



# Local Plan Direction of Travel Consultation

The best for our borough

IN BRIEF



## Richmond Local Plan

The Borough is developing a new Local Plan. This leaflet provides a summary of the 10 themes that will inform a new vision for the borough. While parts of the 2018 Local Plan's vision are still relevant, some elements need updating, especially in relation to the borough's climate emergency and growing population.

### What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan is the key planning document for the borough. It will set out policies and guidance to shape our places, plan and manage growth and guide development across the borough over a 15-year period. We will use the Local Plan to guide our decisions on the location, amount and type of development the borough needs to accommodate growth. It will also set out which places will be protected, and which places will change. Ultimately, the Local Plan will be the main document against which we assess planning applications.

### Why a new local plan?

- Richmond Council has announced a climate emergency. Planning policies need to reflect and actively addresses this issue.
- Richmond borough is changing and has a growing population. The Local Plan needs to reflect the new challenges and opportunities arising in the borough, as well as new trends, technologies and needs, especially in terms of the environment.

- The Mayor of London has produced a new London Plan, which our Local Plan must adhere to, including housing targets, while ensuring we maintain the special character of our borough.
- There have been changes to national planning policies, which our Local Plan must reflect.

### Our place in London

Richmond is located in South West London, with the River Thames running through. In 2015 the population was 194,750 but is expected to rise 8% by 2025, including an increased proportion of the elderly. Richmond has the highest house prices in outer London and the median annual earning of residents is higher than the London average. However, there are also areas of deprivation in the borough.

While the borough has several train stations and tube stops, and a bus network, there are some areas that are poorly connected. The borough is fortunate in its green and open spaces, and their



enhancement and protection must be included in the Local Plan.

Ten themes have been identified that will inform the new vision for growth in the borough. They are as follows:

### **1. Responding to the climate emergency and taking action**

- To address the borough's climate emergency, delivering a sustainable built environment is vital. This includes mitigating adverse impacts of climate change, in particular the increased risk of flooding in the borough and increased temperatures affecting our biodiversity.
- Planning policies should require zero carbon standards in developments, encourage a circular economy and explore the potential for a decentralised energy networks.

### **2. Delivering new homes and an affordable borough for all**

- The borough is facing increased housing targets, and the population is changing. There is a need to plan for new homes, also in terms of housing size, type and tenure.
- The current Local Plan is addressing government policies and specific community needs, and will be informed by a Local Housing Needs Assessment in 2020/2021.

- The new Local Plan must include policies that maximise delivery of new housing. They need to clearly identify which housing should go where and set priorities for the type and size of dwellings.
- Buying and renting homes in the borough is expensive and there is a need for genuinely affordable housing. The new Local Plan needs policies which ensure developments include affordable housing and that targets for this are met.

### **3. Shaping and supporting our town and local centres as they adapt to changes in the way we shop**

- Richmond has five town centres and about thirty local and neighbourhood centres and parades. The new Local Plan must have policies that ensure shopping floorspace meets needs.
- The way we shop is changing our high streets and therefore being flexible is key.
- Policies should ensure there is a range of shops and services, allowing for change whilst making sure that vacancies are minimised.
- Research will be conducted will be conducted to ensure planning reflects retail needs and is flexible to accommodate changing shopping habits.



#### 4. Increasing jobs and helping business to grow

- Richmond's largest economic sectors are business services, creative industries and the visitor economy, with many residents being self-employed or owning micro-businesses. There is an increase in people working from home and using shared office spaces.
- There is a lack of affordable space for businesses, especially for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. Due to the constant pressure for change of use to housing, it is important that business and employment space is protected.
- River-dependent industries should continue to be protected.
- Developments should ensure that there is no overall net loss of industrial floorspace capacity and proposals should ensure that sufficient yard space is provided, meeting the operational requirements of the uses proposed.
- Determine workspace needs, in terms of the types of offices and workspaces provided, ensuring it addresses requirements of local enterprise and business development.

#### 5. Protecting what is special and improving our areas (including Heritage, Culture, and Green infrastructure and protecting open land)

##### 1. Heritage

- The borough is blessed with an exceptional historic environment, including conservation areas, royal parks and listed buildings throughout the borough.
- The need to preserve or enhance our heritage is a priority. New developments are encouraged to be carefully designed and managed in relation to the historic character of the borough.
- The new Local Plan will seek to encourage appropriate developments while preserving the character of the heritage in the borough.

##### 2. Culture

- Richmond has a diverse cultural sector and the Council seeks to increase participation and develop services in arts, culture and sports.
- Currently town centres are encouraged to develop proposals for leisure, cultural and tourism facilities, and encourage sustainable growth of the visitor economy.
- The new Local Plan seeks to further embed culture at the heart of our communities.



### 3. Green Infrastructure

- The rivers, surrounding banks and green spaces, along with their biodiversity and wildlife, are protected and where possible enhanced.
- A review of existing Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Other Open Land of Townscape Importance will be conducted for the new Local Plan to inform the spatial strategy and approach to growth and development in the borough.

### 6. Increasing biodiversity and the quality of our green spaces, and greening the borough

- Richmond has a large amount of green space which is used by the public and has great social value. However, it needs protecting, especially with pressures for housing and business space.
- About two thirds of Richmond is protected by either open space or conservation area status.
- The Local Plan will emphasise the maintenance and improvement of biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and the retention of important landscape features.
- It is proposed to develop a bespoke Urban Greening Factor model for the borough, and to further enhance open and green spaces.

### 7. Improving design, delivering beautiful buildings and high quality places

- Richmond has a variety of heritage assets and conservation areas. Policies need to ensure that new developments fit in with the local character.
- A set of clearly defined design expectations needs to be developed to ensure that new buildings are well designed and contribute positively to the character of the townscape.
- A review of locations that have capacity for development and suitability to accommodate tall buildings will be undertaken through an Urban Design Study.
- Develop effective place making strategies that will strengthen the connection between people and places.



## 8. Reducing the need to travel and improving the choices for more sustainable travel

- Richmond's new Climate Emergency Strategy recognises that transport has a large role in greenhouse gas emissions, and the Council must address this by making it easier for people to use sustainable forms of travel.
- On-Street parking reflects present reliance on car use in the borough and dominates the street scene.
- Working with Transport for London, it is important that connectivity and public transport is improved, while maintaining the public realm and addressing traffic regulation.
- New developments and transport schemes need to address car usage, cycle parking and the provision of sustainable transport, and encourage behaviour change.

## 9. Securing new social and community infrastructure to support a growing population

- Social and community infrastructure, such as leisure centres, health and wellbeing and cultural places and schools, are valued and should meet the needs of a growing population.
- The requirement for infrastructure provision will be addressed in an Infrastructure Delivery Statement by December 2020.

- It is important to continue protecting social infrastructure. Policies should support the provision of new and flexible social infrastructure where it is needed.

## 10. Creating safe, healthy and inclusive communities

- Richmond wants to continue providing healthy, inclusive and safe places. 40% of the borough's land area is publicly accessible parks, with 28% of residents using outdoor space for exercise and health reasons, which is the second highest in London.
- Local Plan policies promote healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities through active and sustainable travel, addressing air quality, the provision of services to treat physical and mental health, access to healthy and affordable food and providing safe and secure places.
- Further development of policies that promote healthy and inclusive lifestyles, encourage social interaction and take into account security needs to be included in the new Local Plan.



## We want to hear your views

Let us know what priorities you think the new Local Plan needs to address, and what should be taken into account in our new vision for growth in the borough.

The documents and accompanying questionnaire can be viewed and commented on until Sunday 22 March 2020 on the Council's website at [www.richmond.gov.uk/new\\_local\\_plan\\_direction\\_of\\_travel\\_engagement](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/new_local_plan_direction_of_travel_engagement)

Paper documents are also available to view at all borough libraries and at the Civic Centre in Twickenham.

## What happens after this?

There will be further engagement opportunities to inform and shape the new Local Plan later in 2020 as part of this informal consultation. Next year, there will be statutory consultations on draft versions of the new Local Plan, following an independent examination in public, with anticipated adoption of the new Plan in 2024.

