Runnymede Local Plan

Sustainability Appraisal
Scoping Report

Appendix B Baseline Data

Prepared for:
Runnymede Borough Council

Prepared by:
ENVIROT
Exeter, UK

Date:
September 2014

Project or Issue Number:
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<th>Description of Status</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>16/09/14</td>
<td>JC</td>
<td>VP/EJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Final for consultation</td>
<td>29/09/14</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Landscape and Open Space</td>
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<td>9.4</td>
<td>Future baseline</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

1.1 Designated sites

Table 1.1 shows sites considered to be areas of biodiversity importance. Each of these holds at least one recognised designation. This table is taken from the RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13. Explanations of the designations are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) - is a designation used in many parts of the United Kingdom to protect areas of importance for wildlife at a county scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) - are the country's very best wildlife and geographical sites. They include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats; wetlands teeming with wading birds, winding chalk rivers, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote upland peat bogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Nature Reserves (NNR) - Many of the finest sites in England for wildlife and geology are National Nature Reserves. There are currently 222 across the country and almost all are accessible and provide great opportunities for people to experience nature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) - SACs are areas which have been given special protection under the European Union’s Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world’s biodiversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Protection Areas (SPAs) - SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of national and international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the ‘Birds Directive 1979’ which provides enhanced protection given by the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status all SPAs also hold.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

[#] Thorpe Park No.1 Gravel Pit is a component of South-West London waterbodies SPA

[*] Chobam Common not located in Runnymede, but its close proximity to the borough is significant

1 - Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC

2 - Thames basin heaths SPA
Figure 1.1 Ecological Designated Sites in Runnymede
### Table 1.1: Areas of biodiversity importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>LNR</th>
<th>SNCI</th>
<th>SSSI</th>
<th>NNR</th>
<th>Ramsar</th>
<th>SAC</th>
<th>SPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey Lake Complex SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addlestone Bourne at Birch &amp; Hoyt Wood SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basingstoke Canal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basingstoke Canal, Scotland Bridge to River Wey SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birch Wood &amp; Hoyt Wood SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chertsey Bourne at Abbey Lake Complex SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chertsey Bourne at Chertsey Meads SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chertsey Meads SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chertsey Water Works - Well Field SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chobham Common [*]</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fan Grove SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hall's Farm Wood and Grassland SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Hardwick Court Farm Fields SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowle Grove SNCI</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laleham Burway Golf Course SNCI</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langham Pond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Longcross Churchyard SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monk's Walk North &amp; West (incl. M3 Exchange Land) SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pannells Farm SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Wood SNCI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site name</td>
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<td>SSSI</td>
<td>NNR</td>
<td>Ramsar</td>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>SPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queenwood Golf Course SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Thames - Runnymede SNCI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Wey - Runnymede SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside Walk, The Bourne SNCI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runnymede SNCI (including Cooper's Hill and Cooper's Hill Slopes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simplemarsh Farm SNCI</td>
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<td>Spinney Wood SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Dell - Ancient Woodland SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Moat, Woodcock Farm SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Hay Meadow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Park No.1 Gravel Pit [ ]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumps Mill SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wentworth Golf Courses - West Wood SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wentworth Golf Courses - Duke's Copse and Wentworth Pond SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wentworth Golf Courses - Fish Ponds Wood SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wentworth Golf Courses - Knowle Hill SNCI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wentworth Golf Courses - Valley Wood (inc. Great Wood) SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wey Navigation (including Addlestone Mill Pond) SNCI</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>NNR</td>
<td>Ramsar</td>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>SPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windsor Great Park (Combined) SNCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woburn Park Stream SNCI</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

HRA is required under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and, in English law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 for any proposed plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of any European sites which may have a significant effect on one or more European sites either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The requirement for the assessment of Local Plans is set out in Section 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

European sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Proposed sites awaiting approval – potential SPAs (pSPAs) and candidate SACs (cSACs) should be treated in the same way as those already classified and approved. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) also states that Ramsar sites, designated under the Ramsar Convention 1971, should be afforded the same level of consideration as SPAs and SACs, as a matter of policy.

The purpose of HRA is to determine whether or not significant effects on European sites are likely and to suggest ways in which they could be avoided. In terms of European sites a ‘significant’ effect is one that is not inconsequential and which is likely to undermine the achievement of the site’s conservation objectives. The Local Plan will need to be subject to a HRA screening process to identify whether it could result in Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) on the conservation objectives of any European sites. The objectives of HRA screening are to:

- Identify the European sites which could potentially be affected by a plan;
- Identify the potential risks of effects on European sites (including potential for in combination effects); and
- Identify any recommended measures by which potential effects can be avoided in the development of the plan.

Runnymede has a number of European sites. These are:

- South West London Waterbodies SPA and Ramsar Site which includes Thorpe Park No1 Gravel Pit SSSI;
- Thames Basin Heath SPA (TBH SPA) which includes Chobham Common SSSI adjacent to Runnymede;
- Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC which also includes Chobham Common SSSI and other components of the TBH SPA; and,
- Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC, which is composed of Windsor Forest and Great Park SSSI.

The features of these sites are set out in detail in Table 1.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site, Designation, and Code</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Reason for designation</th>
<th>Site Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South West London Waterbodies SPA and Ramsar Site SPA [UK9012171] RAMSAR [UK11065]</td>
<td>828.14</td>
<td>Site of resident and migratory populations of European important bird populations of Gadwall (Anas strepera) and Shoveler (Anas clypeata).</td>
<td>South West London Waterbodies records the following conditions in June 2012: Thorpe No.1 Gravel Pit: favourable Staines Moor: 67% favourable and 33% unfavourable recovering Knight and Beesborough Reservoirs: favourable Wraysbury Reservoir: favourable Wraysbury and Hythe End Gravel Pits: unfavourable recovering Wraysbury No.1 Gravel Pit: unfavourable recovering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC SAC [UK0012586]</td>
<td>1687.26</td>
<td>The area is considered to support a significant presence of Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with <em>Ilex</em> and sometimes also <em>Taxus</em> in the shrublayer (<em>Quercion roborpetraeae</em> or <em>Ilici-Fagenion</em>). As well as Old acidophilous oak woods with <em>Quercus robur</em> on sandy plains the site also hosts a small population of violet click beetles (<em>Limoniscus violaceus</em>).</td>
<td>Windsor Forest and Great Park SSSI records the following condition in June 2012: 46.45% is favourable 53.55% is unfavourable recovering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Basin Heath SPA SPA [UK9012141]</td>
<td>8274.72</td>
<td>The site consists of both dry and wet heathland, mire, oak, birch, acid woodland, gorse scrub and acid grassland. In addition it supports three breeding populations of lowland heathland bird species, Nightjar (<em>Caprimulgus europaeus</em>), Woodlark (<em>Lullula arborea</em>), and Dartford Warbler (<em>Sylvia undata</em>). Three components are also included within the TAP &amp; C SAC.</td>
<td>Chobham Common records the following conditions in June 2012: 2.15% favourable, 92.29% unfavourable recovering and 5.56% unfavourable no change Horsell Common SSSI records the following conditions in June 2012: 16.61% favourable, 60.89% unfavourable recovering, 22.5% unfavourable no change Ockham &amp; Wisley Commons SSSI records the following condition in June 2012: 33.19% favourable and 66.81% unfavourable recovering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site, Designation, and Code</td>
<td>Area (ha)</td>
<td>Reason for designation</td>
<td>Site Condition</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC SAC [UK0012793]      | 5138.00   | Comprised of a series of large fragments of – dwarf gorse (*Calluna vulgaris* – *Ulex minor*) dry heathland, and transitions to wet heath and valley mire, scrub, woodland and acid grassland, including types rich in annual plants. This site supports the sole area of lowland northern Atlantic wet heath in south-east England. The wet heath at Thursley is mainly cross-leaved heath – bog-moss (*Erica tetralix*-*Sphagnum compactum*) and contains several rare plants. Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* are widespread, both in bog pools, mires and in flushes where they occur as part of a mosaic associated with valley bog and wet heath. Three components are also included within the TBH SPA. | Chobham Common records the following conditions in June 2012: 2.15% favourable, 92.29% unfavourable recovering and 5.56% unfavourable no change  
Ash to Brookwood Heaths: 13.47% favourable, 85.56% unfavourable recovering and 0.97% unfavourable declining  
Thursley, Hankley and Frensham Commons: 51.27% favourable, 48.61% unfavourable recovering and 0.11% area unfavourable no change  
Pirbright Common – status unknown |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSSI</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Reason for designation</th>
<th>Condition (up to date as of August 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langham Pond</td>
<td>25.9 ha</td>
<td>Langham Pond and its surrounding alluvial meadows lie on the Thames flood plain and represent a habitat of a type and quality unknown elsewhere in Southern England. The combination of alluvial soils and the calcareous influence of the chalk parent rock has led to the development of rich aquatic, marginal and meadow floras. The pond supports several nationally scarce invertebrates. Woodland on adjacent higher ground above the flood plain lies on London Clay and supports a rich community of breeding birds.</td>
<td>63.21% favourable and 36.79% unfavourable recovering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Hay Meadow</td>
<td>6.62 ha</td>
<td>Thorpe Hay Meadow is a small, five-sided meadow lying on the alluvial gravels of the Thames Flood Plain, surrounded by ditches and high hedges. Much of the surrounding land has been used for gravel extraction. The site is thought to be the last remaining example of a Thames valley hay meadow in Surrey. It contains a range of lime-loving (calcicole) plants which are characteristic of this type of meadow.</td>
<td>100% favourable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Park No.1 Gravel Pit</td>
<td>42.17 ha</td>
<td>Thorpe Park No. 1 Gravel Pit is a former gravel pit which has now matured to a relatively stable ecological state, the banks being almost entirely dominated by trees and shrubs. The site also supports a number of other species of wintering waterfowl including goldeneye Bucephala clangula and smew Mergus albellus which occur regularly in small but significant numbers.</td>
<td>100% Favourable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Basingstoke Canal           | 23 ha     | The Basingstoke Canal SSSI has three components – 1. The navigation channel. 2. Off-channel areas, referred to in the Conservation Objectives as Off-channel Reserves and comprising a collection of water bodies such as flashes and ponds associated with and mostly connected to the main channel, together with their marshy surrounding areas. 3. Pondtail Heath.  
At the time of its most recent re-designation in 1995, the Canal SSSI had 87 species of native aquatic higher plant species (approximately half the UK total), five of which are nationally scarce and the canal may have been botanically the most species rich aquatic SSSI in England. 24 species of dragonfly were recorded on the canal, two of which are nationally rare. A range of other notable | 16.66% favourable, 10.41% unfavourable recovering, 45.31% unfavourable no change and 27.62% unfavourable declining |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSSI</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Reason for designation</th>
<th>Condition (up to date as of August 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Forest &amp; Great Park (Units 10 &amp; 11)</td>
<td>100 ha</td>
<td>A range of habitats are represented, from coniferous and mixed plantations through mature and over-mature broadleaved woodland to wood pasture and parkland. Relicts of the primary forest still survive as ancient oak pollards scattered throughout the Park and Forest. Veteran trees occur with a mosaic of unimproved and semi-improved grassland and grass-heath. Many of these ancient trees are over 500 years old and some reputed to be up to 800 years. Of equal importance, although not reaching such a great age, are numerous over-mature beech trees <em>Fagus sylvatica</em>. Being partially hollow and decayed, the oaks and beech afford habitats for a number of extremely rare and specialised insects, particularly beetles, some of which are unknown elsewhere in the British Isles, as well as nesting sites for several species of hole-nesting birds. Groves of hornbeam <em>Carpinus betulus</em> are favoured by hawfinches <em>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</em> including one of the largest wintering flocks of this species in Britain.</td>
<td>100% Unfavourable Recovering (Units 10 and 11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 Habitats and species within Runnymede

Although designated sites are important it is also important to value other habitats and species which are not designated. The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (September 1999) identifies the range of habitats present within Surrey. These include (the following list is habitats for which Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) have been prepared):

- Chalk grassland;
- Floodplain grazing marsh;
- Lowland heathland (including acid grassland and bog);
- Farmland (including arable, improved grassland and boundary features);
- Lowland meadows (unimproved neutral grassland including hay meadow);
- Standing open water and reedbed;
- Urban;
- Wetland (fen, marsh, swamp and linear reedbed); and
- Woodland (including lowland wood pasture and parkland).

A key habitat in Runnymede is woodland. The Borough contains approximately 201 hectares of ancient semi natural woodland and approximately 111 hectares of replanted woodland on ancient woodland. Surrey is the most wooded county in Great Britain with 22% of woodland, compared to a UK average of 12.6% and England average or 10.5% 1.

1.4 Future baseline

There is an overwhelming body of scientific evidence that human activity is resulting in an accelerated rate of global warming. In the South East of England all plant and animal species will have to adapt to hotter, drier summers and warmer wetter winters. More winter rainfall will lead to greater frequency and risk of flooding, particularly in Runnymede where a quarter of the land area lies within the Environment Agency September 2007 modelled ‘high risk’ flood zone. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns may be beneficial to some species. However, for others it will be detrimental and lead to changes in distribution patterns or even extinctions. It is therefore important that policies are put in place to protect and enhance biodiversity and ensure that climate change does not result in adverse effects 2.

The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan identifies the range of habitats that are facing challenges currently and in the future. In respect to Runnymede, lowland heathland and wetland habitats are considered to be the most vulnerable. Development is likely to continue to affect these in the future.

For the lowland heathland habitats the main problem historically has been succession to scrub and forest as a consequence of inappropriate land management practices. The key challenges for the habitat include continued encroachment by scrub, trees, bracken and grass, growing recreational pressures, growing demand for water leading to increased abstraction with adverse effects on wet heathland and mires, unplanned and uncontrolled

2Runnymede Borough Council (April 2008) Local Development Framework Biodiversity topic paper
burning, acidification and nitrogen enrichment from air pollution, habitat fragmentation and loss due to development, and conversion to forestry.

For the wetland habitats of the borough the key challenges include the effects of development in respect of excessive abstraction, loss of habitat, changes in hydrology, and water quality etc. In addition the effect of changes in agricultural practices is not considered significant at this time due to the limited scale of operation within the borough. However, development changes in land drainage and hydrology, habitat fragmentation, degradation and loss, remain considerations for this habitat. These changes can result in deterioration in water suitability, as well as the effects of invasion of alien species on native fauna and flora, the effects of recreational use, and the effects of climate change.

Woodland habitats also have key challenges which include:

- changes in management practices (i.e. neglect, inappropriate management, etc.), habitat destruction and fragmentation;
- changes in habitat composition (i.e. replanting with non-native stock), climate change; and,
- changes in air quality, effects of damage (i.e. by squirrels, deer, rabbits, etc.) or plant disease, climate change and the effects of invasive plant species (e.g. rhododendron, sycamore, etc.).

For the wood pasture and parkland habitats the largest of these being Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC, the key challenges include:

- changes in management practices;
- changes in woodland structure (e.g. lack of younger trees, losses of old and ancient trees); and,
- changes in hydrology and water availability leading to drought stress, habitat isolation and fragmentation, loss of pasture habitat through conversion to arable and other land uses, invasion by non-native species, and the effects of air pollution.

For the open water and large reedbed habitats of the borough the key challenges include:

- changes in water quality and increasing risks of eutrophication;
- changes from plant to algal dominated waters, over-stocking with fish;
- changes in the types and distribution of ponds, introduction of or invasion by alien species of plants and animals; and
- changes in water abstraction and land drainage practices, climate change, and the lack of management or inappropriate management.

For the grassland habitats (unimproved acid and neutral grasslands) of the borough the key challenges include:

- the intensification of agricultural practices; and,
- changes in traditional management practices, development and recreational pressures, atmospheric pollution and climate change.
Natural England data on SSSI condition identifies that most SSSI units within Surrey County are either in favourable condition or are in unfavourable condition but recovering. Only 0.92 of the SSSI in the County are declining\textsuperscript{3}.

\textsuperscript{3} http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designations/sssi/default.aspx accessed on 10/09/14
2 Population and Human Health

2.1 Population

Runnymede has a total population of 83,400. The majority of the population are aged between 25 and 64 (52%). The population has increased by 7% in the last ten years (which is the same as the overall UK population increase) (NOMIS, 2013). The profile of the population is due to change over the next 15-20 years which will result in a larger number of older people and fewer workers to support them (Runnymede Sustainable Community Strategy, 2012).

The District has a population density of 10.3 people per hectare compared to 4.1 in England and 4.5 in the South East (Census, 2011).

2.2 Housing

Delivery of housing in Runnymede is a significant challenge. There is limited land for housing development to meet the community’s needs due to the amount of Green Belt and the number of areas at risk of flooding. However, due to considerable redevelopment and intensification of Runnymede’s mainly low rise, lower density housing, house building in Runnymede has exceeded the draft Local Plan target of 161 dwellings per annum with an annual average of 236 additional dwellings being built over the past 5 years (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13).

House prices are on average higher than in the rest of the south east and similar to London and the number of households on the Housing Register has increased between September 2012 and September 2013 (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13). The availability of affordable housing to meet local needs remains a key issue in the Borough and there are high land values and property prices (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13). One indicator of affordability is comparison of lower quartile house price to lower quartile income. In 2012 the average ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile income in Runnymede was 8.26. This can be compared to data collated in 2011 when a ratio of 9.25 was recorded. This illustrates a decrease of 0.99 between the datasets and shows a positive trend.

The latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in 2013 found that Runnymede has approximately 5.88 years of supply of deliverable sites and these are mainly in the urban areas.

2.3 Health

The Public Health Observatories Health Profile (2012) shows that Runnymede has higher than the national average life expectancy for men and women. However, life expectancy for men and women from the most deprived areas is around five years lower than for those from the least deprived areas. The Health Profile identifies road injuries and deaths, alcohol and hip fractures as priorities within Runnymede.

Over the last 10 years, mortality rates have fallen. Early death rates from cancer and from heart disease and stroke have also fallen and the latter is better than the England average. Almost 1 in 5 adults smoke and almost 1 in 4 are obese and the rate of death and serious injury on the roads is slightly lower than England’s average (Public Health Observatories Health Profile, 2012).
2.4 Food
In recent years, global food prices have been spiking and this trend is predicted to continue. Causative factors are climate change, the increase in biofuel production and price speculation\(^4\). High food prices could increase the incidence of “food poverty”, defined as “the inability to obtain healthy affordable food”\(^5\) which disproportionately affects lower income residents.

2.5 Deprivation
There are pockets of need within the Borough which have health and obesity issues, lack of educational attainment, higher unemployment and unsuitable housing. However, the borough is within the top 10% of least deprived areas nationally (Runnymede Sustainable Community Strategy, 2012). This compares to 42% in England and 47% in the South East (Census, 2011). The most deprived wards in Runnymede are (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13):

- Englefield Green West;
- Egham Hythe;
- Chertsey St Ann’s;
- Addlestone North;
- Addlestone Bourneside; and
- Chertsey Meads.

2.6 Crime and public safety
In September 2013 there were 9 crimes of robbery and 1 crime of violence with injury in Runnymede. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in August 2012 when no robberies were recorded and 19 crimes of violence with injury were recorded in Runnymede. This shows a decrease of 9 crimes between the two datasets and a positive trend (Surreyi website\(^6\)).

In September 2013, 217 incidents of anti-social behaviour were recorded. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in August 2012 when 250 incidents of anti-social behaviour were recorded. This shows a decrease of 33 incidents and shows a positive trend (Surreyi website).

Current data suggests that 83.3% of persons in Runnymede during 2012/13 tend to agree or strongly agree that their neighbourhood was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in 2011/12 when 79.9% of persons in Runnymede tend to agree or strongly agree that their neighbourhood was a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together, an increase of 3.4% indicating a positive trend (Surreyi website).

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\(^4\) IFPRI “Food Prices: Riding the Rollercoaster” (downloaded 14/3/13) http://www.ifpri.org/node/8436

\(^5\) Sustainweb “What is food poverty?” (downloaded 14/3/13)

\(^6\) http://www.Surreyi website.gov.uk/
2.7 Future baseline

The population of Runnymede is growing; data suggests that between 1991 and 2001 there was a growth rate of 8.7%, mainly due to net inward migration rather than a natural increase. At the time of the 2001 Census there were considered to be around 32,000 households in the borough, accommodating a population of 78,033. The 2011 Census showed that the population has increased to 80,500 in 32,700 households. Table 2.1 is taken from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2012 (IDP 2012) and sets out the projected population against the infrastructure delivery periods in the Local Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Period</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Population Increase</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2011</td>
<td>82,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection (2013/14 – 2017/18)</td>
<td>84,244</td>
<td>+3,744</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection (2018/19 – 2022/23)</td>
<td>86,507</td>
<td>+2,263</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection (2023/24 – 2025/26)</td>
<td>87,496</td>
<td>+989</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Projected Population Increase</td>
<td>+6,996</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes in overall population structure are also likely to present issues. The Public Health Observatories Health Profile (2012) identifies a range of key issues and challenges that need to be addressed with respect to the overall health and well-being of the population. The health of the population is likely to remain better than the UK average but the profile of the population is due to change over the next 15-20 years which will result in a larger number of older people and fewer workers to support them.

In the absence of the plan, housing development is likely to happen in an unplanned way and is less likely to meet targets. Therefore, housing is likely to become less affordable.

Levels of crime have been improving and it is assumed that this will also continue to improve in the future.

An analysis included in the Runnymede 2012/13 Annual Monitoring Report showed that the number of people living in the most deprived 20% of wards had decreased.
3 Land, soil, mineral resources and waste

3.1 Land and soil

Large areas of the 7,804ha of Runnymede are rural in character. In 2003 1,755.7 ha of land was being used for agricultural purposes accounting for nearly a quarter of total land area. 78% of the borough has been designated as greenbelt. The majority of the agricultural land cover runs in a band through the middle of the borough.

Agricultural land in England and Wales is classified using a system of grades, which denote the land’s suitability for long-term agricultural use. The grade given to an area of agricultural land reflects the following factors:

- The Climate: in terms of temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure and frost risk;
- The Site: in terms of gradient, micro-relief and flood risk; and,
- The Soil: in terms of texture, structure, depth and stoniness, and chemical properties which cannot be corrected.

Natural England manages the Agricultural Land Classification (Natural England Technical Information Note TIN049), which includes five grades for agricultural land. Grades 1 and 2 land is that which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non-food uses such as biomass, fibres and pharmaceuticals. Local planning authorities are advised that if significant development of agricultural land is unavoidable, poorer quality land should be used in preference to that of higher quality.

Most farm types found in Runnymede are classified as other (as per Defra agricultural census 2003). Therefore, data would suggest that there is no agricultural land of Grades 1 or 2 present within Runnymede. The magic.gov.uk7 website (which has limited data relating to agricultural land classifications) shows little grade 1, 2 and 3a in Runnymede.

3.2 Previously developed and contaminated land

In 2010/11 100% of all housing completions were on previously used land (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13).

Land contaminated as a consequence of previous or historical industrial use (e.g. landfill, chemical works, etc.) may pose a risk to the environment and human health. Once contaminated, a site may be seen as less favourable for further development due to residual risks and the cost of remediation. Runnymede Borough Council has a duty to enable the remediation of contaminated land through the planning system and to maintain a register of statutory contaminated sites. Whilst Runnymede has no statutory contaminated sites to date (due to lack of resources to investigate potential areas), there are currently 430 areas (this value is constantly changing) of potentially contaminated land, in varying stages of investigation. The Council keeps a contaminated land register of statutory contaminated land as well as a list of areas of potential contaminated land to be investigated, and more data will become available as that work progresses.

3.3 Mineral resources

Primary aggregates found in Surrey are sand and gravel used principally for producing concrete (concreting aggregates), and soft sand which is used principally in the building and construction industry for mortar and asphalt. Preferred areas for future aggregate extraction (concreting aggregate) have been listed in the Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Development Plan Document (2011) as:

- Site A: Addlestone Quarry Extension (Wey Manor Farm);
- Site D: Milton Park Farm, Egham; and
- Site E: Whitehall Farm, Egham.

Each preferred area for aggregate extraction has a restoration scheme outlined within the Surrey Minerals Plan Site Restoration Supplementary Planning Document (2011). Site A will be restored to an agricultural (grazing) and woodland end use, involving infilling with inert waste. Site D and E will be restored to meet informal recreational, landscape and nature conservation objectives creating a landscape of open grazed parkland with areas of wet woodland and enhanced public access. Sites D and E will be linked together.

Mineral workings make an important contribution to the needs of society by supplying materials for the building and construction industry. However they can give rise to serious environmental impacts both in terms of the extraction activity itself and the heavy traffic connected with transportation. This conflict is apparent in areas such as Runnymede where mineral workings lie within or close to urban areas but it depends on how reclamation is managed.

A number of aggregate recycling sites in Runnymede have also been listed in the Surrey Aggregates Recycling Joint DPD for the Waste and Minerals Plan (2013). These are:

- Addlestone Quarry Extension (Wey Manor Farm);
- Hamm Court Farm;
- Milton Park Farm;
- Penton Hook;
- Lyne Lane;
- Land adjacent to Trump’s Farm; and
- Martyr’s Lane.

3.4 Waste

Municipal Solid Waste arisings in Surrey in 2011/12 were 545,890 tonnes. It represents a 0.2% decrease on the 2010/11 figure of 547,110 tonnes, and follows on from a 1.9% fall in the previous year. The total amount of MSW arisings reused, recycled or composted were 294,357 tonnes (54%), a further 169,445 tonnes (31%) were sent for energy recovery and 82,088 tonnes (15%) were landfilled. The recycling rate in Runnymede was 47.3% (Minerals and Waste Planning in Surrey - Annual Monitoring Report 2011-12). This has improved since the previous year when the rate was 28.98% (Minerals and Waste Planning in Surrey - Annual Monitoring Report 2010-11).

3.5 Future baseline

As Runnymede continues to experience pressure for further development, impact on land, soil and mineral resources are inevitable. This may adversely affect land by changing its use
from agriculture to urban and thus its usability for food production. Runnymede has little
good quality agriculture land or soils, so it is unlikely that development approved in
Runnymede will have a significant adverse effect on this receptor. Alternatively, in terms of
contaminated land, development can be the vehicle to initiate its remediation. Pressure to
develop will inevitably increase the use of resources particularly mineral resources and thus
increasing adverse effects on the environment that can result from extraction.

Waste will continue to be produced in Runnymede. However, in past years the amount of
waste generated has decreased and the amount of waste recycled has increased and this
trend is likely to continue.
4 Water

4.1 Watercourses

Runnymede is located within the Thames Watershed (River Basin). Figure 4.1 shows the areas of the Thames Watershed. This covers an area of 16,133 square kilometres and encompasses the River Thames and its tributaries from its source in Gloucestershire through Runnymede to London and eventually to the North Sea.

Watercourses and lakes are a key characteristic of the Borough, with the River Thames forming the northern and eastern boundary, and the Basingstoke Canal forming the south eastern boundary. The rivers Wey, the Addlestone Bourne and the Chertsey Bourne run through the Addlestone and Chertsey areas of the Borough, and consequently much of the eastern side of the Borough is subject to flood risk.

![Figure 4.1: Thames Watershed](image)

4.2 Flood risk

In Runnymede in October 2013 there were 12,418 properties in flood zone 2 and 8,620 residential properties in flood zone 3. With regard to commercial properties, 1267 were located within flood zone 2 and 668 commercial properties are located in flood zone 3. This is an increase from the last time the data was collected in February 2012 and indicates a negative trend (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13).
According to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2009), the greatest flood risk posed to the Borough is from the River Thames, which flows along the eastern Borough boundary. The majority of the urban areas and the Runnymede population live within the floodplain, as is common with many areas of the UK. In Runnymede more than 20% of properties lie within Flood Zone 3. See Figure 4.2 for more details.

Figure 4.2: Flood Zones

4.3 Water quality

The rivers in Runnymede are generally of good or very good quality in terms of their chemical and biological standards, however their nutrient levels remain high. The levels of nitrates for the river sites sampled by the Environment Agency within Runnymede are generally in the grade range of 4-6 (moderate – very high) and phosphates are generally graded 4-5 (high – very high). Sources of nutrients in the Thames and Wey catchment areas include effluent from sewage treatment works and agricultural pollution (Environment Agency - 2009 River Quality data). More recent data from the Environment Agency website\(^8\) indicates that most rivers within the Borough are classified as good or moderate quality, but a stretch of the River Thames between Egham and Teddington is classified as poor due to chemical quality and poor potential with regards to ecological quality. However, the chemical quality is predicted to improve by 2015.

Within the Thames Basin region, only eight out of 46 groundwater bodies are at good status (Environment Agency (2009) River Basin Management Plan, Thames River Basin District).

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These results are not expected to change by 2015. The main reasons for poor status of groundwater quality are high level of nitrates, sources of which include agriculture, effluent from waste and contaminated land sites, and vehicle emissions across the basin. The main reasons for poor quantitative status are very high abstraction levels – mainly for drinking water – which exceed the rate at which aquifers recharge. Groundwater Source Protection Zones are shown in Figure 4.3.

![Map of Runnymede Source Protection Zones](image)

**Figure 4.3: Runnymede Source Protection Zones**

### 4.4 Water resources

Water in Runnymede is supplied by Affinity Water for domestic and commercial purposes. The Thames Region is one of the driest regions in the UK with average annual rainfall of 690mm as compared to the annual average for England and Wales of 890mm (Environment Agency (2009) Water Resources Strategy Regional Action Plan for Thames Region). High population density and dry climate mean that the region is classified as water stressed, having less water available per person than other regions in the country. Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies prepared by the Environment Agency for the Thames Region show that there is no water available in the majority of the catchments and some catchments are assessed as over-abstracted.

Data shows that there is a supply / demand deficit in the Affinity Water central supply area (covering areas to the north and south-west of London – which includes Runnymede) (Affinity Water, Water Resources Plan, 2014). There will need to be a reduction in abstractions from a number of groundwater sources to improve flows and environmental
habitats in local chalk streams. Affinity Water has agreed sustainability reductions of 70ML/d with the Environment Agency in their Central region.

4.5 Future baseline

The projected impacts of climate change for the South East of England, coupled with a growing population, would have a range of implications for the freshwater environment and water resources. If average temperatures were to increase in the projected range, and summers to become hotter and drier the region’s water resources and freshwater environments would be placed at increased risk of adverse effect due to scarcity of resource coinciding with a likely increase in demand from the population.

High demand in periods of hot weather coupled with restricted availability of surface water supplies could also adversely affect groundwater and aquifers, the depletion of which would, in turn adversely affect the base flows of rivers and streams, also affecting the ecology of chalk streams.

In the event of the projected scenario of warmer and wetter winters being realised, the likely surfeit of incident rainfall could result in a rise in the risks of flooding from fluvial sources and non-fluvial sources (i.e. surface water runoff during periods of heavy rain).
5 Air and Noise

5.1 Air quality

Air quality in Runnymede is generally good although two traffic related Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared for nitrogen dioxide (NO$_2$) and particulate matter (PM$_{10}$): one adjacent to the M25 (and consisting of two sections) and the other along busy congested roads in Addlestone town centre. The 2013 Air Quality Progress Report for Runnymede Borough Council reports that:

- Monitoring results confirm that exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective continue to occur in the AQMAs;
- Outside the AQMAs, monitoring data collected during 2012 and preceding years confirmed the need to proceed to a Detailed Assessment for nitrogen dioxide, for the area in vicinity of the railway crossing in Vicarage Road, Egham and the area of the Bridge Road / Weir Road junction in Chertsey;
- The Addlestone AQMA may have to be extended at its northern boundary; and
- The assessment of emission sources (transport, industrial, commercial and domestic, fugitive or uncontrolled) confirmed that there were no new or newly identified local developments which may have an impact on air quality within the Local Authority area.

Transport (mostly road transport) is a major source of air pollutant emissions, having contributed 66% of the total nitrogen oxides (NO$_x$) and 67% of the total particulates (PM$_{10}$) in 2010 (NAEI maps: All emissions by UNECE sectors – 2010). Runnymede records high levels of car ownership at approximately 1.5 cars per household (2011 Census). The borough also records high levels of traffic travelling to and through the borough which contributes to adverse air quality.

Particulate matter concentrations are assumed to follow the national decreasing trends. The PM$_{10}$ results from the Egham continuous monitoring site showed the average PM$_{10}$ concentration of 25.7 µg/m$^3$ for the six-month monitoring period in 2011, well below the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m$^3$.

Nitrogen dioxide concentrations can be of concern close to busy roads and in town centres. Two thirds of Runnymede’s roadside nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube monitoring sites had been showing average annual concentrations close to (over 36 µg/m3) or exceeding objectives for 2011 and 2012. Although background concentrations of nitrogen oxides and nitrogen dioxide in Runnymede are below the limit values for the protection of human health, the current levels still can affect the sensitive ecological receptors. Runnymede area lies within a short distance of Chobham Common, site designated both as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and as a National Nature Reserve (NNR). Chobham Common is also a component of two International Sites (European or Natura 2000 sites), the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC currently exceeds the minimum critical loads for nitrogen deposition and NO$_x$ levels. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA exceeds the minimum and maximum range of critical loads and NO$_x$ levels. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the areas of the declared AQMA’s.
Figure 5.1: Boundaries of Addlestone AQMA
Figure 5.2: Boundaries of the M25 AQMA

5.2 Noise
The main sources of noise in the Borough are road traffic noise and aircraft noise from Heathrow Airport. The latter mainly affects the area to the north of the Borough. Figure 5.3 shows this area.
Figure 5.3: Areas affected by aircraft noise

Table 5.1 shows the number of noise complaints that were received by the council in the past two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.1: Noise complaints received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIEH Annual noise enforcement activity survey</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial / Warehousing / Distribution Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-licensed Premises e.g. Pubs, Clubs, Restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family House / Bungalow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats / Maisonettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction / Demolition Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles / Machinery and Equipment in Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The numbers for the two years are similar and are not indicative of a trend.

5.3 Future baseline

Particulate matter (PM$_{10}$) concentrations across the UK have decreased for the past two decades. Urban background particulate concentrations declined from a peak of 35 μg/m$^3$ in 1992 to 20 μg/m$^3$ in 2011. Roadside particulate concentrations declined from a peak of 39 μg/m$^3$ in 1997 to 23 μg/m$^3$ in 2011 (DEFRA (2012): Air Quality Statistics in the UK, 1987 to 2011). It is assumed that PM$_{10}$ concentrations in Runnymede have followed the national trends and will continue falling.

The annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations across the UK averaged for all background urban and traffic urban sites (both including long-running sites) in the AURN (Automatic Urban and Rural Network – national monitoring network) showed a decrease over time, however the average for traffic urban long-running sites showed a slight increase in recent years (DEFRA (2011) Air Pollution in the UK 2010). Long-running nitrogen dioxide diffusion sites in Runnymede reflect the above trend –with roadside locations showing slight increases between the years 2006-2010. It is forecast that roadside concentrations will reduce over time, following higher availability and uptake of clean vehicle and fuel technologies, however this may not happen as fast as predicted by national modelling.

Regarding the AQMA in Addlestone, dispersion modelling was carried out for Addlestone town centre using ADMS Roads and the NO$_2$ / PM$_{10}$ concentrations were modelled for the future year of 2015. The predicted concentrations for 2015 showed exceedences at the junction of the main roads in the town centre, however the reduction required for compliance with the objectives was predicted to be relatively low (below 5%). Future monitoring in the area in the following years will be used to verify the predicted concentrations and used to make a decision with regard to future extent of the AQMA.

It can be argued that the current levels of congestion in the borough are unlikely to decrease. This can be for a number of reasons including increased car dependency, delivery traffic and lack of transport infrastructure, which in turn will adversely affect air quality. Therefore, noise and air pollution may increase.
6 Climate change

6.1 Greenhouse gas emissions

Road transport is a major source of carbon emissions. In 2012 this sector contributed 46% to total emissions of carbon dioxide in Runnymede. Domestic electricity and gas emissions were the second largest source of carbon dioxide in 2012 contributing 25% to the total. Within the transport sector in Runnymede, the majority of carbon emissions can be attributed to motorway traffic (31% of the overall emissions) (DECC Local authority carbon dioxide emissions estimates 2012).

Traffic volumes on Surrey’s motorways have been steadily increasing over the last 20 years. In Surrey in 2012 there were 8369 million vehicle miles travelled. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in Surrey in 2011 when 8394 million vehicle miles were travelled. This indicates a difference of 25 million vehicle miles and records a positive trend (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13).

As can be seen from Table 6.1 emissions per capita have been decreasing. However, emissions increased between 2011 and 2012 (and did in most areas). The main drivers of the increase in UK emissions in 2012 were an increase in residential gas use due to 2012 being a colder year than 2011, and increased use of coal for electricity generation.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Industry and commercial</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>2.6</td>
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<td>10.7</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 Climate change impacts

A changing climate may lead to hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, higher sea levels and an increase in extreme events such as heat waves, droughts and floods. It has been projected that this change will affect boroughs such as Runnymede.

By the 2050s, it has been projected that the South East of England may experience:

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• An estimated increase in average summer temperatures of 1.5 – 3.5 °C relative to the baseline period of 1961-1990;

• An estimated increase in average winter temperatures of 1.0 – 2.0 °C relative to the baseline period of 1961-1990;

• An estimated increase in winter rainfall of 0 to 20% relative to the baseline period of 1961-1990;

• An estimated decrease in summer rainfall of 10 to 40% relative to the baseline period of 1961-1990;

• An estimated overall increase in temperature and rainfall variability compared with the 1961-1990 period; and,

• More frequent and extreme summer heat waves and very wet winters compared with the 1961-1990 period.

6.3 Renewable energy

In Runnymede in 2008/9 an estimated 15,708kWh was produced from renewable resources. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in 2007/8 when an estimated 16,669.8kWh was produced from renewable resources. This shows a decrease of 961.8kWh between the two datasets and indicates a negative trend (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/2013). Accurate information on the capacities of renewable technologies based on applications is not available (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/2013).

In Runnymede, the most cost effective options for micro renewable generation appear to be solar thermal water heating systems, solar photovoltaic panels, air source heat pumps and ground source heat pumps and biomass. Wind turbines are less cost effective in Runnymede as the area is less exposed to strong winds than for example a coastal or upland location, and the economic return on wind turbine installation would be longer (Runnymede’s Renewable Energy Interim Advice Note, 2010).

Runnymede’s Renewable Energy Interim Advice Note (2010) requires all new commercial developments (over 300 square metres floor space) and single residential units including replacement dwellings, to be designed so that at least 10% of the on-site installed energy requirement is provided from a renewable source.

6.4 Fuel poverty

In 2010, 10.25% of the population were residing in fuel poor households (compared to 10.54% in Surrey as a whole) (Surreyi website).

6.5 Future baseline

Greenhouse gas emissions have been decreasing in recent years (apart from last year) and it is expected that this will continue.

In the absence of the plan unavoidable climate change will still occur causing the impacts noted in section 6.2.

Ensuring that the Borough is resilient to future climatic conditions is a considerable challenge, with built fabric and infrastructure which has not been designed to withstand hotter, drier summers, warmer, wetter winters and more extreme weather events.

In the absence of the plan renewable energy in future development may increase slightly because there is policy in place driving this issue forward.
7 Economy and Employment

7.1 Economic base
Accessibility to London and Heathrow by rail and motorway makes Runnymede a highly desirable business location. The Borough has a strong local economic base with many commercial enterprises in the town centres, industrial estates and business parks. The local economy, in common with the rest of Surrey, is dominated by the service sector which employs some 83% of the workforce, while manufacturing accounts for just 5%. Businesses and institutions in the Borough include: St Peters Hospital & NHS Trusts, Royal Holloway (University of London), The Veterinary Laboratory Agency, Thorpe Park, Procter and Gamble, Centrica, BUPA, Gartner UK, Samsung Electronics, Tesco Stores and Automatic Data Processing (RBC Annual Monitoring Report - 2012/13).

7.2 Employment and economic activity
Runnymede has a thriving economy with high earnings, low unemployment and a highly qualified population (Runnymede Borough Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy, 2012). Between April 2013 and March 2014, 84% of Runnymede’s population were economically active. This compares with 77% in the UK and 80% in the South East Runnymede also has a higher jobs density than the UK and the South East (NOMIS, 2013). The % of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Runnymede is 0.8% compared to 2.4% in the UK and 1.4% in the South East (NOMIS, data for July 2014).

In Runnymede in 2011, there were 4205 active enterprises within the borough, compared to 4180 in 2010. This illustrates a difference of 25 enterprises between the datasets and a positive trend (Surreyi website).

In 2010, the average time to travel to work was 25 minutes. This time is unchanged from the last time the data was collected (Department for Transport).

7.3 Employment land
The Council prepared an Employment Land Review (ELR) in February 2010 (with an update in 2012). The review and the update identify that in quantitative terms, there is likely to be sufficient employment space on existing sites and sites with planning permission for employment use to meet the highest forecast requirements up to 2026.

7.4 Skills and training
33% of the population of Runnymede are qualified to NVQ4 and above. This compares with 35% for the UK and 38% for the South East (NOMIS, 2013). Earnings in Runnymede are higher than the South East and the UK average (NOMIS, 2013).

7.5 Tourism
Tourism is an important part of the local economy. The main attractions include Thorpe Park, the River Thames, the Runnymede meadows and Coopers Hill slopes (site of the Magna Carta memorial, the John F. Kennedy memorial and the Royal Air Forces Memorial), Wentworth Golf Club, Virginia Water Lake, Savill Gardens and Windsor Great Park, Thorpe Church, the site of Chertsey Abbey and St. Ann’s Hill.
7.6 Infrastructure

The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013) states that there is an aggregate funding gap between the amount of secured existing funding and the total cost of the infrastructure required to facilitate the growth forecasted in the Borough over the plan period. As such, the Council is able to look at adopting a charging levy under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) for new development (the Council will specify what types of developments will require payment under the levy). Work has already commenced in this regard (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13).

7.7 Future baseline

It is likely that the local economy will continue to experience strong growth. The economic base of the Borough is likely to continue to be dominated by the service sector and it's accessibility to London and Heathrow by rail and motorway will continue to make the Borough a desirable business location. It is anticipated that the population of the Borough should therefore continue to be highly qualified and have access to high earnings with low rates of unemployment. Population growth within the Borough is mainly due to in-migration, which is likely to be connected to the area’s thriving economy.
8 Built Environment and Heritage

8.1 Townscape

The built environment in Runnymede is dominated by a selection of small towns on the fringe of London. It largely comprises of residential and commercial development, plus supporting infrastructure, of which transportation is the most prominent. There are slightly more detached and semi-detached properties in the borough than flats and terraced houses, with more detached properties located in the affluent areas of in Virginia Water, Ottershaw, Woodham, and Thorpe, and more semi-detached in New Haw, Egham and Addlestone. In general, the condition of Runnymede’s housing stock is in good state of repair.

Current data suggests that in 2012/13 93.7% of residents in Runnymede were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This can be compared to the last time the data was collected in 2011/12 when 90.7% of residents in Runnymede were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, an increase of 3% between the datasets and a positive trend (Surreyi website).

The Borough has four main settlements; Addlestone, Chertsey, Egham, and Virginia Water. The Borough also has a number of other smaller centres and villages, including New Haw, Woodham and the villages of Ottershaw, Lyne, Longcross and Thorpe.

8.1.1 Addlestone

Addlestone is the Borough’s youngest centre, which grew with the coming of the railway in the late 19th century. Today the centre contains a mix of commercial and residential uses, with a large superstore at its centre and the Runnymede Civic Centre. Just outside the town is the long established Weybridge and Bourne business park and trading estate.

8.1.2 Chertsey

Chertsey is an historic town which had a famous abbey dating from Saxon times. Part of the town was ‘revitalised’ with modern offices and apartments in the 1990s but the high street conservation area retains much of its historic character. To the west of Chertsey is the St Peters Hospital and Hillswood Business Park, which are major employment locations.

8.1.3 Egham

Egham lies close to the historic Runnymede Meadow, site of the sealing of the Magna Carta in 1215. Egham has seen significant commercial redevelopment, both in the town centre and along the Causeway business area, which extends towards Staines to the north east of the town. Much of this area, known as Egham Hythe, is in the River Thames flood plain. The settlement of Englefield Green is situated to the west of Egham. It comprises a small commercial centre surrounded by large residential areas. Englefield Green is home to Royal Holloway University of London and together with Egham, has a significant and growing student population.

8.1.4 Virginia Water

Virginia Water is a settlement of special character with limited office accommodation and two local shopping parades. The settlement includes the Wentworth Estate, a low density development at Virginia Park at the site of the former Holloway Sanatorium developed by W G Tarrant in the 1930s and the world famous golf course. Other parts of the settlement
include the high quality development at Virginia Park at the site of the former Holloway Sanatorium and more typical suburban development to the east.

8.1.5 Conservation Areas

There are seven conservation areas in the Borough (see Figure 8.1). These are:

- Basingstoke Canal;
- Chertsey;
- Egham - The Hythe;
- Egham Town Centre;
- Englefield Green;
- Thorpe; and
- Wey Navigation

Figure 8.1: Conservation Areas

8.2 Urban area character appraisal

The Runnymede Urban Area Character Appraisal (2009) outlines the character type of the areas within the Borough. The issues identified for each character area are set out below.

8.2.1 Chertsey

- Visual dominance of road and roundabouts and lack of landscaping;
- Lack of signage/awareness for the visitor of the open spaces within the town area;
- Damaged townscape in Heriot Road / Sainsbury’s supermarket area; and
- Poor physical and visual environment in Gogmore Lane.
8.2.2 Chertsey South
- Impact of any future development of the Parklands Site on Bittams Lane.

8.2.3 Egham
- Queuing traffic at level crossings – Thorpe Road, Station Road and Vicarage Road;
- Unco-ordinated development at the rear of the High Street on Church Road;
- Address current visual appearance of Church Road;
- Poor pedestrian environment of Station Road North;
- Poor quality of local environment in Pooley Green/Wapshott Estate Area; and
- Impact of Egham bypass as a barrier to pedestrian movement and access to Runnymede Meadows.

8.2.4 Ottershaw
- Difficult pedestrian movement.

8.2.5 Virginia Water
- Threat to the distinctive character of the Wentworth Estate;
- Poor physical and visual environment in the vicinity of the railway station; and
- Cabrera Avenue open space – lack of access, signing and low use.

8.2.6 Addlestone and Rowtown
- The general environment of the High Street and adjoining section of Church Road is of poor quality and requires regeneration and improvement;
- The poor quality environment of the Industrial area on Hamm Moor Lane adjoining the River Wey Navigation Conservation Area; and
- Need to ensure high quality design for any future development at Aviator Park.

8.2.7 Englefield Green
- Threat to the character of the Victorian core area centered on St Judes Road and Victoria Street;
- Poor, traffic dominated environment in the St Judes Road area; and
- Poor visual and physical environment of the Forest Estate/Kings Lane Area.

8.2.8 Thorpe
- Consider introducing traffic calming measures;
- Fast traffic in the historic village core area; and
- Poor signage and an unattractive environment at the Thorpe Industrial Estate.

8.2.9 Woodham and New Haw
- Poor signage and access to the River Wey Navigation and the Basingstoke Canal;
- Poor local environment at the shopping Parade at Woodham Lane; and
- Poor local environment in the vicinity of the New Haw Road / Byfleet Road roundabout.
8.3 Archaeology and the historic environment

Runnymede contains 57 areas of high archaeological potential. A Bronze Age settlement, west of the Runnymede Bridge is regarded to be at risk from scrub and tree growth, reported by English Heritage in 2011 as being in a declining condition.

Runnymede contains 307 statutory listed buildings including four grade I properties: Runnymede Park, Tite Hill; Founders Building, Royal Holloway College, Egham Hill; Great Fosters, Stroude Road and Holloway Sanatorium, Stroude Road. A further 19 properties merit grade II* listing. In addition to those buildings listed by English Heritage there are also a number of locally listed structures. Data from English Heritage shows that currently (February 2012) there are no buildings of Grade I and Grade II* listed at risk within Runnymede.

Runnymede has seven designated conservation areas within the borough. These are: Basingstoke Canal; Chertsey; Egham Hythe; Egham Town Centre; Englefield Green; Thorpe and Wey Navigation. These streets, buildings and locations are of special architectural interest or historic interest, and they receive additional protection from the Council.

The borough has a considerable number of important historic parks and gardens, having more Grade I and II* than any other Surrey District. Historic Parks and Gardens are particularly vulnerable to insensitive development that affects views from within their boundaries. The largest area of historic parks and gardens is represented by Windsor Great Park partially located within an area to the northwest of the borough.

Data from the English Heritage’s at Risk Register in 2012 shows that Woburn Farm in Addlestone, a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden is at risk and in declining condition. Figure 8.2 shows the location of Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens in the Borough.

Figure 8.2: Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens
8.4 Housing Delivery and Sustainable design

Runnymede recorded a total of 168 new net dwellings in the 2012/13 reporting year. This figure exceeds the current target of 161 dwellings per annum. Total affordable housing completions in 2012/13 was 36 and 0 for 2013/14.

In September 2013 there were 3090 households on the housing register in Runnymede. This is a recorded increase from the last time the data was collected in September 2012 when 3040 households were recorded as on the housing register, an increase of 50 households and a negative trend.

With regard to new homes meeting EcoHome Very Good standard (or the equivalent Code for Sustainable Homes standards) in Runnymede to date (data collected up to March 2013) there were 145 certificates issued at design stage to housing developments and 145 certificates issued at the post construction stage for housing developments. There is no comparable data available to produce a trend (BREEAM) and recent announcements by the Government confirm that the Code for Sustainable Homes is to be wound down and replaced by stricter Building Regulations standards. A new sustainable standard for homes may be developed in the future, for developers who wish to be recognised for building to more sustainable specifications than those legally required. BREEAM standards for non-domestic buildings will continue to be recognised.

8.5 Infrastructure

Car ownership is higher than the national average, at 1.5 cars per household, and the Borough’s road network is extensively used for private and business travel, as well as moving significant volumes of freight. As with the rest of Surrey, the type of freight moved, the need to safeguard the rail network for passenger services, and the lack of interchange facilities, limits the scope for moving freight by rail.

Consequently the volume of traffic that makes use of the existing road network and that which passes through the borough, its towns, and villages is high. This volume of traffic can have adverse impacts on the condition of buildings and supporting infrastructure.

8.6 Future baseline

It can be expected that the population in Runnymede, as within the South East, will continue to grow. This will cause increased demand for housing, employment space and supporting social and community infrastructure (e.g. schools, hospitals and health centres, retail provision etc).

Runnymede has a diverse heritage in terms of buildings, archaeology and landscapes. The demand for development could place the borough’s historic heritage assets at increased risk of disturbance, damage and irretrievable loss.

In addition, likely effects will be amplified as a result of changes in the UK’s climate, which may be severe. Those changes include long periods of hot dry weather during the summer months and increased precipitation during winter periods. Coupled with extreme weather events and storminess all having cumulative and synergistic effects on both archaeological and built heritage assets.
9 Landscape and Open Space

9.1 Landscape

The landscape of Runnymede is characterised as ‘Thames Basin Lowland’, urban fringe, which is of gently undulating vale of small-scale field interspersed by woods, shaws ponds, meadows and heath. The majority of the borough (78%) comprises of Green Belt, which includes 281 hectares covered by environmental stewardship schemes.

There are a number of areas designated as Areas of Landscape Importance within the Borough (Local Plan 2001. Policy NE8). These are listed as:

- Coopers Hill, Egham Hill, Callow Hill and Runnymede Meadows;
- St. Ann’s Hill;
- Woburn Hill and Chertsey Meads; and
- Land adjacent to the River Thames.

In these areas the council will take special care in relation to any proposed development to ensure its siting, scale, height, design and materials are in keeping with the surrounding landscape. These areas are shown in Figure 9.1.

![Figure 9.1: Areas of Landscape Importance and Green Belt](http://maps.runnymede.gov.uk/1000x1000)

9.2 Open space

The Runnymede Open Space Study (2010) defines the nature and distribution of open space in the Borough of Runnymede, and identifies the classifications and broad locations where there is under provision, or where the quality could be improved. The main findings of the study are:
The accessible open space figure equates to over 19 ha of open space per 1000 population;

A shortfall in Outdoor Sport Provision, Provision for Children and Teens and Allotments categories of open space has been identified across the Borough;

Accessibility standards suggests that, broadly speaking, parks and gardens, amenity green space, provision for children and teens, allotments and cemeteries and churchyards are not very accessible in terms of distances from home; however this does not necessarily equate to an under provision or the feeling of the users that provision of open space in the Borough is too little;

The provision of open space in the Borough is generally of high quality, assessed against categories of accessibility; cleanliness; facilities; safety; and overall quality criteria. Breaking this figure down, of those sites assessed, 38 percent is high quality; 42 percent is medium quality and 20 percent is of poor quality;

Significant housing growth is planned in the Borough during the plan period of 2006-2026. The supply of new accessible Open Space should be provided over the plan period to ensure the future open space needs are met.

9.3 Green belt

79% of the Borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt (see Figure 9.1). This is the first open land on the south west edge of the London Metropolitan area and much of Runnymede’s Green Belt is used for open land uses such as mineral working and landfill, public utilities, motorways and their intersections, educational and other institutions, research and development establishments, hotel and conference centres and large scale recreational uses, all of which were largely established before the Green Belt was designated. (RBC Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13). The council is currently undertaking a Borough-wide Green Belt review in order to determine to what extent various areas fulfil the purposes of Green Belt designation as set out in the NPPF.

9.4 Future baseline

In the absence of the plan development is likely to come forward that does not respect the local landscape or provide for additional open space needs. This would have a negative effect on landscape and open space.

The Green Belt declaration and functions will continue to be in place.