

Growth Committee

13 October 2016

Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Report by the Director of Place

Purpose

To adopt the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. To note that the Direction of Travel responds to the consultation process and provides a clear direction and joint statement of intent between the Council and the Greater London Authority.

Recommendations of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

To **resolve** that -

1. the Committee notes the consultation responses and the consequential modifications made.
2. prior to adoption, the Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, be given delegated authority to make factual amendments to the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.
3. the Committee agrees to formally adopt the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames subject to the Mayor of London also adopting it, as set out in Annex 1 (circulated separately).

Key Points

- A. This report seeks the formal adoption of the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (Annex 1).
- B. The Direction of Travel will also be taken to the Mayor of London on 17 October 2016 to gain formal approval to adopt alongside the Borough.
- C. Once adopted by the Council, the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough upon Thames will play a key role in the early production of the Local Plan.
- D. Once adopted by the Greater London Authority, it will provide supplementary planning advice to the London Plan policies by supporting the selective redevelopment of areas within the borough to provide new homes, jobs and investment.
- E. The Direction of Travel Consultation Draft was published for consultation from 24th June 2016 to 29th August 2016 for a period of eight weeks.
- F. The Council engaged in a comprehensive engagement process during this period which followed best practice. Importantly, it reflected the requirements of the Council's draft revised Statement of Community Involvement.
- G. Minor amendments have been made to the document in response to the public consultation (Annex 1). A highlighted version of amendments to the Brief can be viewed in Annex 4. A Consultation Statement setting out the Council's full approach to consultation, and an analysis of the responses received is attached as Annex 2.

Context

1. This Direction of Travel has been jointly prepared by the Council's Strategic Planning team and officers from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL). It seeks to take forward activity on the new Local Plan, the emerging Kingston Opportunity Area as well as the areas of opportunity which have

arisen as part of the potential future delivery of Crossrail 2. The Direction of Travel therefore reflects the culmination of ideas on all of these projects to date.

2. Once adopted by the GLA, the Direction of Travel will provide supplementary planning advice to the current London Plan policies by supporting the selective redevelopment of areas within the borough to provide new homes, jobs and investment. It will also be used to inform the designation of the Kingston Opportunity Area in the draft London Plan, which is expected later in 2017.
3. As the Direction of Travel has been jointly produced, it will be taken by colleagues at the GLA to the Mayor of London for adoption on 17 October 2016.
4. For further detail and background on the Direction of Travel, please refer to the June Growth Committee Report (9 June 2016) (Background Report).

Consultation

5. The Direction of Travel Consultation Draft was published for consultation from 24th June 2016 to 29th August 2016 for a period of eight weeks.
6. The Council consulted the 'specific' consultation bodies identified in the planning regulations as well as other 'general consultees'. Approximately 2000 stakeholders registered on the Strategic Planning consultation database were also consulted by letter and email.
7. A press release publicising the consultation was sent to the local press and published on the Council's website. The document was made available on the Council's website, at reception in the Council offices, at the seven libraries and at all GP surgeries across the borough. Audio summaries of the document were prepared and uploaded to CDs for the benefit of the visually-impaired.
8. The Council undertook a comprehensive programme of eight engagement and drop in events throughout summer 2016, all of which were advertised through the Council's website, social media and the distribution of consultation posters and leaflets across the borough.
9. Presentations and meetings were also offered to local groups and the Neighbourhood Conversation events.
10. During the public consultation, the Leader of the Council ran a series of Kingston Conversation events which focussed on Growth and the Direction of Travel. Officers assisted Communications colleagues throughout these events and attended as experts in the room to talk about growth and transport plans for the borough.
11. The public consultation followed best practice whilst being tailored for the specific requirements of the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. Importantly, it reflected the requirements of the Council's emerging revised Statement of Community Involvement.
12. A total of 219 responses were received; 172 consultees responded via the online portal and a further 47 emailed responses were received from both local residents, businesses and statutory consultees. A total number of 1,518 comments were received. All responses were compiled and analysed by the Strategic Planning team.

13. A Consultation Statement has been produced which sets out in detail who was consulted, when and where during the public consultation (Annex 2). The Statement also sets out a summary of the responses received and, where appropriate, amendments have been made to the document in response to the consultation.

Consultation Responses

14. The Council's Strategic Business team prepared a quantitative analysis of the online responses received for the document. This is appended to the Consultation Statement (Annex 2).
15. The quantitative analysis showed that 87% of all online responses received were from residents. For the most part, agreement with the statements and questions used in the analysis far outweighed disagreement.
16. Generally responses were supportive of protecting heritage and the character of the borough, as well as the green and open space, and the desire to limit the impact of pollution. Transport and congestion was an issue as expected, particularly in the south of the borough.
17. The concept of development was supported, although many commented that developers need to have more consideration for affordable housing and a greater sensitivity in their developments for what keeps the borough unique.
18. All consultation comments and Council responses are set out in full in Annex 3.

Main Observations and Changes

19. There were a range of issues raised through the consultation which mainly related to the proposed growth ambitions. Most concerns related to the scale of growth and density that is projected and the detrimental impact that could be caused to the borough's character and heritage, traffic congestion and local services such as the increased pressures on healthcare facilities and schools.
20. Affordable housing was recognised as a key issue that the Direction of Travel didn't address as part of meeting the needs of the growing population.
21. The protection of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land was raised, particularly in relation to the Hogsmill, Tolworth and Chessington. It is important to recognise that the Council will review all of our open spaces as a key part of our evidence base through the Local Plan.
22. A range of other matters were raised that related directly to the formation of the Local Plan. These have been acknowledged and noted and will be carried forward into the Issues and Options stage of preparing the Local Plan.

Document Changes

23. A number of changes have been made to the Direction of Travel that recognise both consultation responses and some general updates that were required. A highlighted version of amendments to the Brief can be viewed in Annex 4. All changes have now been incorporated and key ones are set out below:
 - General formatting and updates includes including making maps and keys clearer, checking the positioning of layers - i.e. the railway stations, and updating population statistics.

- Adding Hogsmill as a notable key place to the Kingston places map
- Expanding on the section regarding the Outer London Commission to emphasise that “these is no one size fits all solution for town centre renewal, so any intensification of development would take account of the particular needs and characteristics of a town centre.
- Adding in a sentence about affordable housing, acknowledging its importance in relation to the needs of the rapidly rising population.
- Including Eden Walk as part of the ‘Story So Far’ as it has recently gained planning permission within Kingston town centre
- Adding in a number of Environment Agency schemes to the Infrastructure Improvements map

Sub area maps

- An additional bullet point has been added in each sub area to emphasise that any growth must be balanced with the unique heritage and character of the borough
- Kingston - inclusion of a bullet point regarding the potential for enhancing and improving higher educational facilities.
- Berrylands and Hogsmill - additional bullet point to emphasise that the Hogsmill valley and its ecology will continue to be protected

Next Steps

24. All work will commence once the recommendations within the report have been agreed by the Committee, the decision published and the call in period successfully completed. Following this, final proof reading and any minor amendments identified by this Committee; the Direction of Travel Document will be taken forward and prepared for publication and formal adoption.
25. When published an adoption statement, consultation statement and a copy of the final document will be made available on the Council’s website.
26. Once adopted by both the Council and the GLA, the Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough upon Thames will be published. This is anticipated to be in early November 2016. After which time the Direction of Travel will play a key role in the production of the Local Plan.

Resource Implications

27. The production of the Direction of Travel is jointly funded by the Strategic Planning team and the GLA through departmental budgets. It is proposed that there will be a print run for the final adopted Direction of Travel. Copies will be available to purchase by the public and third parties with a reasonable charge applied to cover printing costs. Digital copies will be available for download from the Council’s website free of charge.
28. The cost associated with the public consultation forms part of the committed budget of the Strategic Planning team.

Legal Implications

29. Legal advice will be secured when necessary on an ongoing basis as part of the process of developing and formulating the documentation associated with the new Local Plan and the emerging Opportunity Area.

30. There is a close relationship and there will be numerous interdependencies between this document and the new Local Plan, its activities and the emerging Kingston Opportunity Area. This will also require on-going legal oversight and the provision of advice as the project progresses to mitigate potential duplication and conflict.

Risk Assessment

31. A range of risks can be identified. Those known and of significance at this stage relate to issues discussed above including how the Direction of Travel and the local Plan integrate (or conflict) with one another (project resources, relationship/ interdependency to the new London Plan, emerging Local Plan and community/stakeholder ambition/engagement). Mitigation of these risks is linked to extensive engagement with local communities and stakeholders, ongoing discussions with GLA and TfL, legal support, and the production of project management documentation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

32. This is not required at this stage. A full assessment will be produced as matters progress with the production of the new Local Plan.

Road Network Implications

33. None.

Environmental Implications

34. None.

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List of reports and supporting information

- Annex 1 - Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- Annex 2 - Direction of Travel - Consultation Statement
- Annex 3 - Direction of Travel - Responses from the Public Consultation
- Annex 4 - Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames - Tracked Changes

List of Background reports/document

- Growth Committee, 9th June 2016, Direction of Travel for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- Growth Committee, 17th March 2016, Local Development Scheme: Revised
- Infrastructure, Planning and Contracts Committee, 25th June 2015, The Need for a New Borough-wide Local Plan and new Local Development Scheme
- Infrastructure, Projects and Contracts Committee, 24th March 2015, The Kingston Opportunity Area
- Place and Sustainability Committee, 27th March 2014, Consultation on the Further Alterations to the London Plan