



Kingston Local Plan

**Statement of Common Ground between
The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
and Surrey County Council**

August 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 Kingston'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 Surrey County Council (SCC), 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 29th June and 24th August 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. RBK will consult on the Publication Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) between July and September 2026.

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 (RBK) 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. RBK 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 local services including planning, and the county council is responsible for strategic functions and services such as transport, education and minerals and waste planning. 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 Figure 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 new 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.

Transport

- 3.3. Both RBK and SCC recognise that the development and growth proposed in the Kingston Local Plan will have direct cross-boundary impacts on the shared highway and transport network. To address this, both authorities are committed to ongoing partnership working.
- 3.4. Cooperation will prioritise the development of sustainable travel corridors, active travel routes, and public transport links between RBK and Surrey. This collaborative approach aims to support cross-boundary commuting and alleviate transport pressures on residents following the London Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expansion. Cooperation will also consider how strategic development sites connect to and interact with neighbouring areas, including the design of access arrangements and movement patterns across administrative boundaries.
- 3.5. Both parties agree to collaborate on vital strategic infrastructure projects aimed at reducing localised congestion, improving connectivity, and ensuring that transport impacts arising from growth do not adversely affect neighbouring communities. This will include key network hot-spots, including the A3/A309 intersection, the Tolworth junction, the A3 Hook Roundabout, and the proposed Kingston Bypass Greenway extension.

Green Belt, MOL & other Open Spaces

- 3.6. Both authorities recognise the strategic importance of protecting the Green Belt and maintaining open spaces along the shared boundary. Following discussions regarding the progression of the RBK Local Plan, it is agreed that SCC will actively monitor the potential impacts of any large-scale development or Green Belt release within RBK on cross-boundary infrastructure.
- 3.7. Both parties are committed to ensuring that any future boundary alterations or nearby developments do not adversely affect the integrity of Surrey's adjacent green infrastructure networks or place unmitigated pressure on surrounding county services.

Minerals & Waste Planning

- 3.8. Together with the neighbouring boroughs of Croydon, Merton and Sutton, RBK prepared and adopted the joint development plan document, the South London Waste Plan in 2012 and its review, the South London Waste Plan 2022. The South London Waste Plan 2022 was adopted on 14 December 2022.
- 3.9. As the statutory Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Surrey, SCC raised critical concerns regarding the safeguarding of strategic mineral infrastructure adjacent to the borough boundary. A key area of discussion centred on Site Allocation 44 (Tolworth Station) in the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan, where a proposed mixed-use development threatened to encroach upon operational rail infrastructure functioning as an aggregates depot.
- 3.10. In response to these concerns, and in accordance with the "agent of change" principle outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and London Plan, RBK has agreed to remove the mixed-use allocation proposal for the Tolworth strategic rail freight site from its forthcoming draft plan.
- 3.11. Both authorities agree that the Tolworth Days Aggregates (TDA) depot is an invaluable asset for imported aggregates serving both Surrey and southwest London. Consequently, RBK's Local Plan policies will ensure that adjacent developments are appropriately designed to prevent conflicts regarding noise, dust, air quality, and odour, thereby safeguarding the facility's ongoing operations.

Schools and Education

- 3.12. 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. SCC has responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient schools and early years places to support growth in Surrey.
- 3.13. RBK will continue to work with schools and other educational partners to identify demand and consider how needs can best be met.
- 3.14. Key providers in RBK 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.
- 3.15. SCC has concerns about the potential impact of housing growth on school places near the boundary. This matter will require ongoing liaison through the plan period.

Infrastructure

- 3.16. 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.
- 3.17. 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, RBK also maintains public-facing 'live' records of S106 and CIL agreements, accessible through the Council's website.
- 3.18. Working with communities, RBK 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.

Flood Risk

- 3.19. RBK and SCC share localised and strategic flooding risks associated with the River Thames and its immediate tributaries. Both authorities recognise that managing these risks requires a coordinated, catchment-level approach that extends beyond individual council boundaries.
- 3.20. SCC acts as a joint lead authority alongside the Environment Agency on the River Thames Scheme (RTS). This major strategic infrastructure project is designed to reduce flood risk to thousands of homes and businesses through the installation of new river channels and control gates at existing weirs, including Sunbury, Molesey, and Teddington.
- 3.21. RBK agrees to explicitly reference the River Thames Scheme within the flood risk policies and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) of the emerging Local Plan. This will formally acknowledge and support these vital cross-boundary flood mitigation efforts and ensure infrastructure planning is aligned.

Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

- 3.22. Blue infrastructure forms a uniquely significant component of RBK's natural capital, providing multifunctional benefits including transport, drainage, urban cooling, and wildlife habitats. The River Thames flows along the western boundary, providing a major ecological corridor that connects diverse landscapes, heritage assets, and urban waterfronts.

- 3.23. RBK and SCC 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.
- 3.24. Both authorities acknowledge that vital ecological networks transcend administrative boundaries and provide essential ecosystem services, including climate resilience, natural flood management, and biodiversity conservation.
- 3.25. With regard to Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), SCC has produced one covering Surrey and the GLA has produced one for London.
- 3.26. Both councils are committed to aligning our respective planning frameworks to secure measurable Biodiversity Net Gain and support the cross-boundary delivery of LNRSs, ensuring that development near the boundary contributes to a robust, climate-resilient, and multi-functional green infrastructure network.
- 3.27. 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 Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common, and the Epsom and Ashstead Commons.

Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

- 3.28. 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.
- 3.29. 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.
- 3.30. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is a strategic cross-boundary matter requiring ongoing cooperation. RBK and SCC 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.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

- 3.31. RBK and SCC declared a Climate Change Emergency in 2019.
- 3.32. RBK's Regulation 19 local plan proposes introducing a range of policies to reduce carbon emissions from new development, mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce water use.

3.33.RBK participates in pan London forums on climate change matters and while climate change is a strategic cross boundary matter for all councils, there are no specific issues identified between SCC and RBK.

Record of agreement:

3.34.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:
	
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Date: 29.06.2026	Date: 06.07.2026



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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KINGSTON
UPON THAMES