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Members' briefing pack

Wednesday, 13 August 2025

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Environment and Sustainability Committee

The following 'to note' reports fall under the remit of the Environment and Sustainability Committee.

1. Update on Design Code

1 - 6

To note progress made to date on the Design Code and next steps.

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E&S Committee – Briefing Report

13 August 2025



Title	Update on Design Code
Purpose of the report	To note
Report Author	Laura Richardson
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Environment, Community
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: To note progress made to date on the Design Code and next steps
Reason for Recommendation	The Design Code Task Group has asked for a regular update report so that all Councillors are aware of the project's progress

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
- The Project Board recognise the important role of the Design Code in supporting high quality development in the Borough - The Project Board wish to keep Councillors up to date on project progress	So that all Councillors have an understanding of the Design Code project and are able to answer any queries their residents may have, as well understand their opportunities to contribute to the development of the Design Code
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
A monthly Briefing Note will be produced which sets out key activities undertaken, what is upcoming and any key project stages further into the future	Regular monthly reports will be provided until the Spelthorne Design Code is adopted

- 1.1 This report gives a monthly update on the key activities undertaken/to be undertaken and any key project stages further into the future on the Spelthorne Design Code.
- 2. Key issues**
- 2.1 The Spelthorne Design Code is now transitioning from Stage 4, the Statutory Consultation stage, to the last stage which is preparing the Final Code following the Statutory Consultation from June to August 2025 on the final draft of the Code. During March and April 2025, the first draft of the Code was tested by the Spelthorne Design Code Citizens' Panel and technical stakeholders. A detailed recap of the Citizens' Panel workshops, highlighting important insights and the main design principles derived from the Panel's feedback and how the panel members tested the draft Code are available on the Online Engagement Hub (Commonplace). Residents can read the details of Citizens' Panel workshops here: [Have Your Say Today - Spelthorne Design Code Citizens' Panel - Spelthorne Design Code](#)
- 2.2 The public engagement opportunity on the first draft of the Code for the wider community ran from 18 March 2025 to 8 April 2025 on Commonplace. Local people could download and view this draft Code, find out what is in the draft Code, see how the draft Code has responded to the community and provide feedback to help refine and develop the Code by answering a survey.
- 2.3 After the 3-week public engagement on the first draft of the Code, there were 45 responses to the community engagement survey on Commonplace. While the public engagement opportunity on the draft Code has been completed, members of the public can still view the comments submitted here: [Follow the Conversation on the draft Spelthorne Design Code - Commonplace](#)
- 2.4 Based on the feedback received from the Design Code Task Group, technical stakeholders, the Citizens' Panel, and the broader community, the Spelthorne Design Code team has further updated the draft Code, which can be viewed and downloaded here: [Have Your Say Today - Spelthorne Design Code - Final Draft for Consultation \(May 2025\) - Spelthorne Design Code](#). The Spelthorne Design Code- Final Draft for Consultation (May 2025) was presented to the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 17 June 2025, who approved the Code for statutory public consultation. Following the statutory consultation, it is anticipated that Spelthorne Design Code will be adopted in the autumn. You can view the project timeline here: [Spelthorne Design Code- Timeline](#)
- 2.5 A statutory 6-week public consultation on the Spelthorne Design Code- Final Draft for Consultation (May 2025) ran from 24 June 2025 until 11.59pm on 4 August 2025 and received 81 responses. Local people, business, visitors to the Borough and key stakeholders had the opportunity to review the updated draft Code and share their views by responding to a short survey on Commonplace. The responses to the online survey can be viewed here [Follow the Conversation on for Spelthorne Design Code - Commonplace](#).
- 2.6 Following the feedback from the statutory consultation, the Code will now be undergoing any further relevant revisions, before being presented to the Environment and Sustainability Committee in the autumn, seeking a

recommendation to Council for adoption. If the committee recommends adoption, the Code will be taken to Full Council to seek formal adoption. The Code is intended to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is a planning policy document that builds upon, and provides more detailed guidance to, policies in the Local Plan. You can find out more about how the Code relates to the Local Plan, SPDs and other frequent questions about the Code here: [Have Your Say Today - Spelthorne Design Code FAQ - Spelthorne Design Code](#).

- 2.7 For further information on what the Code covers and how other relevant policies and tools relate to the Code or cover other topics, please review the table below:

Table 1: Topics covered by the Design Code and other relevant policies and tools

Topic	Design Code	Other Relevant Policy Tools
Development Locations & Amount/Quantum	No	Local Plan Policies
Affordable Housing	No	Local Plan Policy
Infrastructure Provision	No	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Open Space Provision Standards	No	Local Plan Policy
Open Space Design	Yes	Local Plan Policy covers high level principles
Street Design	Yes	Surrey Healthy Streets Design Code (Surrey County Council)
Layout Design	Yes	Local Plan Policy covers high level principles
Densities and Heights	Yes – sets out design parameters that can make different development densities and heights work successfully - Sets out acceptable density measures (eg Floor Area Ratio) or acceptable heights in different area types and locations. Coding requirements for density or height measures for allocated sites ensure anticipated capacity can be delivered. -The design code sets out how to deliver higher densities with lower building heights, if this is appropriate for the area and supported by a community-led vision.	Local Plan Policy sets out anticipated capacities of allocated sites.
Building Design & Environmental Sustainability	Yes	Building Regulations (national) Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Water & Flooding	Yes - design parameters for the sustainable and effective handling of surface water and how to consider water-related issues	Local Plan Policy where flooding issues form a constraint to development
Stewardship / Management	Yes - where design decisions have an impact on long-term management, e.g. higher density mixed use	Local Plan Policy
Permitted Development Rights	No	General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) Regulations (national)
Active & Sustainable Transport Provision	Yes - spatial/design requirements only	Surrey Local Transport Plan 4 (Surrey County Council)

- 2.8 The project has maintained a high level of community engagement, with over 12,100 visitors, over 800 contributions and over 410 subscribers to the engagement hub. On 3 February 2025, project officers and consultants presented findings to the Spelthorne Partnership Assembly, outlining how community insights shape the Code and the next steps. The Design Code Team has been working with the Communications Team to ensure Borough-wide promotion to increase public participation in the development of the Code. The advertising and delivery of the engagement activities have been done both online and offline to increase public participation and ensure that we reach as many people as possible for their views. Communication channels have included weekly online promotion via social media channels, features in the Council's e-news and Bulletin, printed promotional materials distributed to key locations across the Borough, press releases and news updates and communications with community organisations.

3. Options analysis and proposal

- 3.1 Not applicable as this is a noting report.

4. Financial management comments

- 4.1 There are none.

5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 A risk register is used in projects to document, assess, and manage potential risks that could impact the project's success, ensuring proactive mitigation and response strategies. The risk register for the project is regularly monitored and updated by the Project Manager.

6. Procurement comments

- 6.1 There are none.

7. Legal comments

- 7.1 There are none.

8. Other considerations

- 8.1 There are none.

9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 This will be dealt with as an integral part of the Design Code.

10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

10.1 This will be dealt with as an integral part of the Design Code.

11. Timetable for implementation

The project timeline can be found here: [Spelthorne Design Code- Timeline](#)

12. Contacts

12.1 Cllr Burrell is the Design Code Task Group Chair. Other members are Cllrs Gibson, Williams and Clarke. Cllr Beecher attends the Project Board meeting as chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee.

12.2 Queries for Officers can be emailed to the Design Code Team:
designcode@spelthorne.gov.uk

12.3 Laura Richardson is the Project Lead.

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices: There are none.