

New Runnymede Local Plan



Topic Area 5: Transport & Other Supporting Infrastructure

Background

- 6.1 The Runnymede area is served by a wide range of transport routes, including road, rail and bus routes and some 'active travel' (e.g. cycling and walking) routes. In addition, the area is situated in close proximity to Heathrow Airport, and to some degree Gatwick Airport, although access to the airports from Runnymede by means other than the car is limited. The area also benefits from many community facilities and public service infrastructure such as education and healthcare facilities, and police and library facilities. These are either run by either infrastructure providers or local community groups. Other physical infrastructure such as power and water supply, wastewater, broadband and telecommunications are provided and managed by various utility companies.
- 6.2 Key infrastructure provision in Runnymede is identified in the Runnymede Digital Place Portrait¹.
- 6.3 Evidence supporting the existing 2030 Local Plan (such as in the [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#)) identified a lack of capacity in some of Runnymede's infrastructure to support planned growth, and also a significant funding gap associated with infrastructure delivery. The existing Local Plan therefore set out the facilities and contributions expected from new development – both through on-site delivery and through the collection of financial contributions such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is a levy charged on new development to help deliver the infrastructure that is needed to support development in the area.
- 6.4 Our monitoring evidence shows how these contributions are now helping to deliver new or improved strategic and neighbourhood infrastructure across the Runnymede area, such as improved play areas, community and healthcare facilities, street improvement measures, walking and cycling infrastructure, and public realm infrastructure. However, developer contributions do not fully meet the funding gap, and so infrastructure delivery often needs to be prioritised based on the criticality of the need for each piece of infrastructure combined with the amount of funding available.

What has changed since the 2030 Local Plan?

- 6.5 The emphasis in the latest NPPF continues to be on managing patterns of growth by focussing significant development in locations that are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel and offering a choice of transport modes. However, in the past, Local Plans were supported by transport evidence which took a 'predict and provide' approach i.e. predicting future demand on the network which would be generated by growth, and providing greater capacity for more cars. The latest NPPF embeds a 'vision-led' approach to transport planning. This starts with a collective

¹ Available at: www.runnymede.gov.uk/runnymede-digital-place-portrait

ambition for how a place should look and feel (e.g. achieving well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places) and then identifying a range of transport solutions to deliver those outcomes.

- 6.6 Combined with an uplift to electric and possibly self-driving vehicles in the future - which will impact the road network - and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and work from home patterns, predicting travel patterns is likely to become increasingly challenging. Of potential benefit, however, is that Local Government Reorganisation will see local services merge into one unitary West Surrey Council, which may make assessing transport impacts and planning for appropriate infrastructure more aligned.
- 6.7 During the development of the 2030 Local Plan, a number of transport schemes were identified to support the delivery of its spatial strategy. Of critical importance were the A320 corridor and M25 Junction 11 improvements – the delivery of this scheme is now underway, having secured forward funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). However, this funding needs to be reimbursed through the collection of developer contributions from a number of development sites which rely on this improved transport infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of development.
- 6.8 Since the existing Local Plan was adopted, Surrey County Council adopted the [Surrey Local Transport Plan 4](#), which aims to significantly reduce carbon emissions from transport, and focuses on the principle of ‘avoid, shift and improve’ (see box below).

Surrey Local Transport Plan's approach to transport planning:

- **Avoid** unnecessary travel by reducing the number and length of trips needed. The Plan aims to achieve this through improving planning for homes and employment sites, travel planning and levels of digital connectivity.
- **Shift** travel choices to more sustainable modes of transport, including public transport, walking and cycling, away from car use.
- **Improve** the energy efficiency of vehicles and operational efficiency of roads through technology improvements.

- 6.9 To help achieve the Transport Plan's aims, we have been working with Surrey County Council to prepare Runnymede's first '[Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#)' (LCWIP), which identifies several priority routes and areas for improvement; and to develop '[Local Street Improvement](#)' (LSI) schemes. Improvements include introducing 20mph zones, re-aligning some of the highways, and creating pop-up green spaces. CIL funds have recently been allocated to help deliver priority LCWIP routes and LSI zones in various parts of the Runnymede area, to support new development.
- 6.10 Heathrow Airport lies to the north of Runnymede. In January 2025, the government confirmed its support for a third runway at Heathrow and invited the airport to develop proposals for further consideration – the project is a ‘pre-application’ stage, with an application expected to be submitted in December 2027. The Council is a member of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG), which addresses issues such as the potential expansion of the airport and also potential new rail routes to Heathrow, which could have significant implications for the Runnymede area and need to be planned for.

What we think is in scope

- 6.11 In terms of transport infrastructure, the latest NPPF is clear that sustainable transport solutions should be considered from the earliest stage of plan-making. The outcomes of a vision-led approach to planning for transport should be reflected in the vision of the new Local Plan, and its specific proposals. The NPPF sets out how this should be done – in collaboration with local communities and a range of transport stakeholders – as summarised in the box below.

Transport considerations should be taken fully into account in the preparation of the new Local Plan in the following ways:

- Engaging early with transport colleagues within the Council (from 1 April 2027, this will include the highway authority officers currently operating from Surrey County Council), local communities, National Highways, Heathrow Strategic Planning Group and other stakeholders to understand local views on how the Local Plan can prioritise and maximise sustainable movement across the area; and to better understand and address potential impacts of development on transport networks.
- Reflecting outcomes of a vision-led approach to planning for sustainable transport in the vision for the plan area and its specific proposals. This vision can also inform the setting of local parking standards for residential and non-residential development across the plan area, or for specific sites or sub-areas.
- Aligning land use policies and allocations with wider strategies such as the Surrey Local Transport Plan, Runnymede Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Rights of Way Improvement Plans and investments in transport to ensure that the potential impacts of development on Runnymede's transport networks are understood and addressed.
- Allocating land for development where it can support sustainable patterns of movement and make efficient use of existing or proposed transport infrastructure. A new '[Connectivity Tool](#)' will be used to assist with this, which helps us understand how potential development sites are connecting to everyday services by walking, driving, cycling and public transport; and can plot new transport routes to understand how these would affect an area's connectivity.
- Supporting an appropriate mix of uses across the Runnymede area, and within strategic sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
- Identifying and protecting sites and routes which will widen transport choice and are essential to facilitate sustainable development, including networks for walking, wheeling and cycling, and public transport infrastructure.
- Providing for any transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support them. This could be relevant for transport infrastructure needed to support more sustainable access to Heathrow Airport, for example.
- Setting out thresholds for what constitutes a 'significant amount of movement' arising from new development (based on our local circumstances), to help

decision-makers understand whether development proposals should be situated in locations that are, or can be made more sustainable; and whether transport statements, transport assessments and/or travel plans should be submitted to support such applications, to help understand transport impacts.

- 6.12 The latest NPPF is also clear that the new Local Plan should set out the infrastructure and financial contributions expected from development, including as part of site allocations, to support the delivery of the plan and provide certainty at plan-making stage. Aside from affordable housing contributions discussed in the Housing topic area of this scoping consultation, developers are required to contribute to infrastructure to support new development several ways, including through planning conditions attached to planning permissions; through section 106 agreements and section 278 agreements (legally binding agreements between a local authority and a developer); and by way of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is a fixed charge levied on new development to fund supporting infrastructure.
- 6.13 It is recognised that the identification of both on-site and off-site infrastructure improvements to support the next Local Plan will be critical to its success. Work has begun on an Infrastructure Needs Assessment to identify how much infrastructure will be needed to support growth in the Runnymede area which arises from a new Local Plan – this will look at existing deficits in the availability of community facilities (including recreational land and facilities) and public service infrastructure, and additional requirements expected over the plan period. This will also assess energy supply and network capacity, water supply, drainage and wastewater capacity, which will help address potential constraints to development arising from current or anticipated infrastructure shortfalls.
- 6.14 The Infrastructure Needs Assessment will feed into a new Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which will identify the infrastructure projects required to secure growth, how much this might cost and where potential funding will come from. Requirements will be identified through consultation with various key infrastructure providers, including the NHS, utility providers such as Thames Water and network operators such as UK Power Networks, the Environment Agency, and internal council departments, including those transferred from Surrey County Council. The new IDP will also need to reflect emerging outcomes in the wider Spatial Development Strategy, which can also assess and identify cross-boundary infrastructure needs and requirements to support growth.
- 6.15 At this early stage of plan-making, we cannot say how much new or improved infrastructure we will need or where this might come forward in Runnymede. This will be informed by decisions made later on in the plan-making process on where growth will be directed over the next Plan period. However, based on our conversations with infrastructure providers, it is likely we will need to see additional or enhanced health and education facilities to deal with the anticipated increase in population as well as improved cycle and walking facilities, recreational land and facilities, and other transport options to ensure that development that comes forward is as sustainable as possible.
- 6.16 The CIL charging rates will also need to be reviewed at some point to ensure that the financial contributions we seek from developers are set at the right level for different types of development and remain viable (meaning that the contributions are affordable and will not hamper the delivery of development).

What we think is out of scope

6.17 We think the following matters are out of scope, which are now addressed by NDMPs in the latest NPPF:

- Policies setting out criteria for the expansion and upgrading of telecommunications infrastructure; and the development and operation of energy and water infrastructure.
- Policies which set out highway design measures to be considered in decision-making, including street design and access.
- Policies which require transport statements or assessments and travel plans to be submitted with planning applications (although there is scope to define what 'significant amount of movement' means taking into account local circumstances).
- Policies which seek the retention of community facilities and public service infrastructure, open space/recreational space, playing pitches; and which assess affects of proposals on Local Green Space (although Local and Neighbourhood Plans can continue to designate land as Local Green Space – see the 'Call for Sites' information for more details).

The following questions are set out in the response form²:

Q20. Do you agree with what the Council believes is in scope which regards to transport infrastructure, which a new Local Plan could address? If not, please explain why.

Q21. Do you agree with what the Council believes is in scope with regards to other supporting infrastructure, which a new Local Plan could address? If not, please explain why.

Q22. Do you agree with what the Council believes is out of scope for these matters? If not, please explain why.

Q23. What do you consider to be the key transport issues which need to be addressed to help new development come forward?

Q24. What are the types and sizes of development proposal that you think could generate a 'significant amount of movement' in Runnymede?

Q25. Are there any other key infrastructure improvements that you think the next Local Plan covering the Runnymede area should address, or safeguard land to deliver?

² Available at: www.runnymede.gov.uk/local-plan/scoping