



SPELTHORNE DESIGN CODE



SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Appendix A Understanding Spelthorne Today

This appendix sets out a summary of the existing urban design and key indicators of Spelthorne borough. This information informed the development of the Design Code.



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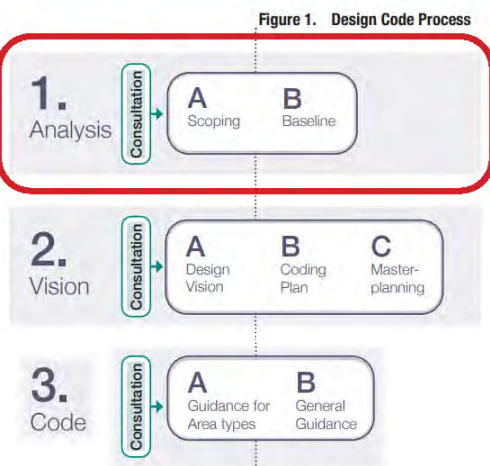
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

Spelthorne Borough Council is developing a Design Code that will set out the design requirements for proposed new development in the borough. It will ensure that new development is locally supported, sustainable and functions well for all its users.

The first stage of preparing the Design Code is to understand the places of Spelthorne in detail, learning about what makes it distinctive, what the key design-related issues are, and how the design code can enhance and improve the borough in the future.

This report sets out information and overviews to build a baseline understanding of the borough and the key design issues facing it.



Where this work sits in the National Model Design Code methodology

WORK UNDERTAKEN

Following the methodology set out in the National Model Design Code, key information about the borough has been mapped and analysed, across:

- Historic Development
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Movement
- Built Form
- People

Recent development and the emerging Local Plan have been analysed for patterns of development and growth that the Design Code will need to consider to be most effective.

Following this overview, detailed urban design characterisation analysis of the whole borough has been undertaken to understand the different area types and places in detail. This has been undertaken through a combination of desktop analysis, 3D imagery and walking, cycle and public transport-based site visits across the borough to record and observe.

Taken together this work has resulted in a draft Area Types plan, shown to the right.

PRIORITIES FOR THE DESIGN CODE

The analysis has found a number of key priority areas that the Design Code should address.

- **Key Borough-Wide Design Issues** that all development should address: creating healthy environments; integrating high quality open spaces that have amenity value, nature value and can help manage surface water; design of streets that prioritise people; managing the transitions and interfaces between different uses and forms of development.
- **Key Types of Development** that are anticipated and need detailed coding: High Density Mixed Use beyond what is typically seen in the borough today; development that intensifies but can integrate successfully into existing built-up areas ('urban' densities); medium-density residential design.
- **Key Areas of Change** that would benefit from more detailed Design Code consideration: Staines town centre; Sunbury Cross; Stanwell.

NEXT STEPS

This analysis, along with the community views we have gathered and technical input from stakeholders, will inform Stage 2 of the Design Code, where Visions of what future development should aim to achieve will be formulated for key places and area types, in close collaboration with the community and stakeholders. Taken together, this work will inform what is coded for in the Draft Design Code, and at what level of prescription.



Design Code Areas

- Green Belt
- Inner Suburban
- Suburban
- Village
- Town Centre
- Village Centre
- Retail Park
- Employment - Business Park
- Employment - Light Industrial/Estate

This plan shows a summarised assessment of the area types of Spelthorne. Area types share key urban design characteristics in their existing design, and the potential development that might occur in the future. It is a key output of this stage of work and will form the basis for the next stage of the Code.

DRAFT

Spelthorne - Draft Area Types Plan

Rev	Description	Date

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Client:



Spelthorne Design Code

Design Code Areas

Scale: A3: Drawn: - Designed: - Approved: OR
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Drawing Number: SPEL04-022 Revision: A Date: 05/08/2024

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SPELTHORNE DESIGN CODE

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

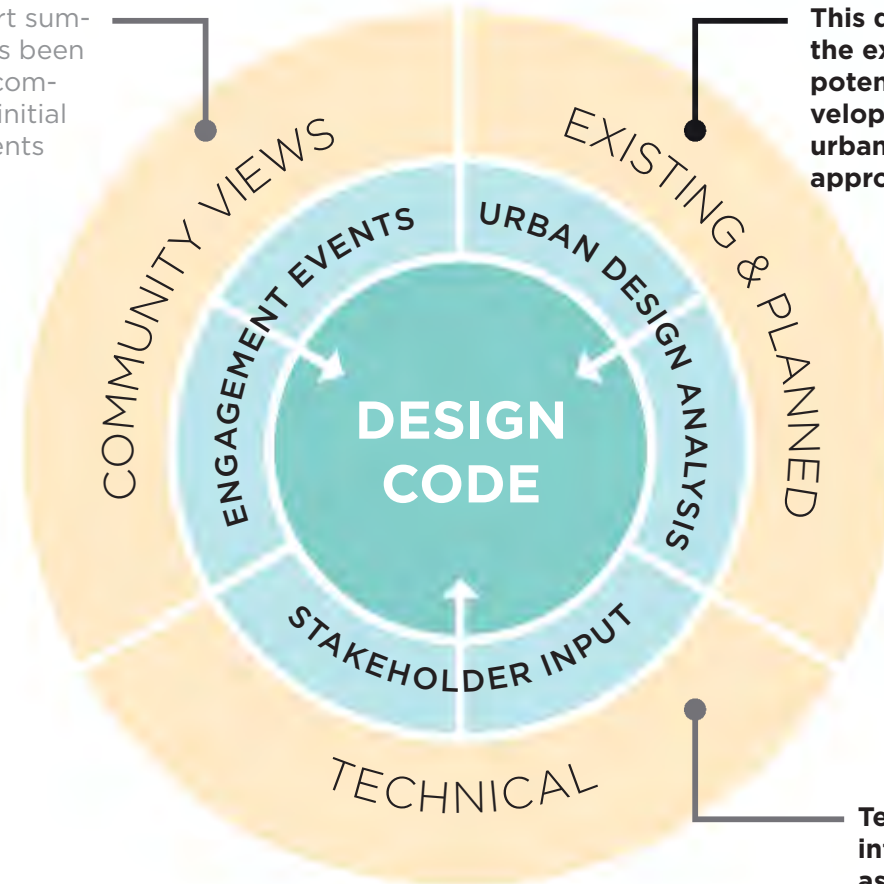
Spelthorne Borough Council is developing a Design Code that will set out the design requirements for proposed new development in the borough. It will ensure that new development is locally supported, sustainable and functions well for all its users.

The Design Code will be used to determine whether planning applications are acceptable in design terms, and will support the emerging Spelthorne Local Plan. It will contain simple, concise, illustrated design requirements for streets, open spaces and buildings. It will also set out expectations for the process to be followed when proposals are designed. It will be based on wide-ranging input including that from the local community, other stakeholders and wider understanding of the places within the borough, to ensure it is locally-supported, robust and can be used in practice.

The first stage of preparing the Design Code is to understand the places of Spelthorne in detail, learning about what makes it distinctive, what the key design-related issues are, and how the design code can enhance and improve the borough in the future.

This report sets out initial information and overviews to build a baseline understanding of the borough and the key design issues facing it. Each section sets out a summary of the information presented, sources of the data and information, and what the information means for the preparation of the Spelthorne Design Code.

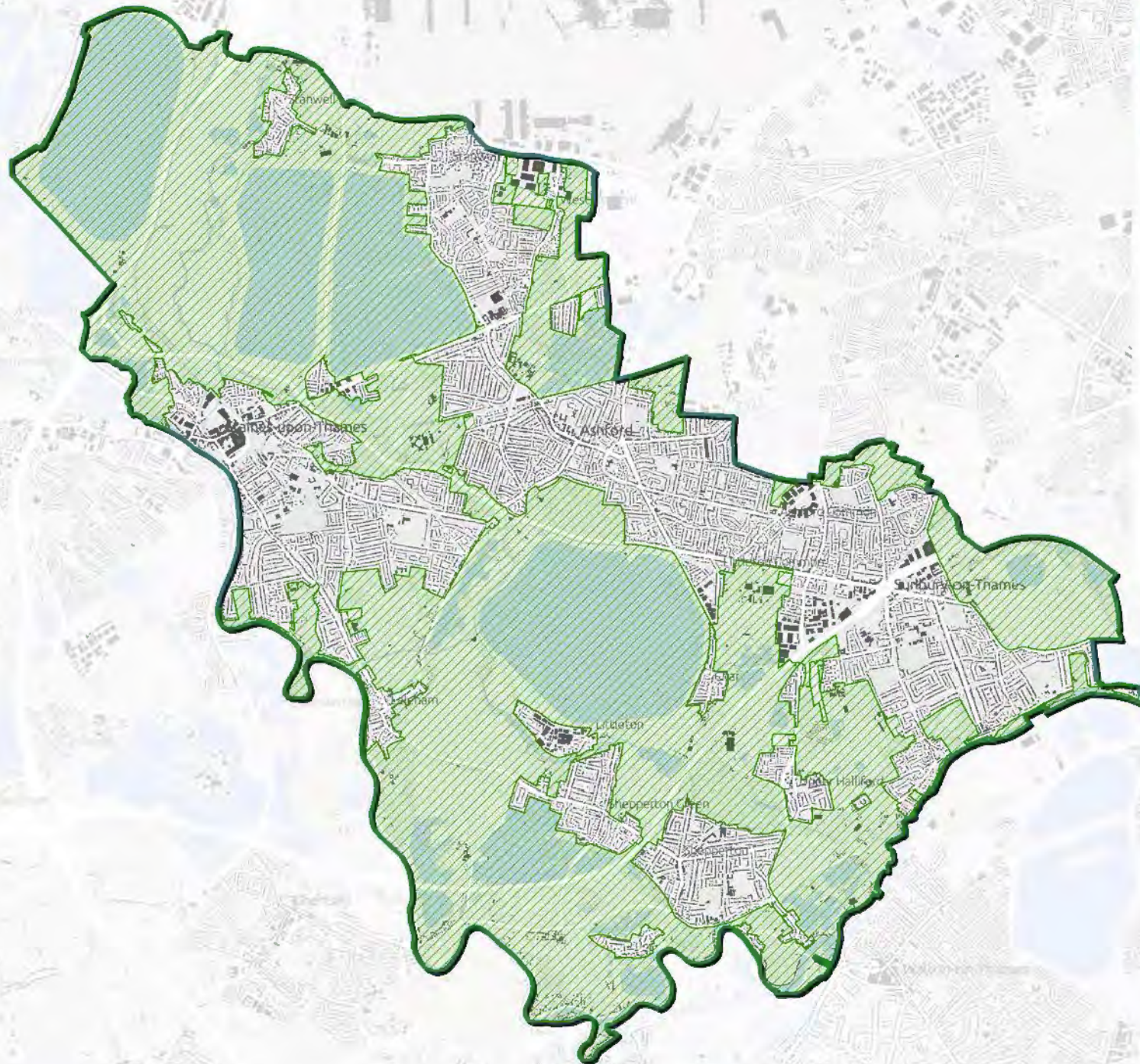
A separate report summarises what has been learnt from the community through initial engagement events




This document looks at the existing place and potential future development through an urban design analysis approach.

Technical input has informed baseline aspects of this report. Requirements and stakeholder inputs for the future are being recorded to inform the next stage of the Code.

The key inputs to a Design Code (outermost ring) and approaches adopted by the Spelthorne Design Code to understand them (middle ring).



-  Amended GB Boundaries
-  Existing Green Belt
-  Spelthorne Borough Boundary
-  Buildings
-  Surface Water

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Spelthorne Design Code

Baseline Plans - Borough Overview

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SPELTHORNE'S IDENTITY AND CHARACTER

OVERVIEW

Spelthorne is part of 'urban Surrey'. The historic pre-20th century towns and villages have attractive 18th and 19th century architectural, streets, public realm and open space characters that form the core 'sense of place' of the borough.

Much of the borough's distinctiveness and connection with its rural past has been lost during the 20th Century, as it became a part of the continuous London built-up area, and increasingly integrated with its economy and infrastructure needs. Architectural styles and development patterns since 1945 have been less inspired by place and context, and more by prevailing national development styles of the times. This has led to a loss of distinctiveness and sense of place in the built environment. In recent years proximity to London and good transport links have meant higher density and more urban forms of development have become more common.

As following sections will demonstrate, the borough has developed around this series of small historic towns and a set of smaller villages, that have been joined together by an urban fabric of 20th century suburbs that assumed their current extent by the early 1970s. Due to the creation of the Metropolitan Green Belt preventing further sprawl, the borough has largely avoided 1980s-1990s-style cul-de-sac development.

These four types of area set out to the right (historic towns, historic villages, pre/post-WW2 suburbs) thus form the bulk of the built-up area and define the prevailing character.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CODE?

The borough's location, on the fringe of London, gives it an overall split identity. When it works well, it offers the connectivity, economic and facility benefits of a major city along with the open space and other benefits of the suburbs and countryside. However in other situations it can combine the downsides of being a suburb on the fringes of major city (traffic, major infrastructure, poor/degraded green areas) without the benefits of a city such as high quality public transport or walkable access to facilities and services.

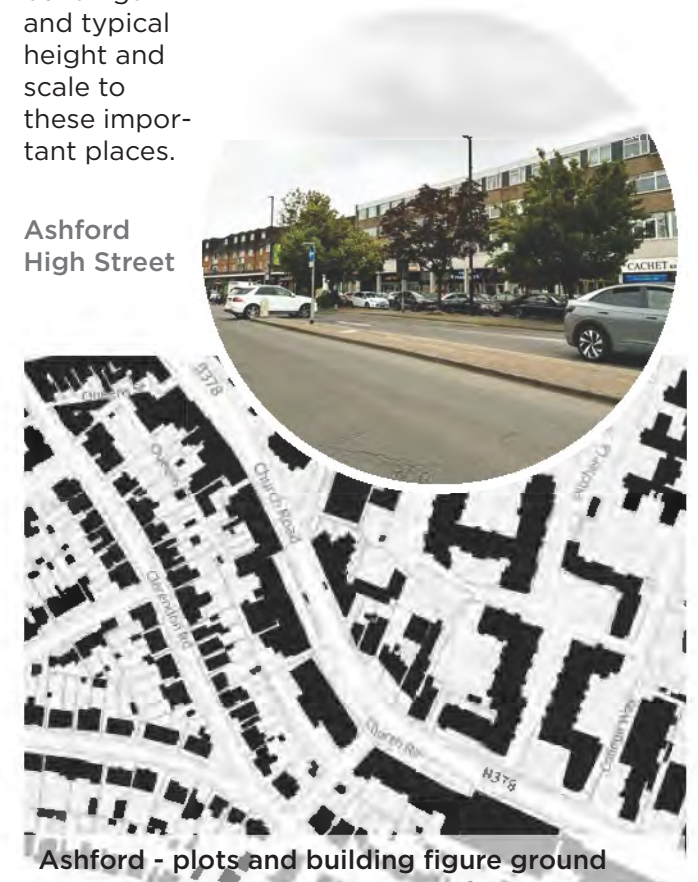
The code could strengthen the identity of the borough, and help bring out the benefits of Spelthorne's location, through:

- ensuring new development considers, reflects and transitions well to existing prevailing development forms
- supporting architecture that reflects a sense of place and history
- embedding the importance of green space and nature in all places
- enabling places that can support local living, good active travel and strong communities
- setting out the key morphological features that make areas distinctive, such as typical plot widths, building setbacks, heights, street sections and other dimensions that can be seen on plot/figure ground diagrams such as those shown to the right

HIGH STREETS AND TOWN CENTRES

Spelthorne's main centres (Staines, Ashford, Shepperton, Sunbury Cross) are based around historic linear high streets with a disparate mix of architectural styles along them as buildings have been replaced over time. With the exception of Sunbury Cross, there is a generally fine grain of buildings and typical height and scale to these important places.

Ashford High Street



Ashford - plots and building figure ground



HISTORIC VILLAGES

The historic small villages of the borough (e.g. Laleham, Stanwell village, Lower Sunbury) have mostly been absorbed by surrounding suburban development, but retain their historic role as centres and have a character based around small green open spaces, a church and varied 18th-19th century buildings.

See p82 for more →

Stanwell village



Laleham - plots and building figure ground

PRE-WW2 SUBURBS

Suburban areas primarily built in the Edwardian era and in the earlier part of the Inter-War period share a common character, with small front gardens, terraced or semi-detached homes with attractive detailing and a rigid grid of streets.

See p74 for more →

Staines-upon-Thames



Ashford - plots and building figure ground

POST-WW2 SUBURBS

Suburban areas built later, up to the mid-1970s, share a similar character with larger front gardens, more space for car parking, mostly semi-detached homes with simpler architecture, and street networks that form a continuous grid but have more variety and changes of direction.

See p78 for more →

Stanwell



Stanwell - plots and building figure ground