise the impact of any new development and will require, where appropriate, good standards of design and landscaping particularly in the more sensitive areas of landscape importance, in conservation areas or where the setting of a listed building is affected. This policy will apply to above ground structures and to both overground and underground service lines. Any above ground structures which are no longer required due to new development will be expected to be removed. The 1991 Streetworks Act requires the reinstatement of any surfaces disrupted by work to underground services to the previously existing standard.

POLICY BE35

The Borough Council will seek to ensure that the visual impact of public utilities is minimised, especially in or adjoining a Conservation Area, Listed Building, Area of Special Landscape Character, the River Thames Area of Special Character or the

Colne Valley Park. Where development includes the provision of services involving the permanent siting of plant and machinery above ground, high standards of landscape design will be required where necessary. The Borough Council will seek the removal of redundant above ground structures.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

4.90. ?Telecommunications is a rapidly expanding industry and, given the location of Spelthorne and the level of population, demand for telecommunications development locally is likely to continue to increase. Government policy is set out in PPG8 "Telecommunications" and seeks to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems, whilst ensuring that this growth is achieved with minimal visual impact, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas. This Council will consider with particular care any proposed telecommunications development in or affecting the Green Belt, an Area of Special Landscape Character, the Colne Valley Park, the River Thames Area of Special Character, a Conservation Area, a Listed Building, a Protected Urban Open Space Site or a residential area. Whilst some installations require no specific planning application, provided the visual impact of equipment has been minimised by suitable siting, the Council can seek repositioning if this condition has not been met. A comprehensive approach to installations is sought which allows for future growth and does not place undue constraints on the location of future telecommunication development. The Council will expect operators requiring equipment to be placed on masts or tall buildings to demonstrate that they can not share an existing mast facility. Where a new mast is provided, prior to the issuing of a planning permission, the Council will require the applicant to enter into a legal agreement allowing spare capacity to be used by other operators.

POLICY BE36

Planning permission will be granted for any new telecommunication development including cable television, subject to the following criteria being met:-

(a) there is no existing mast, structure or building that can be satisfactorily used for the purpose

(b) the visual impact of the proposal has been minimised through suitable siting, colour, materials, design and landscaping, and any redundant mast should be dismantled by the operator

(c) the proposal will facilitate future network development by reducing the need for additional masts or structures.

In order to adequately assess the impact of any proposal, full details of the operator's proposed network should be submitted. Early discussion with operators will be welcomed and particular

care given by the Borough Council for proposals in or affecting the Green Belt, an Area of Special Landscape Character, the Colne Valley Park, the River Thames Area of Special Character, a Conservation Area, a Listed Building, a Protected Urban Open Space or a residential area.

RECYCLING

4.91. Recycling is important in reducing the amount of waste being disposed of at land-fill sites each year. The responsibility for waste collection rests with Borough Councils and for disposal with County Councils. The Environment Agency have a responsibility for waste management and support the Government's preferred waste hierarchy of Reduction, Reuse, Recovery, Disposal. County Councils also have responsibility for producing Waste Local Plans and Waste Management Plans. The County Council is considering in its work on the Waste Local Plan, the scope for more extensive waste recycling facilities. The Borough Council first published its own recycling plan for domestic waste in 1992 and in September 1995 agreed to an enhanced paperbank scheme and the introduction of a door-to-door paper collection scheme. This aims to achieve the recycling of 13-14% of total household waste and would represent significant progress towards the Government's target of 25% by the year 2000. The Borough Council has for several years been developing a network of collection points for recyclable waste (paper, glass, cans, material). It will encourage in appropriate developments, additional small scale, well placed and convenient collection facilities. It is also actively promoting composting of appropriate domestic waste and cuttings etc. from Council managed recreation grounds and open spaces. The Council will also seek the recycling of materials from the existing buildings within sites, when they are redeveloped, and encourage other recycling facilities subject to no unacceptable impact on amenity or the Green Belt.

POLICY BE37

The Borough Council will encourage recycling initiatives through the planning process by:-

(a) seeking the recycling of materials from the existing buildings within sites when they are redeveloped

(b) seeking to negotiate appropriate facilities for the collection of recyclable materials e.g. paper, glass, cans and textiles, within major development and other appropriate sites

(c) encouraging other recycling facilities subject to no unacceptable impact on amenity or Green Belt.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

4.92. Alternative forms of energy generation to the use of fossil fuels can reduce the depletion of this finite resource and assist in the reduction of CO^2 emissions. PPG 22 "Renewable Energy" commends the inclusion in local plans of relevant policies.

4.93. The geography and location of Spelthorne is such that the major alternative forms of energy such as hydro-electric schemes, wind farms and wave power are not available as options. Most of the former mineral working sites have been filled with inert material and therefore schemes to capture methane also have little scope. Energy can be generated from incinerators designed to burn household refuse, however, the difficulty of locating such a facility in an area like Spelthorne is such as to justify omission of any Policies to positively encourage such a facility in the Borough.

4.94. There are established technologies to enable energy capture via natural light and heat which can operate in conjunction with both domestic and industrial buildings, and appliances. However, they need to be installed in a way which minimises their impact on the environment. During the life of the Plan other technologies may be developed to the point they may become viable.

POLICY BE38

Appropriate renewable energy schemes and proposals will be actively encouraged subject to no adverse impact on the environment and compliance with the other policies of this Plan.

SUMMARY OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT PROPOSALS

4.95. Chapter 12 - Implementation contains a schedule of all Proposals contained in this Plan with relevant additional background information. Proposals which relate to the Built Environment chapter are made for the following sites:-

P5 Orchard Meadow, Thames Street, Lower Sunbury
P6 Turks Boat Yard, Thames Street, Lower Sunbury
P7 Land west of Village Hall, Park Road, Stanwell