



Kingston Local Plan

**Statement of Common Ground between
The Royal Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council**

July 2026



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a documented record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities in addressing cross-boundary matters during the planning process. This SoCG has been created to show that RBK's draft Local Plan is built on effective collaborative efforts regarding cross-boundary strategic issues, aligning with the requirements of paragraph 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on Maintaining Effective Cooperation.
- 1.2. This Statement of Common ground addresses key strategic matters between the two signatories, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC), as relevant to the preparation of the Kingston Draft Local Plan and its progression to public Examination.
- 1.3. Strategic matters overseen by other organisations will be addressed in other SoCGs, in order to streamline the process of reaching agreements with each party.
- 1.4. This SoCG concentrates on the strategic cross-boundary issues being tackled and the progress made in cooperative efforts to address them.
- 1.5. In the context of London, most strategic issues that extend beyond borough boundaries, such as housing targets and major growth areas, are primarily addressed by the London Plan. London Boroughs are working to implement the policies in the London Plan. Some of these policies are particularly relevant to this SoCG and are summarised in the key strategic matters below.
- 1.6. The document is intended to be 'live', updated as circumstances change. Please see the Governance Arrangements section of the statement for more details.

Background

- 1.7. Kingston Council prepared the Publication Draft Local Plan and will publish it for consultation between 6 July and 4 September 2026. This is the version of the plan that the Council considers to be 'legally compliant' and 'sound' and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in December 2026.
- 1.8. To date, Kingston Council has consulted on:
 - 1.8.1. Early engagement on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between May and July 2019
 - 1.8.2. Further engagement on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between July and September 2021
 - 1.8.3. A First Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between November 2022 and February 2023.
- 1.9. EEBC has engaged with RBK's Local Plan process, providing comments at the Regulation 18 stage and through various Duty to Cooperate meetings. EEBC's Local Plan is currently

at examination having been submitted in March 2025. Kingston and EEBC signed a [Statement of Common Ground dated March 2025](#) in relation to the EEBC Local Plan.

- 1.10. There are two designated neighbourhood planning areas in Kingston: North Kingston and Malden Rushett. Malden Rushett forms the southernmost tip of RBK and sits right at the intersection where Greater London meets Surrey, bordering the borough of Epsom and Ewell.

2. Strategic Geography

- 2.1. This section sets out the factual position regarding cross boundary matters.
- 2.2. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is a London borough and, together with the other 31 boroughs and the City of London Corporation, sits within the regional governance of the Greater London Authority. Kingston is bordered by the London Boroughs of Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth, Merton, and Sutton. In addition, Kingston shares its boundaries with the Surrey borough councils of Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, and Mole Valley which are also covered by Surrey County Council - the borough councils are responsible for planning, and the county council is responsible for strategic functions and services such as transport and education. Local Government reorganisation is underway and due to create new unitary authority of East Surrey from April 2027 to replace these councils in Surrey.
- 2.3. The area shown in Map 1 has been identified as the strategic planning area for the purposes of this SoCG. These boroughs represent key cooperative partners and contain areas most likely to be directly affected by the policies set out in the Kingston Local Plan.



Figure 1: Map of Kingston in relation to its neighbouring authorities

3. Strategic Matters

- 3.1. RBK's draft Local Plan seeks to address a number of key strategic matters. Each is considered in turn. The SoCG identifies where there are specific areas of joint working or cooperation. The parties agree to work together through several actions, which are detailed as records of agreement. Where relevant, this SoCG also highlights where agreement on key strategic matters have not, as yet, been reached.
- 3.2. Both parties will continue to communicate in a collaborative manner and engage with each other through 1-2-1 meetings, informal telephone and email correspondence and statutory consultation exercises.

Meeting identified housing needs within the borough and wider unmet housing needs

- 3.3. RBK's identified housing land supply falls significantly short of the total homes required through 2043. With a current five-year housing land supply of only 1.48 years, the Council faces an acute delivery challenge.
- 3.4. Whilst Greater London is considered to be the strategic housing market area for the purposes of the London Plan and its SHLAA, the more detailed assessment at a local level identifies five sub-regional areas (North, East, West, South and Central). Kingston is identified within the South area along with immediate neighbours, Merton, Wandsworth, Richmond and Sutton.
- 3.5. Epsom and Ewell's emerging Local Plan contains a spatial strategy which seeks to meet approximately 47% of the borough's housing need identified through the standard method that applied at the time the plan was submitted for examination on 10 March 2025. This was informed by a range of evidence including a Land Availability Assessment (2024), which demonstrated the constrained nature of the borough in terms of housing land supply.
- 3.6. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating Kingston's unmet development needs, including housing needs. EEBC formally responded to this request on 21 April 2026 stating that "Due to the limited availability of sites and the significant level of unmet need within the borough, it can be confirmed that the EEBC is not in a position to assist with meeting neighbouring authorities' unmet housing needs."

Meeting identified employment land needs within the borough and wider unmet needs

- 3.7. RBK's Employment Land Review (ELR) 2021 identifies a requirement to plan for 59,050 sq.m of new employment floorspace up to 2041. However, when comparing our estimated demand against all currently identified supply (including potential

intensification of existing sites), the ELR identifies a significant overall shortfall of up to 67,270 sq.m. Specifically, there is an acute shortfall of 44,400 sq.m for office space, alongside insufficient supply to meet our industrial and light industrial requirements.

- 3.8. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating Kingston's unmet development needs.
- 3.9. EEBC formally responded to this request on 21 April 2026 stating that "To inform the Local Plan, EEBC has carried out a robust and objective assessment of its employment needs which is detailed in the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)(2023). This found that there is demand for at least an additional 41,464 sqm of employment floorspace in the borough over the plan period. As such, due to the constrained nature of the borough and limited land available to meet Epsom and Ewell's own development needs, employment needs from elsewhere, including Kingston upon Thames, cannot be accommodated."

Meeting the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within the borough and wider unmet needs

- 3.10. The 2025 London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) identifies a requirement for 52 additional permanent pitches (2022–2032) and 100 residential units to address overcrowding for those currently in 'bricks and mortar' housing. Despite conducting site assessments of council-owned land and a Green Belt Review, RBK is still struggling to meet its need in the first 10 years of the New Local Plan.
- 3.11. RBK is continuing to investigate all reasonable opportunities to meet identified needs within the borough boundary, including through site allocations, optimisation of existing provision, and engagement with landowners and development partners.
- 3.12. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is a strategic cross-boundary matter requiring ongoing cooperation. The boroughs will continue to engage constructively and actively through the preparation of their respective Local Plans, including through the exchange of evidence and updates relating to accommodation needs, site delivery, and any emerging opportunities for collaboration.
- 3.13. EEBC formally responded to this request on 21 April 2026 stating that "EEBC's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2022) identified a need for an additional 18 traveller pitches within the borough over their plan period. The emerging Local Plan proposes the allocation of a site to deliver 10 new pitches leaving an unmet need of 8 pitches. A robust assessment as to how EEBC's Gypsy and Traveller needs could be met is documented in the Meeting Gypsy and Traveller Needs Topic Paper (2024). EEBC is therefore unable to assist in meeting the traveller needs arising from the RBK."

Infrastructure

- 3.14. RBK has produced an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identifies the key physical, social, and green infrastructure required to support the borough's projected population and housing growth over the plan period. The IDP specifies the locations for these projects, alongside delivery timescales and funding mechanisms (such as section 106 agreements and CIL) to ensure a coordinated and viable development process. As a 'live' document, the IDP will be subject to regular updates to reflect the borough's evolving needs and shifting priorities.
- 3.15. To ensure transparency, the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) serves as the statutory mechanism to monitor developer contributions and track IDP delivery. For real-time oversight, the Council also maintains public-facing 'live' records of S106 and CIL agreements, accessible through the Council's website.
- 3.16. Working with communities, Kingston has created community plans for each of the four neighbourhoods. These plans serve to identify local priorities, ensuring that investment from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) is directed toward resident-led community projects.
- 3.17. In September 2025, EEBC updated their [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) to support their emerging Local Plan. EEBC has highlighted the importance of properly assessing and mitigating the cumulative impact of development on the wider environment and infrastructure.

Schools and Education

- 3.18. RBK's education facilities - including childcare, primary schools, secondary schools, and further education facilities - are essential to the regional economy, providing direct training and employment opportunities while enriching the borough's cultural and social life. Achieving for Children (AfC) is commissioned to provide the Council's children's services, including planning for school places and specialist SEND places.
- 3.19. RBK currently offers approximately 15,500 primary school places and approximately 10,000 secondary school places. The recent rebuild of Burlington Junior School has allowed the school to expand from 4 forms of entry to 5 forms of entry, if needed. RBK will continue to work with schools and other educational partners to identify demand and consider how needs can best be met.
- 3.20. Key providers include Kingston University and Kingston College, of which the majority of students live outside the borough. To meet the needs of all learners, the Council will support the expansion and upgrades of both institutions, recognising their significance beyond boundary lines.
- 3.21. EEBC works with Surrey County Council to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet future needs at the early years stage through to post 16 education/training. Surrey County Council has provided EEBC with bespoke forecasts to identify the

primary and secondary pupil place growth arising from the Proposed Submission Local Plan. The forecasts identify that there is sufficient capacity within the existing school estate to accommodate the pupil growth. As part of EEBC's Local Plan examination, further work has been undertaken to assess the impact on school place provision if the housing requirement were to be increased by approximately 1,000 units. This identifies that although reduced, there is still capacity at primary level, while for secondary level there is some initial challenge to capacity, reaching a deficit peak of 60 places in 2029/30, which then returns to a surplus of places by 2031/32. Surrey County Council, as the Education Authority, advise that the deficit could be met through temporary bulge provision in existing schools, which would require financial contributions from new development.

3.22. Both parties agree that:

- Both authorities will continue to monitor school place provision against need to ensure there is sufficient capacity.
- There are no identified strategic cross boundary issues.

Sports and Recreational Facilities

3.23. The Council's approach to leisure, sport, and physical activity is currently guided by the Active Kingston Framework (2023), the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy (2022), the Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy (2023), and the Playing Pitch Strategy (2023). These strategies provide the evidence base for protecting and enhancing outdoor sports provision, increasing participation, and improving accessibility.

3.24. Sports facilities identified as in undersupply, and thus may require strategic cooperation, include (but are not limited to):

- Archery
- Golf courses
- Netball courts
- Skateparks
- Outdoor gyms
- Tennis courts

3.25. There are a range of sporting facilities in the borough of Epsom & Ewell and EEBC has undertaken a [Playing Pitch Strategy \(2021\)](#) and [Sports Facilities Assessment \(2020\)](#). These identify that there is a shortfall of playing pitches, particularly those with secured community use. The studies note that EEBC has a high level of 'imported demand' i.e. many users of facilities travel from outside the borough, demonstrating the cross-boundary nature of sports provision.

Healthcare

- 3.26. RBK is within the NHS Southwest London Integrated Care Board (ICB) area, while the Borough of Epsom & Ewell is within the NHS Surrey and Sussex Integrated Care Board area, following the merger of the Surrey and Sussex ICBs in April 2026.
- 3.27. The NHS South West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) is responsible for planning, allocating NHS resources, and coordinating health services for around 1.5 million people living and working across the six boroughs of Wandsworth, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton, and Croydon. Replacing the Clinical Commissioning Group in 2022, the ICB oversees primary care, hospital treatment, rehabilitation, urgent care, community health, and mental health services.
- 3.28. EEBC has worked with the Surrey Heartlands ICB to identify the impact on primary healthcare which arises from their Local Plan, and identify potential schemes to mitigate this, which are reflected in the plan. EEBC will continue this work with the Surrey and Sussex ICB.
- 3.29. Both parties agree that:
- Both authorities will continue to liaise with their ICB to ensure healthcare infrastructure needs continue to be met.

Transport

- 3.30. RBK works closely with Transport for London (TfL), which manages its strategic transport links, while Surrey County Council operates as the highways authority for the borough of Epsom and Ewell.
- 3.31. Main roads that cross the border between EEBC and RBK:
- A240 (Kingston Road)
 - Worcester Park Road / Old Malden Lane
 - B284 (Chessington Road)
 - B280 (Christ Church Road)
- 3.32. Overground rail lines that cross the border between EEBC and RBK:
- Mole Valley Line (Stations include Epsom, Ewell West, Worcester Park, Motspur Park)
- 3.33. Bus routes that cross the border between EEBC and RBK:
- Route 406 (Kingston to Epsom)
 - Route 418 (Kingston to Epsom via West Ewell)
 - Route 467 (Hook / Chessington to Epsom)
- 3.34. For Crossrail 2, Kingston's Local Plan recognises that the project may not come forward during the lifetime of either local plan (having been suspended in November 2020). Should the scheme progress, it would significantly improve strategic cross-boundary connectivity between RBK and the borough of Epsom and Ewell.

- 3.35. Within RBK, the Hook junction is a key public transport corridor, which is already significantly congested and close to the boundary of EEBC. RBK raised concerns in response to EEBC's Regulation 18 Draft Local plan consultation in relation to some of the proposed allocation sites, which are within reasonable proximity to the RBK borough boundary and the Hook junction. The concern is that the development of these sites will add pressure to the local road network, through the high likelihood of car dependency. EEBC has shared with RBK the Strategic Highways Modelling Assessment Report (2024) that identifies the impacts of the Proposed Submission Local Plan on the highway network to assist in identifying the potential impact at this location.
- 3.36. Both parties agree that:
- Information relating to transport studies/schemes will continue to be shared, where relevant.
 - EEBC and RBK will continue to work together to identify any mitigation that may be required to address the impact of growth.

Flood Risk

- 3.37. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change (PPG) set out the active role Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should take to ensure that flood risk is understood and managed effectively and sustainably throughout all stages of the planning process. The NPPF outlines that Local Plans should be supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and LPAs should use the findings to inform strategic land use planning.
- 3.38. RBK has commissioned Metis to produce an SFRA, including Level 1 and 2 Assessment, to inform the Local Plan.
- 3.39. This has been used by the Council to inform the preparation of the Local Plan, including the application of the Sequential Test to site allocations.
- 3.40. The borough is significantly constrained by fluvial flood risk emanating from the River Thames and its key tributaries: the River Hogsmill, Beverley Brook, and Surbiton Stream. The principal areas subject to this river flooding include:
- Kingston Town Centre (The Metropolitan Centre): This area is exceptionally vulnerable and faces acute flood risk due to the geographical confluence of the River Thames and the River Hogsmill. Strategic modelling shows that significant portions of the town centre, including land directly along the Thames, fall within these high-risk zones.
- The Hogsmill Valley: The land surrounding the River Hogsmill corridor as it flows from the east towards the town centre is a primary flood risk area.
- Eastern Boundary: The land forming the borough's eastern boundary is severely constrained by flood risk from Beverley Brook.

Chessington: In the south of the borough, areas surrounding the Bonesgate Stream are formally identified as being at risk of fluvial flooding.

- 3.41. Beyond river flooding, the densely urbanised and populated areas of the borough are highly susceptible to surface water flooding. To manage this, the borough's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) has categorised the risk into Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and five primary catchments: Bonesgate Stream, Surbiton Stream, Upper Hogsmill River, Beverley Brook, and the Thames and Lower Hogsmill Rivers.
- 3.42. Within EEBC, the main cause of flood risk in the Borough is from surface water flooding. Surrey County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the borough. EEBC's Proposed Submission Local Plan has been informed by the Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024.
- 3.43. The administrative boundary between RBK and EEBC encompasses areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3a. Both authorities will continue to work with each other to ensure that future development safely manages and mitigates this flood risk.

Views, Design, Heritage and Conservation

- 3.44. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the borough of Epsom and Ewell agree that the conservation of the historic environment and the delivery of high-quality, place-led design are matters requiring proactive and ongoing collaboration.
- 3.45. Significant portions of the boundary between RBK and EEBC are designated as areas of archeological significance. Both authorities agree to recognise their importance by protecting and/or further enhancing these areas.

Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

- 3.46. RBK and EEBC agree that the protection, enhancement, and restoration of the natural environment and strategic green and blue infrastructure are cross-boundary matters necessitating sustained, coordinated action.
- 3.47. Both authorities acknowledge that vital ecological networks, most notably the Hogsmill River corridor, transcend administrative boundaries and provide essential ecosystem services, including climate resilience, natural flood management, and biodiversity conservation.
- 3.48. Both councils are committed to aligning our respective planning frameworks to secure measurable Biodiversity Net Gain and support the cross-boundary delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, ensuring that development near the boundary contributes to a robust, climate-resilient, and multi-functional green infrastructure network.
- 3.49. Furthermore, the authorities agree to actively collaborate to appropriately manage the impacts of development on shared, adjacent, and internationally or nationally

designated nature conservation sites, including the Epsom and Ashstead Commons, and Horton Country Park.

Green Belt

- 3.50. The two boroughs have land designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and thus must work strategically to ensure the purposes of the Green Belt remain protected in accordance with national policy while also meeting their identified development needs.
- 3.51. Both RBK and EEBC are proposing through their Submission Local Plan to release some Green Belt land for development. There is a significant need for housing and limited availability of development sites within the boroughs, as identified in the evidence base, and so RBK and EEBC consider that exceptional circumstances therefore exist to justify the release of some Green Belt land for development.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

- 3.52. RBK declared a Climate Change Emergency in 2019 and EEBC has committed to tackling climate change.
- 3.53. Both RBK and EEBC are proposing through their Local Plans to introduce a range of policies to reduce carbon emissions from new development, mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce water use.

Record of agreement

- 3.54. Both parties agree that the above represents the key strategic matters at this stage of the Local Plan process.

4. Governance Arrangements

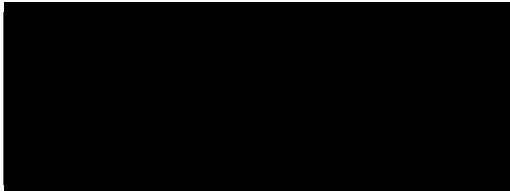
- 4.1. SoCGs need to be prepared and then maintained on an ongoing basis; and be made publicly available to allow transparency. This SoCG is a live document, to be reviewed and updated regularly so that it reflects the most up-to-date position in terms of joint working, especially:
 - 4.1.1. Whenever agreements on outstanding matters have been reached and where progress in addressing strategic cross boundary matters is achieved, or
 - 4.1.2. At each subsequent key stage of the plan making process, as it progresses towards adoption.
- 4.2. Requirements for signing documents differ between Local Authorities depending on their structure. It will be for each body to decide who is the appropriate person to sign the statement.

5. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation

- 5.1. This statement has been informed by on-going engagement between the parties and has been informed by various evidence base documents.
- 5.2. This SoCG is a live document and will be reviewed on a regular basis, informed by continued communication between the parties through meetings, statutory consultation at key plan making stages and electronic communication.

6. Signatories

- 6.1. Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.
- 6.2. Both parties agree that they have engaged positively on an ongoing basis and that on this basis the Duty to Cooperate has been met.
- 6.3. Both parties agree that there are no substantial areas of disagreement between the parties relating to the emerging Kingston Local Plan and will both continue to work proactively on the key strategic cross boundary issues identified in this SCG.

Signed:	Signed:
	
Name:	Name:
Hannah Harris	Councillor Peter O'Donovan
Position:	Position:
Head of Spatial Planning	Chair of Licencing and Planning Policy Committee
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Date: 30/07/2026	Date: 19/08/2026



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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KINGSTON
UPON THAMES