

*Working towards...*  
*The Spelthorne Local Development Framework*

# Initial Draft Elmsleigh Centre Western and Southern Extension Planning Brief



Supplementary Planning Document

May 2006







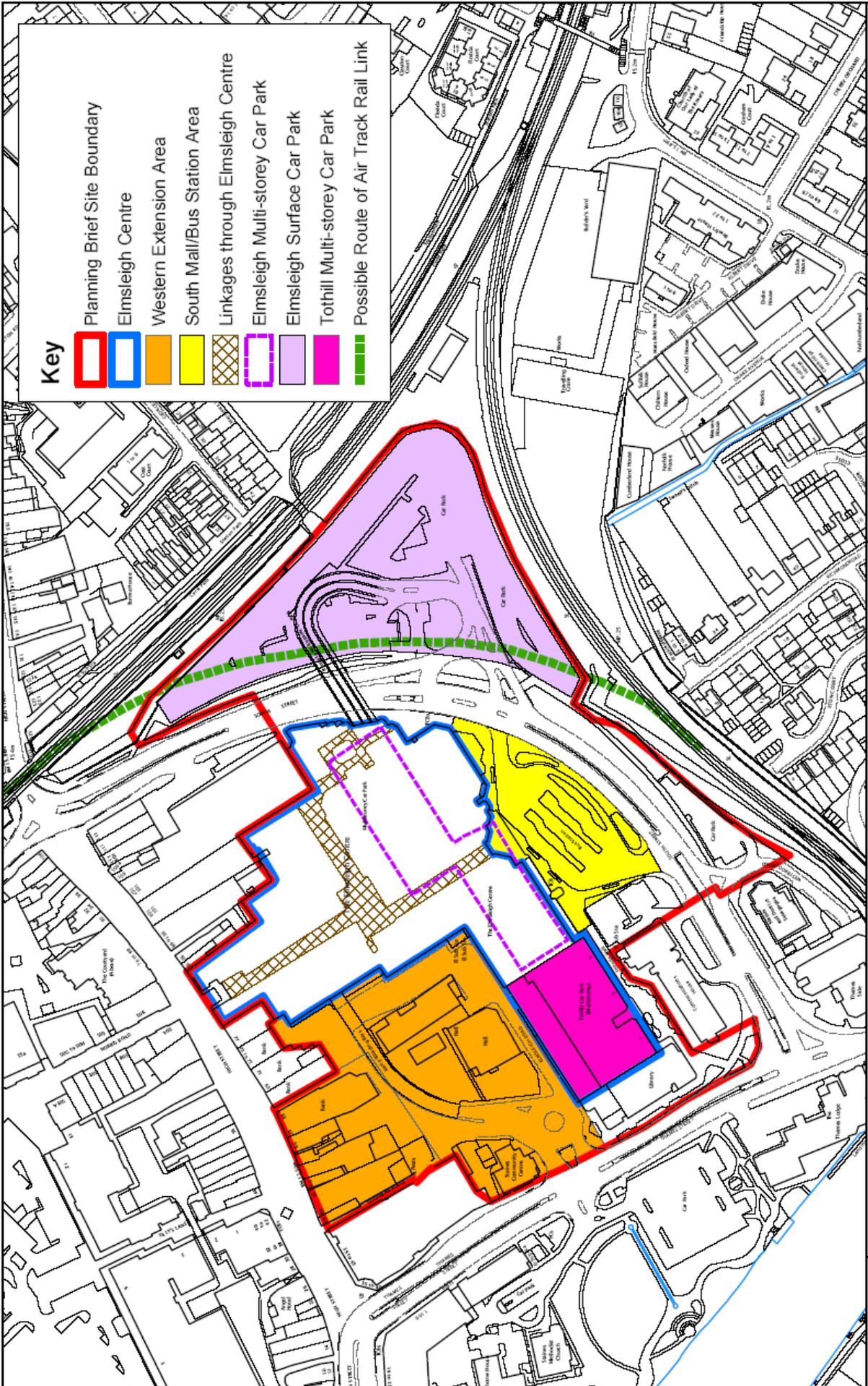












**Key**

- Planning Brief Site Boundary
- Elmsleigh Centre
- Western Extension Area
- South Mall/Bus Station Area
- Linkages through Elmsleigh Centre
- Elmsleigh Multi-storey Car Park
- Elmsleigh Surface Car Park
- Tothill Multi-storey Car Park
- Possible Route of Air Track Rail Link

Date - May 2006

Not to scale



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Plan 2: Planning Brief Site and its Sub-Parts





**Planning Brief**  
**for**  
**THE WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EXTENSION**  
**of**  
**THE ELMSLEIGH CENTRE**  
**STAINES**

**Initial Draft**

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

**Planning Services**  
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## 1. Preface

- 1.1 This document has been prepared in order to set out the Council's planning requirements for the brief site.
- 1.2 It builds on proposals already set out in the Council's Local Plan (April 2001) for part of this area and supplements Proposal P10 for this site in the 'preferred options' draft of the Spelthorne Local Development Plan – Site Proposals.
- 1.3 The Council's intention is that this Planning Brief will, in due course, be a Supplementary Planning Document under the terms of the new plan making system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Its purpose is to explain in more detail the proposal for the site in the emerging development plan.
- 1.4 The brief has been published at this stage as an 'initial draft' to facilitate public consideration of its content. The consultation period is from 4 May to 15 June 2006, after which all comments received will be carefully considered. A formal draft will then be published toward the end of the year. It is intended to formally adopt the document in early 2008 when the new development plan is adopted.
- 1.5 Whilst this brief has yet to be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document within the terms of the new Act it is nevertheless an up-to-date statement of the Council's requirements for this area and will be used as a material consideration in determining planning applications that come forward, for any part of the brief site for the Council's decision prior to the adoption of the document.

## **2. Introduction**

- 2.1 This Planning Brief explains the Council's proposals to secure a further significant increase in retail floor space in Staines town centre with associated environmental improvements to meet identified future retail needs. Schemes based on this brief will, however, also provide the opportunity for other land use needs to be met.
- 2.2 The Council see the development of the Planning Brief site(s) as critical to the continued success and further consolidation of Staines as an important and sustainable major shopping centre in this area.
- 2.3 The brief explains the background to the requirement for additional retail development in Staines town centre, the importance of the Planning Brief site, the need for effective integration of the proposed new development into the town centre as a whole, scope for other important land uses and essential design requirements. The development must contribute to the economic, social and environmental well being of the town centre and its role in meeting the needs of the wider community.
- 2.4 Throughout this brief reference will be made to the “planning brief area” – this refers to the whole area shown on Plan 1. There are two main opportunity areas within this for development which are referred to as the “Western extension” of the Elmsleigh Centre (once known as Phase 3) and the bus station area referred to as the “South Mall extension”. The various distinct parts of the “planning brief area” are shown in Plan 2.

### **3. Objectives**

3.1 This brief has been prepared to achieve the following objectives:

- a) provide a significant quantitative increase in retail floor space to secure Staines retail position and long term vitality and viability,
- b) ensure that the provision of this significant increase of retail floor space on the brief site is well integrated with the existing retail area of the town and functions as an integral part of it,
- c) secure completion of the upgrading of the Elmsleigh Centre and its effective integration with the future Western and South Mall extensions to the retail area,
- d) provide for other town centre uses including, residential, retention/re-provision of the library and Staines Community Centre and space for a museum, and leisure uses.
- e) comprehensive access and servicing arrangements,
- f) development of a high quality which enhances this part of the town centre and effectively integrates its various existing built elements,
- g) help secure a sustainable development.

## **4. Background**

- 4.1 This section of the Brief explains the Council's policy approach to retailing, the existing proposals in its Local Plan, findings of the recent Spelthorne Retail Study (2004) and its conclusions about the needs of Staines and requirement to complete the current improvements to the Elmsleigh Centre and the proposal for the site (Proposal 10) which is set out in the 'preferred options' draft of the Spelthorne Local Development Plan – Site Proposals.

### **a) Role of Staines Town Centre**

- 4.2 Staines town centre is a major retail centre in North Surrey and has a shopping floor space of 81,800 sq metres (880,500 sq feet). Within Surrey it performs a similar retail role to that of Camberley, Woking, Epsom and Redhill. Outside of Surrey other nearby major retail centres are Windsor, Hounslow and Kingston.
- 4.3 The shopping area of the town centre comprises a core area centred on the High Street, the Elmsleigh Centre to the south of the High Street and the Two Rivers shopping area to the north of the High Street. Secondary shopping areas comprise Clarence Street and Church Street to the west of the core area and the section of the High Street to the east of the Windsor railway line. The Council's approach to planning Staines town centre has been and continues to be based on a clear vision and related strategy.
- 4.4 Its vision has been to provide an expansion of the town's retail floor space centred around the High Street and ensure that additional floor space is effectively integrated with the town as a whole. This retail expansion needs to continue to be supported by environmental improvements to make the town an attractive and pleasant place in which to shop work and live.
- 4.5 Significant improvements have been made to the environment of the town centre in the last few years, in particular through:
- a) pedestrianisation and comprehensive enhancement of the High Street
  - b) creation of the Staines Riverside Park
  - c) comprehensive improvements to the design of street furniture
  - d) high standards of design of new buildings and their surrounds including hard and soft landscaping
  - e) inclusion of public art as part of the built environment.
- 4.6 In November 2003 the Council won the British Council of Shopping Centres Environment Award for its improvement to Staines Town Centre and in February 2004 was awarded the Royal Town Planning Institute's Planning Award for 2003 for Staines in the Urban Areas and Communities category. The Council wishes to continue securing development of at least equal quality and effectiveness in meeting the needs of businesses, shoppers, employees and all those who use the town centre.

## **b) Spelthorne Borough Local Plan 2001**

- 4.7 The Spelthorne Borough Local Plan was adopted in April 2001 and the aim, so far as shopping is concerned, is "to provide and maintain attractive and accessible shopping facilities to meet the needs of the local population as a whole." This is achieved in the Plan by:
- a) Seeking to provide additional retail floor space primarily in the existing town centres.
  - b) Ensuring that provision is sufficient to meet the needs of the Borough and the catchment area of Staines (which extends beyond the Borough boundary)
  - c) Identifying specific sites for further retail development.
- 4.8 The approach of the Local Plan to the location of new retail development is consistent with PPG 6 which was current at that time but also with the new PPS 6 on retailing.
- 4.9 There is a specific proposal (P17) for the area between the Elmsleigh Centre and Debenhams for a western retail extension to the Elmsleigh Centre providing 9,000 m<sup>2</sup> (gross) of retail floor space and a requirement for links to Debenhams and the western end of the High Street, comprehensive rear access and servicing arrangements, additional parking provision and satisfactory completion of development on the Thames Street and High Street frontages.
- 4.10 This proposal in the Local Plan reflects the longstanding commitment of the Council to see this area developed for retail purposes and was originally proposed in the 1991 Local Plan.

## **c) Retail Studies**

- 4.11 A retail study of the Borough was published in August 2004. This draws on advice from consultants Cushman & Wakefield Healey & Baker, who, in respect of Staines, reached the following conclusions:
- a) There is sufficient scope or capacity for the existing Local Plan commitment of approximately 9,000 sq m (gross) for what is now identified in this brief as the Western extension (previously referred to as Phase 3 Elmsleigh Centre).
  - b) Without any additional floor space, over time, Staines' attraction and hence market share would be likely to decline and therefore the additional floor space identified in the latest retail study (see point e below) is essential to consolidate Staines' position in the retail hierarchy over the medium term.
  - c) The attraction of Staines has been enhanced by the Two Rivers scheme but retail floor space is not the only factor influencing a centre's retail attractiveness and hence market share. Other significant factors include:
    - i. Specific identity of new retailers
    - ii. Unit sizes
    - iii. Car parking and accessibility
    - iv. Environmental quality
  - d) Staines might be able to increase its market share for comparison goods across the study area as a whole from 37.5% to 41% by 2011 – subject to developments in other towns.
  - e) Up to 17,000 sq m gross floor space (non food) could now be contemplated during this period for the Western Extension of the Elmsleigh Centre (excluding allowance for non A1 floor space). An allocation of this scale would

offer significant scope for the enhancement and improvement of the Elmsleigh Centre as a whole and as such will be the critical factor in significantly enhancing Staines market share. An allocation of this quantum, but split across a number of sites throughout Staines town centre, may not achieve the critical mass required to secure an uplift in the centre's performance, and the critical qualitative improvements that shoppers are likely to expect. In quantitative terms this is likely to require only a modest increase in Staines market share of its catchment area from 37.5% to just over 41%.

- f) Beyond 2011 to 2016 there will be further scope for new floor space across the Borough in the order of 15,000 sq m gross – but this figure is subject to increasing penetration in the Staines shopping catchment area from 41% to 45% and the timing and scale of developments in other towns outside the Borough.

- 4.12 The Council considers that Staines town centre is the most appropriate location for this additional floor space of which a significant part can be accommodated on the brief site.

#### **d) Proposal P10 – Spelthorne Local Development Plan – Site Proposals (Preferred Options)**

- 4.13 Proposal P10 is set out in Appendix 1 of this draft brief. It reflects the findings and requirements identified in the 2004 Spelthorne Retail Study and carries forward the intentions of the proposal in the 2001 Local Plan but with a much larger site area and a greater amount of retail floor space. The proposal is in two parts reflecting scope for an extension to the South Mall and improvement of the bus station and then the much larger western extension of the Elmsleigh Centre. The proposals are intended to deal with the weaknesses and opportunities shown in plans 4 and 5. This proposal follows on from a multi- million pound refurbishment scheme of the Elmsleigh Centre which commenced in July 2003 and the first phase was completed in September 2004. A second phase is currently underway largely involving a reformatting of space in the south east part of the centre.

#### **e) Other Land Use/Design Matters**

- 4.14 The Thames Street frontage between the new Staines Community Centre and the Library is taken up by a large vehicular access point to the western extension area. This is currently occupied by the primary servicing areas (via a ramp) for the Elmsleigh Centre, Debenhams, rear of the shops on this section of the south side of the High Street, Friends Walk, Staines Community Centre, Masonic Hall and Night Club, and access to the areas of surface parking at Elmsleigh Road and to the Tothill Multi-storey car park. This large gap in the frontage to Thames Street provides an unattractive view of the servicing/access facilities in this area. This detracts from the appearance of this particular part of the town centre. Furthermore, the elevation of the multi-storey car park building toward Thames Street is dominant and unattractive.
- 4.15 A major redevelopment to provide the amount of additional retail floor space capacity identified will require the majority of this area and necessitate:-
  - a) alternative access to the Elmsleigh Centre upper service deck – the current position of the ramp effectively bisects the area where additional retail floor space would need to be centred.

- b) new access arrangements to rear service yards for shops on the south side of the High Street, Friends Walk and Debenhams
  - c) discussions over the future of the Masonic Lodge and Night Club in this location
  - d) loss of approximately 87 existing official and unofficial parking spaces.
- 4.16 The existing Elmsleigh and Tothill multi-storey car parks both have a utilitarian external appearance and do not contribute to the attractiveness of this part of the town. There would be benefit in taking opportunities to reduce their visual impact. There could also be operational benefits from linking the two multi-storey car parks internally for both vehicles and pedestrians, thereby providing a more flexible parking facility.
- 4.17 Staines Bus Station was purpose built in 1980 as part of the original Elmsleigh Centre. It is an important bus interchange point for all services to the town including both local and longer distance routes. Its juxtaposition with the Elmsleigh Centre means it is readily accessible for both shoppers and those working in the town and does not require those shopping in the core area to cross any roads to get to it. In April 1996 consultants PDM completed a study of public transport in Staines town centre for Surrey County Council. The study concluded that the bus station was in the best location to meet the town's needs and contribute to enabling greater use of public transport by those travelling to the town centre. Proposals to relocate the bus station to enable complete redevelopment of the site will not be accepted.
- 4.18 The 1996 study did also identify the need for the whole character of the bus station to be improved and proposed a layout of 10 stands facing the Elmsleigh Centre. Any new layout must have capacity to meet longer term growth in bus use.
- 4.19 Land in the vicinity of the site is affected by the Airtrack proposal for a rail link from Staines to Heathrow, which is included in the Strategic Rail Authority's Plan for the Future of Britain's Railways as a project for future development and also the Draft South East Plan, Regional Transport Plan, Surrey Structure Plan and Local Transport Plan. It is currently anticipated that it may be at least 10 years before this scheme could be in operation. If this were to proceed the preferred route would involve the construction of a new short section of elevated track close to the outside bend of South Street directly linking the Windsor rail line with the Reading rail line. This would have three significant impacts:
- a) create some adverse visual impact to this part of the town centre
  - b) result in the loss of about half (205) of the car park spaces in the Elmsleigh surface car park
  - c) require new vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements to the remaining car park area within what would be a triangular shaped area surrounded by railway lines on all three sides.
- 4.20 A large part of this planning brief site is in an area at risk of flooding in a 1 in 100 year event as defined by the Environment Agency and two very small parts are within the 1 in 1000 flood risk area. The extent of the flood area is shown on Plan 7. The Council's policy toward development in areas of flood risk reflects the advice of the Environment Agency and national policy advice as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 "Development and Flood Risk" and draft PPS 25. The Council's own policy on flooding is set out in Policy BE29 of the Spelthorne Borough Local Plan

and Policy EN 15 of the Spelthorne Development Plan - Strategy and Policies (Preferred Options) and reflects the principles in the national guidance.

- 4.21 The preceding paragraphs have identified a number of contextual issues to this planning brief which are illustrated on the plan set out at Plan 4.
- 4.22 In addition to the above contextual issues there are a number of additional considerations, which a redevelopment of the brief site should take account of. These are:
- a) the encouragement in national planning policy to introduce a mix of uses into town centres – particularly more residential use.
  - b) the Council has a longer term interest to relocate its offices from its current site just outside the town centre at Knowle Green, Staines to the town centre.
  - c) the community's longstanding aspiration to secure a permanent and centrally sited museum facility in the town centre and the merit of siting this with the existing library facility.
  - d) requirements for rear servicing of premises on the south side of the High Street,
  - e) CCTV provision
  - f) Public art provision

#### **f) Land Ownership**

- 4.23 The Council is the largest freeholder with ownership of the Elmsleigh Centre, Friends Walk shops, both multi storey car parks, Communications House, BUPA offices, bus station, Elmsleigh service road and public parking areas adjacent to it. Clerical Medical has the leasehold for the Elmsleigh Centre and Friends Walk shops. Communications House and the BUPA offices are leased with associated areas of parking including within public car parks. The extent of known land ownerships are shown on Plan 5..

## 5. Requirements

5.1 This section explains the Council's requirements for the proposed comprehensive development of the planning brief site.

### a) General

5.2 The Western extension area identified in this brief is the last major part of the town centre where there is scope for comprehensive redevelopment to accommodate the scale of additional retail floor space required to maintain the town's retail role in the longer term and is so located that it can be successfully integrated with the existing shopping areas.

5.3 The Council's requirement is for a comprehensive development, which realises the full potential of the Western extension and the South Mall/bus station areas to make a significant contribution towards meeting the town's additional retail floor space requirements up to at least 2016.

5.4 It is considered that potential exists on the Western extension area to provide up to 9,000 sq m gross of retail floor space on a single floor level and up to 18,000 sq m gross on two levels. The precise floor space depends on the nature of the required links to the High Street and how it integrates with the premises on the south side of the High Street and to Debenhams. In addition there is scope for approximately 3,000 sq m of retail floor space on two levels at the end of the South Mall of the Elmsleigh Centre and which would leave sufficient land for a well arranged bus interchange facility

5.5 The retail development, whilst capable of being implemented in phases, must:

- a) be well integrated to the town centre as a whole so as to secure strong pedestrian links with the existing core retail area (as illustrated in Plan 3). This must include strong links with each of the following areas to ensure the area south of the High Street generally is well integrated and provides an enhanced relationship with the High Street and Two Rivers:
  - i. the Elmsleigh Centre
  - ii. Friends Walk
  - iii. High Street
  - iv. Debenhams and the western end of the High Street generally
  - v. Thames Street
- b) be of sufficient critical mass in any phase to help generate the required uplift in the town centre market share from its catchment area and not compromise the extent of the comprehensive development which is sought
- c) in its layout and design be attractive to good anchor tenants to both the South Mall and the Western extension to secure the required uplift in market share.

5.6 A fundamental re-arrangement of current access and service arrangements to this area will be required to fully realise the potential of the Western extension area to provide the required additional retail floor space. Servicing of the development of a South Mall extension to the Elmsleigh Centre cannot take place across the bus station area. Therefore, the servicing and access needs for the brief site as a whole will need to be dealt with comprehensively. It is considered that a new comprehensive access and servicing arrangement will be necessary. This will need to link to the roof level

service points to all existing retail premises in the Elmsleigh Centre, the new retail areas (Western extension and South Mall extension areas) and to Debenhams and all other premises on the south side of the High Street between Debenhams and the existing entrance to the Elmsleigh Centre.

- 5.7 This will need to include new vehicular access arrangements for the Tothill Car Park and any additional development above the new retail areas.
- 5.8 The following sub-sections identify the more detailed requirements of the comprehensive development of the brief site. Section 6.0 of this brief deals with phasing and in particular the need to ensure that infrastructure provision and costs are properly contributed to or secured by any individual phase of the overall development.

#### **b) Enhancement of the Elmsleigh Centre**

- 5.9 The enhancement of the South Mall of the Elmsleigh Centre with an increase in retail floor space could be secured in the shorter term and will be positively encouraged subject to it including proposals for and ability to link to the proposed Western extension and appropriate provision for the bus station.
- 5.10 Enhancement of the existing external entrance adjacent to the controlled crossing from the Elmsleigh Surface Car Park must be secured in the short term and certainly no later than completion of any South Mall extension.

#### **c) Retail floor space**

- 5.11 A significant quantitative increase in retail (A1) floor space is required to secure Staines' retail position and long-term vitality and viability. The floor space will be a prime retail area and any proposed A3 uses (especially on the ground floor) will be strictly limited.

#### **d) Car Parking**

- 5.12 The significant additional retail floor space and other uses is likely to increase the demand for car parking. A comprehensive assessment of parking requirements will be required for both the South Mall and Western Extensions. It will be expected to consider:
- a) the amount of parking likely to be required by the additional development having regard to the scope to encourage the use of alternative travel modes
  - b) scope to secure a greater use of existing provision
  - c) the loss of some 87 surface parking spaces in Elmsleigh Road
  - d) any other losses due to necessary adjustments to access to the two multi storey car parks and the Elmsleigh surface car park
  - e) account of the contribution of convenient and sufficient parking to the attraction of town centres for shopping and the requirements of the proposed new uses
  - f) the balance required between short stay and long stay parking provision in the town centre and the existing role of the Tothill car park as a long stay car park.
  - g) Dual use of parking

- 5.13 The Elmsleigh multi-storey car park is constructed above the South Mall of the existing Elmsleigh Centre itself and is an integral part of that structure. The Tothill multi-storey car park is located above the shop units in Friends Walk. The shop space underneath the Tothill multi-storey car park, however, could be reformatted/reconstructed to be part of the Western extension scheme without necessarily requiring the car park above to be removed and re-provided. Scope to 'mask' the visual scale and general appearance of the Tothill car park with other uses and the cost benefits of not having to re-provide it elsewhere may be an important financial consideration for any scheme.
- 5.14 It is considered that any additional/replacement parking that is considered acceptable over and above the capacity of the existing multi-storey car parks could be provided in the form of additional levels on the Elmsleigh multi-storey car park but developers may identify other opportunities within a comprehensive scheme..
- 5.15 The Council consider that linking the vehicle decks of the two car parks (if the Tothill Car Park is retained) could offer a more flexible and therefore efficient use of their capacity. Access to car parks and linking the Elmsleigh and Tothill multi-storey car parks is dealt with further in paragraphs 5.22 to 5.24.
- 5.16 The Transport Assessment will be expected to assess and identify locations for the provision of an appropriate number of cycle parking facilities to facilitate modal shift for both shoppers, workers and residents. This should not only consider the requirement of new floorspace but also existing adjoining provision. The non-shopping developments should also provide secure cycle parking facilities for workers and visitors and include within new buildings appropriate shower facilities. Appropriate links must be provided between the Planning Brief site and existing cycle routes to secure safe and convenient routes for cyclists

#### **e) Bus Station**

- 5.17 Any scheme must include the comprehensive enhancement of the bus station, to include:
- a) provision for sufficient stands to meet current and longer term needs
  - b) end-on bus bays to enable queuing and the entry and exit of passengers from buses from a pedestrian only concourse
  - c) a high quality safe, enclosed and comfortable waiting area for passengers (including seating areas).
  - d) extensive passenger and general travel information including Real Time Passenger Information and passenger direction signing.
  - e) a layout which does not facilitate unauthorised parking or access by other vehicles.
  - f) facilities for bus drivers
  - g) provision for the day to day management and maintenance of the bus station

#### **f) Residential**

- 5.18 National policy encourages residential use in town centres and the Council want to encourage as much residential as is possible in Staines town centre to meet local housing needs. This will include the requirement for developments to include an element of affordable housing in accordance with the Council's affordable housing

policy (Policy H6 as altered) in its Local Plan. There is particular scope for residential use on the Thames Street frontage above the retail use at ground and first floor levels. This location can take advantage of views toward the River Thames. The Council support the provision of car free housing and seek a maximum provision of 0.8 spaces per dwelling.

#### **g) Library and Museum**

- 5.19 The Council wishes to retain a library facility in the town centre of an equivalent size to the present. It recognises that redevelopment of the existing site could enable a more comprehensive approach to the Thames Street frontage as well as opportunity to provide new buildings to mask the Thames Street elevation of the Tothill multi-storey car park. If the existing library site were to be redeveloped, re-provision of a library would be required within the redevelopment. The Council would also wish to see the opportunity taken to provide space for a museum with the library. Close proximity or even a common entrance and a new library/museum facility could secure benefits associated with a nucleus of civic facilities which will be encouraged by the Council.

#### **h) Other uses**

- 5.20 Whilst the Council would like to secure residential use as the main use other than retail in the Western Extension, there may be scope for some space for leisure related or commercial uses, at upper levels, so long as they contributed to the attractiveness of the retail space, the wider attractiveness of the town centre as a whole and were compatible with residential use.

#### **i) Staines Community Centre**

- 5.21 This facility in Thames Street was opened in 2002 and is a two storey structure. Its scale is much smaller than the other nearby development of the Thames Street frontage, which substantially fills in the gap between Debenhams and the Tothill multi-storey car park. The Council would not be opposed to its demolition and re-provision within a comprehensive scheme so long as the need to do so was essential to produce a demonstrably better development of this area, the replacement facility was of at least equal quality to the existing and it was at no cost to the Council. Opportunity could be taken to link the Community Centre facilities with the library/museum in a comprehensive approach to the provision of these public facilities.

#### **j) Servicing and vehicular access**

- 5.22 Proposals for development will need to be accompanied by a full Transport Assessment which should include a Parking Strategy based on projected model splits and taking account of maximum parking standards and transportation policy. The requirements for this development will need to be consistent with the County Council's emerging Local Transport Plan No.2, including sustainability policies, and have regard to both the constraints on the highway system that exist in the town centre and any scope to improve its operation.
- 5.23 The servicing arrangements for the new development will need to be comprehensive and achieve the following:

- a) Maintain satisfactory access to and serving of the existing Elmsleigh Centre.
- b) Ensure a comprehensive approach for the new development and existing premises on the High Street
- c) Not involve any service vehicles using the bus station
- d) If any access from Thames Street is retained this should not be intrusive either visually on the Thames Street frontage or adversely affect the operation and attractiveness of the new retail/public areas
- e) Be acceptable in terms of potential impact on the highway network.

5.24 One possible approach is for all access and servicing to be via South Street close to the line of the existing car park access ramp, and serving both the Elmsleigh and Tothill Car Parks and the retail units. This would require the two car parks to be linked and the entry level of a combined access ramp to be at a higher level. This would allow service vehicles to go above the existing service deck to get to the western extension area, with a ramp from that area back down to the existing Elmsleigh Centre service deck. The Council is however open to any other proposals which meet the above requirement. Such an arrangement must enable sufficient clearance for any Airtrack rail link. Consideration will need to be given to replacing the turn-round facility currently existing via Elmsleigh Road for traffic on the town's two-way traffic system and the similar facility at the Elmsleigh Surface Car Park entrance. These turn-round facilities are important as they avoid traffic otherwise having to travel to the edge of the town centre before making such a manoeuvre.

#### **k) Flooding**

5.25 A large part of the Western Extension and South Mall/bus station areas are within the 1:100 year flood risk area and any development must comply with the Council's Local Plan policy (BE29) on development in flood areas and the Environment Agency's requirements. See Map 7. Proposals must be accompanied by a full flood risk assessment.

5.26 So far as is possible the development should seek to utilise Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

#### **l) Design requirements**

5.27 Proposals must be accompanied by a design statement which has been prepared in accordance with existing Council requirements and advice contained in PPG1.

5.28 The design of all elements of this comprehensive development must be of the highest possible standards and make a significant contribution to the perceived visual attractiveness of this part of the town centre. The quality of the end result, both internally to covered shopping areas and externally, must support the purpose of the additional retail floor space to meet the needs of those who shop in Staines. The development will need to provide the required uplift in retail expenditure and experience.

5.29 The internal positioning of new streets and malls and entry/exit points for the western extension development must serve to draw shoppers and provide a convenient and comfortable shopping experience. It should enable the new floor space to function as an integral part of the core shopping area of the town centre. The design of internal

public areas must be of a high standard using materials of appropriate quality and the provision of public art.

- 5.30 The external design must be of very high quality to ensure: -
- a) an effective 'completion' of the Thames Street frontage
  - b) to make the bus station area and South Mall entrance to the Elmsleigh Centre an attractive transport interchange and an inviting entrance to the shopping area, which masks the current elevation of the multi-storey car park above.
- 5.31 In the design of the development and selection of materials regard must be had to sustainable construction and design. The extent to which this is proposed to be achieved must be set out in the design statement for the development.
- 5.32 New build elements should generally not exceed the height of Debenhams/Communications House (21 metres) so as to avoid any adverse dominating effect.
- 5.33 External areas should be appropriately landscaped to soften the built form of new and existing development.
- 5.34 Vehicular access ramps will need to be well designed with appropriate landscaping to reduce the potential adverse impacts from their inherent utilitarian nature. Car park areas should be designed and maintained to the AA Secured Car Park Gold Standard.
- 5.35 The development must fully provide for the needs of those who are disabled or have movement difficulties. A statement explaining how this is to be secured must be submitted with proposals.

#### **m) Public Art**

- 5.36 The Council has seen a successful integration of public art into new developments and enhancement schemes throughout the town in recent years. It will be important to include artistic elements and approaches in the design of the development which must be demonstrated and explained in the Design Statement.

#### **n) Renewable energy and energy conservation**

- 5.37 The development must be designed to secure the highest possible standards of energy conservation both by appropriate methods of construction and insulation and in running costs. This should include the appropriate design and specification of any external lighting.
- 5.38 In line with Structure Plan Policy SE2 and the Government's objectives to reduce carbon emissions the development will be expected to incorporate appropriate measures to ensure a proportion of the energy requirements of users of the development come from renewable sources. Structure Plan policy seeks a minimum of 10% of the energy requirement of the development as a whole to be from renewables. This is reflected but with more specific requirements in Policy CC 1 of the Preferred Options draft of the Spelthorne Local Development Plan - Strategy and Policies. A range of technologies exist which, subject to good design, could be

included without detriment to the design quality being sought for the development. These include solar heating systems, photo voltaic panels, mini combined heat and power and possibly underground heat pumps. The Council will expect the developer's design to assess the likely carbon use of the whole development and propose measures to secure a minimum of 10% of the energy needs of the development from on-site renewable sources. Each residential unit will be required to benefit from the on-site renewable energy generation. Details of provision should be set out in the design statement for any proposed development.

#### **o) Archaeology**

- 5.39 Staines town centre has an extensive history including evidence of a settlement from Neolithic times onward, including the Roman occupation. In accordance with Policy BE26 of the Local Plan the Council requires an agreed scheme of archaeological assessment or evaluation to be submitted with any application. Where evidence of significant archaeological remains are found then the more detailed requirements of Local Plan Policy BE25 will apply. These relate to appropriate physical evaluation, appropriate scheme of preservation (preferably on-site) and publication of findings.

## **6. Implementation**

- 6.1 A comprehensive approach is required to ensure the requirements of this planning brief to secure the intended improvements to Staines as a major shopping centre are achieved. Any phases will need to demonstrate how they achieve the overall requirement.
- 6.2 Piecemeal developments in parts of the site which are either contrary to the objectives of the brief or would, by virtue of their scale and nature, fail to secure the benefits required for the town, will be refused.
- 6.3 Any development will need to be implemented in conjunction with the owners of the Elmsleigh Centre because of the essential links with the Centre and the common vehicular access and servicing arrangements.
- 6.4 With its extensive land ownership interests within the brief site area the Council need to be consulted as landowner, and, subject to meeting its requirements under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, is willing to enter into a development agreement with appropriate terms to secure the requirements of this brief.
- 6.5 Paragraph 8.17 of the existing Local Plan gives the Council's commitment to use its compulsory purchase powers as necessary to secure the implementation of Proposal P17 for the western extension area. The Council remains committed to use of its CPO powers and will be prepared to use them to secure any aspect of this planning brief.
- 6.6 Any planning permission will need to be accompanied by appropriate agreements to secure the provision of any necessary highway and transport movements, affordable housing and any other requirements which are essential to make the scheme acceptable. The need and scope for such agreements should be resolved at an early stage.

## **7. Other Matters**

- 7.1 The developer will need to consider whether the development might require an Environmental Impact Assessment. The Council can provide a 'screening' assessment of any particular development proposal prior to submission. The Council expects consultation on screening and scoping prior to formal submission of an application.

## 8. Further Information

8.1 The Council welcomes pre-application discussions as a way of helping developers to devise the best possible development for a site. For further information on the Planning Brief developers are asked to contact in the first instance either Paul Underwood (Assistant Head of Planning - Development Control) or Esmé Spinks (Principal Planning Officer - Development Control).

- a) Highways - Edward Josey,  
Transport Development Control,  
Surrey County Council, 0208 541 7417
- b) Crime Reduction - Vic Smith, Crime Reduction Officer  
Surrey Police, 01784 444269
- c) Environment Agency - Fiona McNie, Planning Liason Officer  
0207 091 4020

8.2 The Council will expect a developer to undertake early and appropriate consultation with residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site prior to finalising its proposals and submitting a planning application. Applicants will be expected to submit the details of the pre-application consultation arrangements with the application and the comments made and how they have been responded to. This approach accords with good practice and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement

## Appendix 1

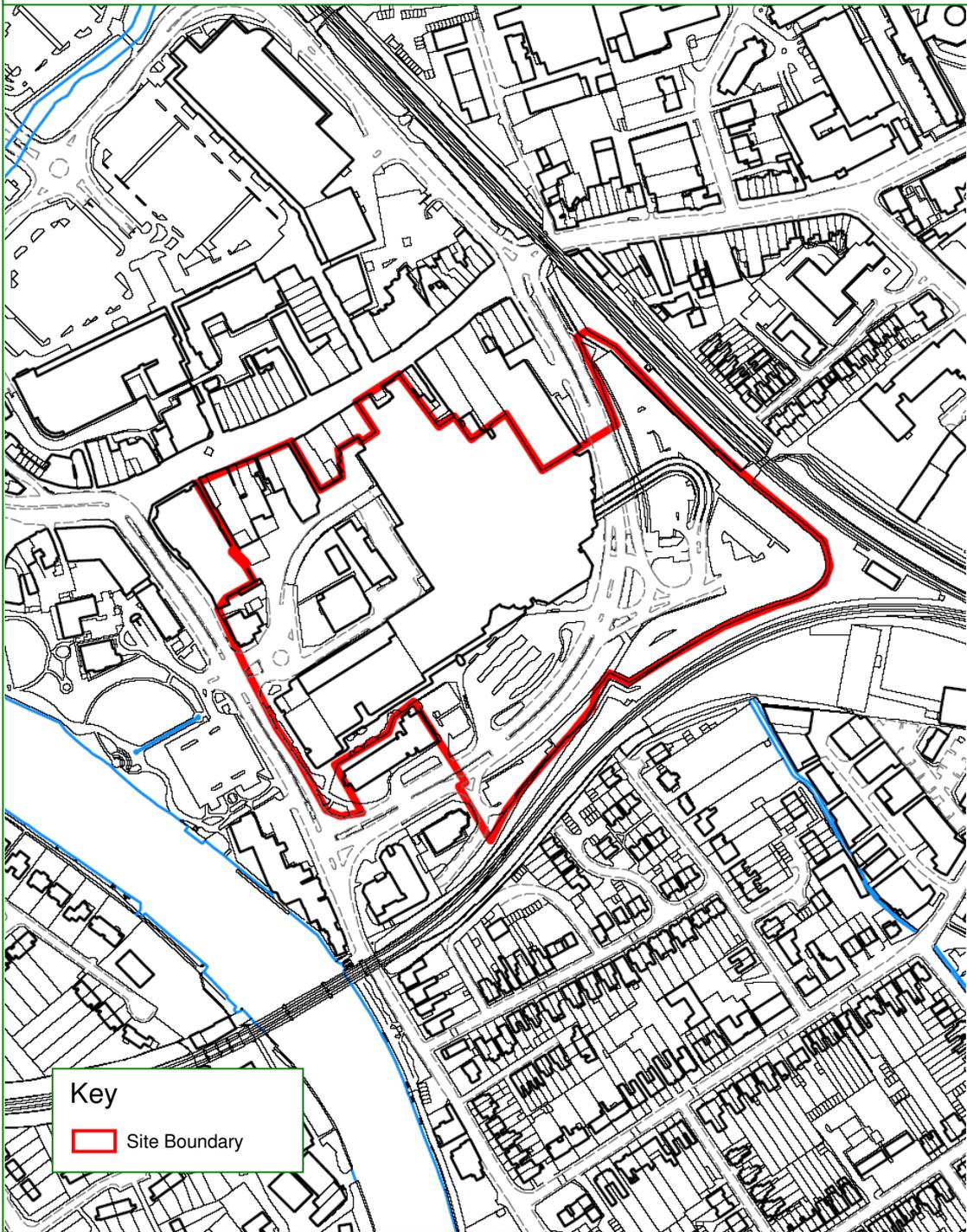
## Proposal P10: The Elmsleigh Centre and adjoining land, Staines

Site Area	Proposed Development	Relevant Policies	Implementation/ Timescale	Comments
6.62ha	<p>1. Redevelopment within the Elmsleigh Centre and extension to the south to provide approximately 2,500 sq m of retail floorspace, a food court at first floor level, at least 30 flats and improvements to the bus station.</p> <p>2. Extension of the Elmsleigh Centre to the west to provide a comprehensive development including at least 18,000 sq m of retail floorspace, a mix of related non retail uses, approximately 65 flats, additional parking and revised access and servicing arrangements</p>	TC 1: Development in Staines town centre	<p><i>Implementation:</i> Private</p> <p><i>Timescale:</i> 2008-2013</p>	<p>It is envisaged that the development would take place in two stages.</p> <p>A traffic impact assessment will be required to demonstrate the acceptability in transport terms of the larger proposals</p> <p>Part of the site is within an area at flood risk and any scheme will need to ensure no loss of flood storage capacity and a dry route of escape to a point outside the floodplain for occupants of the residential element. The scheme will require a detailed flood risk assessment.</p> <p>A Planning Brief giving further guidance on requirements for the development of the site is to be published and which it is intended to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document</p>

## Justification

- i. The 2004 Spelthorne Retail Study suggests there is scope for further retail development in Staines to meet forecast growth in retail expenditure on non food items. The scale of the proposal is consistent with the findings of the study, which suggests there is scope for a development of approximately 17,000 sq m by 2011 and up to a further 15,000 sq m by 2016, subject to future monitoring. In the context of growing retail expenditure and consequent demand for extra floorspace a development of the scale proposed enables Staines to maintain its role as the principal shopping centre for North Surrey in accordance with core strategy policy.
- ii. The first stage represents the last of three phases in a programme of refurbishment and redevelopment to enhance the existing Elmsleigh Centre. It also includes improvements to the layout of the bus station.
- iii. The second stage enables the Elmsleigh Centre to grow creating a better balance between shopping on the north and south side of the High Street and creating the opportunity for links with Debenhams and the western end of the High Street. It also makes better use of an under-used and unattractive site immediately adjoining the main part of the shopping centre.
- iv. The inclusion of housing widens the mix of town centre uses and contributes to meeting housing needs.
- v. Part of the site is at risk of flooding and a flood risk assessment has been carried out to show that the assess whether in principle a development is could be acceptable in flooding terms. The assessment shows that it can.

## The Elmsleigh Centre and adjoining land, Staines



### Key

 Site Boundary



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Printed - March 2006  
Not to Scale

