



Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Local Development Framework

K+20
Kingston Town Centre
Area Action Plan

Sustainability
Appraisal

June 2005

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Appendices (these are available separately and can be viewed at the planning reception in Guildhall II in Kingston, at the borough libraries, and on the Council's website www.kingston.gov.uk)

Appendix 1: Relevant strategies, plans and programmes

Appendix 2: Baseline data

Appendix 3: Sustainability Framework

Appendix 4: Appraisal matrices for the elements of the Area Action Plan 'spatial vision'

Appendix 5: Appraisal matrices for sites

1.0 Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Kingston Council is preparing an Area Action Plan for Kingston, a successful metropolitan town centre, as part of the new 'Local Development Framework' for the borough.
- 1.2 When adopted, the Area Action Plan will replace existing planning policies for the town centre in Chapter 12 of the Unitary Development Plan Proposed First Alteration (UDP). The Area Action Plan is currently scheduled for adoption in April 2007 following an 'examination' by a Planning Inspector in September 2006. The Area Action Plan will cover the same area of the town centre as the UDP town centre inset area.
- 1.3 The purpose of this 'sustainability appraisal' is to assess the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the 'Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan - Preferred Options' as set out in the consultation document and summary, which will be the subject of public consultation in June and July 2005.

How to comment

- 1.4 This Sustainability Appraisal Report is out for consultation with the Area Action Plan Preferred Options. Both reports can be viewed at the planning reception in Guildhall II in Kingston, at the borough libraries, and on the Council's website [www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus 20](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus20)
- 1.5 The deadline for any comments to be received is **5pm on Friday 5 August 2005.**

The Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan

- 1.6 A number of factors have led to the need to review current planning policies for Kingston town centre and to plan for the future to enhance and develop the town centre for the benefit of the whole community. The Council wants to ensure that Kingston remains a thriving, vibrant, popular, attractive and environmentally sustainable town centre, providing a good quality of life, work and leisure for residents, workers and visitors.
- 1.7 The town centre covers a compact area (80ha.), fronting the riverside and surrounded by housing. This constrains the area available for town centre activities and expansion. There is pressure and need for new development and facilities, including shops; housing; employment, leisure, cultural, community and educational facilities, as well as transport and environmental improvements.
- 1.8 Kingston is a sub-regional shopping centre. However there has been no new retail development for over 10 years, competing centres are

expanding with new shops and Kingston risks losing trade and shoppers. Retail studies conclude that there is now need, demand and capacity for new shopping facilities. At the same time the Council is seeking a town centre that caters for a full range of town centre activities serving local people and visitors.

- 1.9 Some areas of the town centre offer significant opportunities for new development, whilst other areas, especially the riverside and the area around the Market Place, have significant natural and cultural heritage value, which needs to be preserved and enhanced. The Area Action Plan will identify key areas suitable for change to accommodate new development and facilities and key areas for conservation, in order to protect the town from inappropriate unplanned development and to preserve and enhance its attractive character, its heritage, historic core & the riverside. Currently, there are only two areas of vacant land in the town centre, around Vicarage Road and on the former 'Power Station' site and two areas of under-utilised land used for surface car parking, around Ashdown Road and Sopwith Way, which are suitable for development.
- 1.10 This review of the town centre, known as K+20, was launched in 2003 with a stakeholders' workshop and audit of the town centre, which focussed on the town centre's strengths, weaknesses and aspirations for the future. The main strengths were identified as: the variety and quality of shops; the riverside and new riverside development; the historic Market Place; the Rotunda leisure development and the town's attractive character. The main weaknesses were identified as traffic congestion; parking; poor approaches to the town centre, poor quality streetscape in some areas and issues associated with the vibrant evening economy, which attracts large numbers of young people.
- 1.11 The Area Action Plan will set out the spatial vision for the town centre and provide the planning framework identifying areas of change and conservation, with policies and proposals to promote and manage development and improvements over the next 20 years. It is a way of ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change and conservation. The AAP will be the Council's first Development Plan Document under the new planning system. It will influence planning decisions by the Council on new development and transport infrastructure.

Findings of the sustainability appraisal

- 1.12 The sustainability appraisal was carried out in two parts. Firstly the various elements of the spatial vision were appraised, followed by detailed appraisal of the Proposal Sites.

1.13 The main positive findings from appraisal of the Area Action Plan Preferred Options spatial vision are:

- a. Growth in retail floor space with redevelopment should enhance Kingston's role as regional centre, preventing decline against competing centres;
- b. The Area Action Plan offers the opportunity to improve streetscape, and achieve environmental enhancements, enhance 'gateways' into the town centre and incorporate sustainable construction;
- c. Additional housing in the town centre will help meet housing needs and deliver affordable housing for local people. Proximity to public transport and town centre facilities means less need to travel and potential for fewer car trips from residents.
- d. Re-balancing the car parking should reduce traffic congestion, with knock-on benefits for environmental quality and accessibility for those who need to use vehicles, such as some disabled people, and freight delivery;
- e. Retaining viable office accommodation and providing new and enhanced office space should mean Kingston retains its role as a centre for office employment, not losing out entirely to residential and retail uses. It supports delivery of a robust local economy with balanced employment, more jobs for local residents and less need to travel for work.
- f. The enhanced range of cultural and entertainment attractions and community facilities should mean a wider spread of age groups are attracted to the town centre with positive benefits for the evening economy and helping to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- g. New bus and improved railway stations will make public transport a more attractive proposition reducing car use and associated problems of congestion and pollution;
- h. The growth of the university and college has positive benefits for the vitality of the town centre and the local economy.
- i. New health facilities will have positive benefits for residents;
- j. The programme for environmental improvements will help ensure that Kingston remains an attractive place to visit and shop.

1.14 The most significant areas of potential conflict arising from the Area Action Plan spatial vision are:

- a. Further development has the potential alter the existing townscape, which in turn may impact upon the centre's historic environment and its open spaces if not managed appropriately;
- b. The constraints to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity are still a valid issue for consideration in the Area Action Plan
- c. If access is made easier by all modes of transport, including travel by private car, then people may not be encouraged to consider alternative means of travelling to the town centre;
- d. Providing for further commercial, leisure and tourism activities with the Kingston Town Centre may result in greater transport movements by both public and private vehicles;
- e. Where developable land is a scarce commodity, restrictions in building height and scale may not be consistent with seeking to maximise the potential of an individual site;
- f. The enhancement of the historic character of the town centre may require the use of materials that are not the most cost effective in terms of energy efficiency and/or maintenance.

Sustainability Appraisal of proposal sites: summary of findings

- 1.15 The preferred options for sites have been appraised, generally with positive sustainability effects. A mix of town centre uses is proposed, including residential, retail, offices, hotel, open spaces, and cultural, leisure and community uses. Affordable housing is a high priority and can be delivered via new housing, though a key issue is whether the types of homes that can be built in the town centre will contribute to much needed family housing. There is also an issue of competition for scarce sites and outstanding need from Kingston University for student housing.
- 1.16 Development objectives for the different character areas are designed to ensure that development is appropriate to its context, respects the historic elements or other attributes, distinctive of the locality.
- 1.17 Comprehensive, as opposed to piecemeal development is sought with benefits in terms of design and economies of scale to make the most of new development and the opportunities it can bring to improve the environment and provide socially beneficial facilities.

The difference this sustainability appraisal process has made to the plan-making process

- 1.18 The assessment of the preferred options shows that the objectives of the Plan are in general conformity with the themes of other relevant plans, policies and programmes. It has highlighted a few sustainability implications that could possibly arise from adopting the Preferred Options. While it is necessary at this stage that the Plan remains relatively broad, to allow open discussion with the public over the best policy approach to take, it is anticipated that the submitted scheme will provide the detailed required to address the sustainability issues raised through the assessment.
- 1.19 The assessment will help to inform decision-makers and the public in their consideration of the pros and cons of adopting the Preferred Options, including the inter-relationship of the options.

2.0 Sustainable Development and the Sustainability Appraisal process

- 2.1 This document is a Sustainability Appraisal of the 'Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan: Preferred Options' going out for public consultation in June and July 2005.
- 2.2 The purpose of 'sustainability appraisal' is to identify the significant likely effects of the preferred options and report on the extent to which implementation of these preferred options will achieve the social, environmental, and economic objectives of sustainable development.
- 2.3 The World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The test of how well the Preferred Options of the 'Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan' contribute towards sustainable development depends on how well they foster:
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
 - Effective protection of the environment
 - Prudent use of natural resources
 - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- 2.4 The sustainability assessment report is an audit trail of how the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan was prepared. Its purpose is to demonstrate whether and how the Area Action Plan, and its likely significant effects, take account of the social, environmental, and economic objectives of sustainable development, and whether these objectives have been effectively translated into sustainable policies. Like most audits, the Sustainability Appraisal report will accompany the Area Action Plan when it is published for community involvement and will be subject to public scrutiny and comment.
- 2.5 The Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan is not only subject to sustainability appraisal (as required by the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004), it is also subject to the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the 'assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment'. This is also referred to as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and is a similar tool to sustainability appraisal, except that it focuses on environmental issues only, whereas sustainability appraisal looks at social and economic impacts as well.
- 2.6 To implement the SEA Directive the Government published the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. It is the enactment of these regulations that places the requirement upon Local Planning Authorities to integrate both the plan-making and sustainability appraisal processes. Work began on 'K+20 Strategy', which has now become the Kingston Area Action Plan, back in 2003 and

as such the earlier stages did not follow the requirements of these Regulations. While the Government has waived the need for a SA scoping report where the timing of publication pre-dates the guidance, the authors of this report have sought to ensure consistency with the sustainability appraisal process for a Development Plan Document (DPD) where this has been possible.

Compliance with the SEA Directive/Regulations

2.7 **Table 1** provides a list of the SEA Directive requirements and establishes where these requirements have been covered in this sustainability report.

Table 1: Compliance with the SEA Directive/Regulations	
Summary of the SEA Directive requirements	Where covered in this SA Report
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives and relationship with other relevant plans, policies and programmes.	3.6 – 3.15 5.2 – 5.3 Appendix 1
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the Area Action Plan.	5.4, 5.5 Appendix 2
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be affected	5.6 – 5.27 Appendix 2
d) Any existing environmental problems, which are relevant to the Area Action Plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	5.28, 5.29 Table 2
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international community or national level, which are relevant to the Area Action Plan and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	5.2 Appendix 1
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climate factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscapes and the interrelationships between the above factors	Appendix 4 Appendix 5
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible offset, any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Area Action Plan.	Appendix 4 Appendix 5
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or the lack of know-how) encountered in the compiling of the required information.	7.2 – 7.59
i) A description of the measures envisaged concerning the monitoring in accordance with Article 10.	10.0
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	1.0
k) A list of authorities with environmental responsibilities involved in the development of the Area Action Plan and their level of involvement.	Appendix 6

3.0 The K+ 20 Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan

- 3.1 Kingston Council is preparing an Area Action Plan for Kingston, a successful metropolitan town centre, as part of the new Local Development Framework for the borough. The Area Action Plan will replace Chapter 12 on Kingston Town Centre in the Unitary Development Plan Proposed First Alteration (UDP).
- 3.2 A number of factors have led to the need to review current planning policies for Kingston town centre and to plan for the future to enhance and develop the town centre for the benefit of the whole community. We want to ensure that Kingston remains a thriving, vibrant, popular, attractive and environmentally sustainable town centre, providing a good quality of life, work and leisure for residents, workers and visitors.

Pressures for Change

- 3.3 The town centre covers a compact area (80ha.), fronting the riverside and surrounded by housing. This constrains the area available for town centre activities and expansion. There is pressure and need for new development and facilities, including shops; housing; employment, leisure, cultural, community and educational facilities, as well as transport and environmental improvements.
- 3.4 Kingston is a sub-regional shopping centre, however there has been no new retail development for over 10 years, competing centres are expanding with new shops and Kingston risks losing trade and shoppers. Retail studies conclude that there is now need, demand and capacity for new shopping facilities.
- 3.5 Some areas of the town centre offer significant opportunities for new development, whilst other areas, especially the riverside and the area around the Market Place, have significant natural and cultural heritage value, which needs to be preserved and enhanced. The Area Action Plan will identify key areas suitable for change to accommodate new development and facilities and key areas for conservation, in order to protect the town from inappropriate unplanned development and to preserve and enhance its attractive character, its heritage, historic core & the riverside. Currently, there are only two areas of vacant land in the town centre, around Vicarage Road and on the former 'Power Station' site and two areas of under-utilised land used for surface car parking, around Ashdown Road and Sopwith Way, which are suitable for development.

K+20 and the Area Action Plan

- 3.6 This review of the town centre known as K+20, was launched in 2003 with a stakeholders' workshop and audit of the town centre, which focussed on the town centre's strengths, weaknesses and aspirations for the future. The main strengths were identified as:- the variety and quality

of shops; the riverside and new riverside development; the historic Market Place; the Rotunda leisure development and the town's attractive character. The main weaknesses were identified as traffic congestion; parking; poor approaches to the town centre, poor quality streetscape in some areas and issues associated with the vibrant evening economy, which attracts large numbers of young people.

- 3.7 The Area Action Plan will set out the spatial vision for the town centre and provide the planning framework identifying areas of change and conservation, with policies and proposals to promote and manage development and improvements over the next 20 years. It is a way of ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change and conservation.

The Strategic Context for the Area Action Plan

- 3.8 The Area Action Plan takes account of government planning policies, in particular, PPS6: Planning for Town Centres, March 2005; the Mayor's London Plan 2004, which is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London; its associated strategies on Transport, Housing, Economic Development, Bio-diversity, Culture, Air Quality, Waste and Noise; the emerging South London Sub-Regional Development Framework being prepared by the Mayor and the Thames Landscape Strategy (Hampton to Kew), launched in 1994.

- 3.9 It also takes account of a number of local strategies and initiatives, set out below:

- Kingston First Business Improvement District (the country's first BID), which commenced operation in January 2005 & Kingston Town Centre Management
- Community Plan 2004-2009
- Council's Policy Programme and Neighbourhood Policy Statement
- Housing Needs Survey 2001, Housing Strategy Statement & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2003-06
- Cultural Strategy 2002-2006 & supporting Arts & Sports Plan & Heritage Action Plan
- Draft Visitor Management Plan 2004-2007
- Crime, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- After Dark Strategy
- Retail Studies 2003
- Old Town Conservation Area Studies 2003-2005
- Local Implementation Plan of the Mayor's Transport Strategy
- Parking Strategy 2005
- Integrated Transport Feasibility Study 2003
- Secure Cycle Parking Study 2004
- Local Air Quality Management Action Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan 2004, Local Agenda 21 2000 & the Waste Strategy: the main environmental initiatives

- UDP & Annual Monitoring Reports
- Work with developers and landowners, including with Hammerson under the Co-Operation Agreement with the Council

3.10 The overarching spatial objective of Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan is:

“To accommodate growth – new homes and jobs; enhanced shopping, leisure and cultural facilities, with better access for all, to enhance the local economy, whilst preserving and improving the environment, the quality of life and historic character and heritage, to ensure that Kingston remains a prosperous and attractive place, where people enjoy living, working and visiting.”

3.11 This is accompanied by a series of associated objectives for different aspects of the Area Action Plan.

3.12 Character and Identity

- To preserve and enhance the ‘best’ and improve the ‘rest’
- To promote and enhance the town centre’s role as a key Metropolitan (sub-regional) centre within the London economy
- To protect and enhance the town’s attractive character, respecting its evolution since the Medieval period; its Medieval historic core (around the Market Place and All Saints Church); its riverside heritage, including improving access to the riverside and the quality of the riverside walk; the historic routes into the centre; and other areas of Victorian and 20th century development that retain their original fabric and character
- To promote the River Thames and raise its profile to encourage greater use of the river and the riverside for a wide range of activities, whilst respecting the natural environment

3.13 Land Uses, Local Economy and Housing

- To achieve a balanced mix of land uses
- To provide a range of new homes, including affordable & student housing
- To maintain a healthy & sustainable local economy with a wide range of job opportunities
- To maintain & enhance Kingston’s position as a sub-regional retailing centre
- To provide an enhanced range of cultural, leisure & entertainment facilities, including a new library and learning centre (within the relief road), a quality hotel, restaurants, nightlife, the theatre, cinema, visual and performance arts to attract a wide spread of ages
- To provide commercial space for businesses, including quality offices
- To develop tourism and creative industries to boost the local economy
- To provide for community uses, local services and healthcare facilities

- To ensure Kingston is a centre for excellence for learning, with Kingston University and Kingston College playing a central role

3.14 Transport and Access

- To provide a sustainable transport system that is accessible to all
- To improve access to the town centre by all modes of transport
- To work with partners to improve the quality & convenience of public transport
- To maintain and enhance cycle routes and parking, including secure cycle parking
- To improve pedestrian routes to, from and across the town, especially from points of arrival and leisure routes
- To ensure better integration of transport
- To minimise car use and journey lengths and encourage modal shift away from the car to public transport, cycling and walking
- To reduce congestion on the road network, whilst maintaining the number of people that visit and work in the town centre
- To reduce the impact of traffic on the environment and on the safety of road users
- To make better use of parking capacity and to improve the quality, distribution, signing and naming of car parks and the Variable Message Signing System
- To work with partners to improve rail access to Heathrow Airport

3.15 Environmental Quality

- To improve the quality of the environment; the public realm, landscaping & public spaces
- To maintain a clean, safe, environmentally sustainable town centre
- To promote high quality contemporary architecture in key locations, providing new landmarks to reinforce the town's identity and improve legibility
- To ensure appropriate building heights and scale
- To protect and enhance the historic core's medieval street pattern and to 'repair' the urban grain where 'erosion' has occurred
- To improve the gateways/approaches to the town centre
- To ensure sustainable development principles in new developments

4.0 Methodology for the Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.1 This sustainability appraisal has been completed by borough planning officers and officers from the Council's Environment and Sustainability Department.
- 4.2 The methodology for this appraisal was developed using the Government's draft guidance for sustainability appraisal and the Government's interim advice note published in April 2005.

Methodology

1. A Sustainability Framework was developed, with sustainability objectives and indicators, against which the Area Action Plan could be tested. The framework was informed by an analysis of sustainability issues relevant to Kingston Town Centre derived from an analysis of:
 - Other strategies, plans and programmes (**Appendix 1**)
 - Social, economic and environmental baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline (**Appendix 2**)

The sustainability framework is presented at **Appendix 3**.

2. The Area Action Plan objectives were tested against sustainability objectives for compatibility (**Section 6.0 and Table 3**). This process highlighted potential conflicts between what the Action Plan was trying to achieve and wider sustainable development objectives.
3. The various elements of the Area Action Plan 'spatial vision' were then appraised (**Appendix 4**)
4. The Area Action Plan preferred options for sites were then appraised (**Appendix 5**)

5.0 Developing a Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 5.1 Before undertaking the appraisal of the 'Area Action Plan - Preferred Options' a set of 'sustainability objectives' were derived that reflect what sustainability means for Kingston Town Centre. The sustainability objectives were developed through the assessment and integration of relevant plans and policies (national and local) and baseline information on the social, environmental and economic aspects of the town centre.

Links to other strategies, plans and programmes

- 5.2 The preferred options for the Kingston Town Area Action Plan have been influenced by a wide range of other plans, strategies and guidance documents, ranging from international and national guidance to London and local strategies. The London Plan, the Kingston's UDP and Kingston's own Community Plan are of particular relevance to all Local Development Documents, including this Area Action Plan. The objectives contained within these documents provide the detailed direction for planning within the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.
- 5.3 The purpose of this exercise is to identify synergies, inconsistencies and constraints between the emerging Area Action Plan and the existing objectives and targets of these existing plans, policies and programmes. The full analysis of these documents is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline

- 5.4 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them, it therefore helps to inform the sustainability framework.
- 5.5 The baseline information collected for this area action plan is set out in **Appendix 2**. The information collected has been grouped under the three main headings of Social, Economic and Environmental Issues. A summary of the key findings is set out below.

General Characteristics

- 5.6 The Royal Borough of Kingston is situated in south west London, in one of the most prosperous parts of London and the South East of England. It plays a major strategic role as a shopping, business, judicial (Crown, County and Magistrates Courts), cultural, entertainment, public administration (central, county and local government services and Police) and education centre, with Kingston University and Kingston College. Its catchment extends well beyond the borough and it serves a wide area of south west London and north east Surrey.

Social

- 5.7 Population: The population of the town centre has increased from about 500 in the late 1980's to 2,000 at the time of the 2001 Census. Recent developments have further increased the population by an estimated 1,500 people to around 3,500.
- 5.8 Employment: The borough currently has a relatively large working age population, 64% of the population is aged between 16-59 years. The proportion of Kingston Town Neighbourhood residents that are currently in full time employment is 36%, those in part-time employment is 6.4% and those self-employed is 7%.
- 5.9 Around 18% of employment in the borough is in high value-added and high wage 'knowledge based business services', compared to the London average of 13%.
- 5.10 Education: The borough has a range of education establishments. There are 20,834 people aged 16-24 in the Kingston Town Neighbourhood with the highest qualifications attained at level 1-4/5. The figure for the borough is 35% achieving the highest level of attainment, this compares with an England and Wales figure of 29%, illustrating that the residents of Kingston Town Neighbourhood achieve higher than the England and Wales average.
- 5.11 Kingston is a major education centre with the University and Kingston College. Kingston University has over 17,000 students and 1800 staff and Kingston College has over 7000 students.
- 5.12 Community Safety: Kingston is one of the safest boroughs in London. The total number of offences per 1000 population for all crime in the borough is 27.1, compared with 36.1 for London and the national average of 28.2 (Home Office crime statistics April 2003 – March 2004).
- 5.13 Health: Within Kingston Town Neighbourhood there are 4,246 people registered with a limiting long term illness, of these 1,986 are recorded as being of working age.
- 5.14 Housing: The housing market in the town centre is buoyant. There has been the completion of 10 new housing developments since 2000 adding 750 units to the town centre's stock of about 400 residential properties. There is approximately a further 650 flats under construction, bringing the total housing stock in the town centre to approximately 1800 units, including 180 affordable units.
- 5.15 In Kingston Town Neighbourhood, 10,057 residents own their properties, 1,852 rent their properties from the council and 487 residents rent their property from a Housing Association.

Economic

- 5.16 The economy of the town centre is characterised by retail, leisure, cultural, business/ financial services and public sector services including public administration, the courts, higher and further education, with Kingston University and College.
- 5.17 Kingston Town Centre is the borough's main shopping centre. It is the second most successful shopping centre in London and the 12th in the country in a recent Experian survey. The town centre has some 234,000sqm of retail space and around 400 shops, including 2 department stores and two markets. The vacancy rate of shops in the town centre was recorded at 30 units in 2004 - a slight increase since 2003 when there was a recorded rate of 25 units.
- 5.18 Office accommodation in the town centre is concentrated in 37 office buildings plus a few small office suites above shops. The average rental value for Kingston town centre is £29.60/m², comparable to Bromley at £22.60/m² and Croydon at £29.06/m².
- 5.19 Employment within the key sectors based in the town centre is dominated by retail, employing 7,960 people (46% of jobs), offices employ 21%, civic and public administration 15%, culture and entertainment 9%, and higher education 9%.

Environmental

- 5.20 Transport: Transport issues are key to the future prosperity of Kingston town centre. Residents of the borough make, on average, three journeys per day each. This equates to 444,000 journeys per day or 162 million per year.
- 5.21 Approximately 16,000 vehicles enter Kingston daily 7am-7pm on 7 radial routes. The highest flow is from the west side via Kingston Bridge. There is evidence that traffic flows are declining, from 67,000 in 1999 to 63,000 in 2002.
- 5.22 The town centre is a hub of a comprehensive network of bus services; in the peak hours 135 buses per hour arrive in the town. The main shortfall in public transport accessibility is from the south and west, especially from Surrey districts.
- 5.23 Travel to work is monitored by the 2001 census. This data shows that 26% of Kingston town residents use train as a means to travel to work, 9% use buses and 16% walk to work. The use of car as the means to travel to work is still the dominant form of transport at 44% of all residents. This supports the need to improve the accessibility of Kingston Town and neighbouring towns for public transport modes.

- 5.24 **Car Parking:** Kingston town centre contains 17 permanent car parks providing on weekdays 6583 car parking spaces and on weekends 6654 spaces. There are also 5 temporary car parks providing 415 spaces all week. The parking study undertaken for the K+20 project has identified that 52% of the traffic entering Kingston from the east side chose to access the west car parks, adding to traffic congestion on the relief road. 79% of cars entering from Kingston Bridge choose to park in the John Lewis/ Bentalls car parks. 52% of cars entering from the east choose the car parks in the east and less than 35% of cars entering from the south choose the car parks in the south.
- 5.25 **Waste:** The levels of municipal waste arising are available for the whole borough. In 2003/04 waste arising were 85,551 tonnes of which 9,299 tonnes was diverted from landfill (recycled and composted).
- 5.26 **Heritage:** Kingston town centre has a well preserved historic core consisting of the medieval Market Place, the narrow alleys leading down to the river and distinctive listed buildings. Within the town centre there are 64 listed buildings and approximately 220 buildings of townscape merit.
- 5.27 **The Kingston Old Town and Riverside North conservation area designations cover part of the K+20 area action plan area. Land adjacent to the riverside is designated within the Thames Policy Area (TPA) and there is also a Strategic Area of Special Character (SASC).**
- 5.28 **Nature Conservation:** The River and its banks, incorporated within the K+20 boundary is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). The land at Canbury Gardens is designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

Main social, environmental and economic issues identified

- 5.29 From the analysis of the relevant plans and programmes (**Appendix 1**), the baseline data (**Appendix 2**) and issues known to effect the achievement of sustainability in the borough of Kingston, a set of sustainability issues have been identified that are relevant to this area action plan. These issues, provided in **Table 2**, are aspects of sustainability that could be affected by the area action plan.

Table 2: Sustainability Issues

Key Issues and Problems	Key Indicators
Lack of affordable housing and key worker housing, which has an effect on the ability of local people, and especially first time buyers to remain in the Borough and an effect on the economy in terms of difficulty in recruiting people in lower paid positions, including many key workers.	Number of affordable homes Homeless households Level of measured deprivation
Physical constraints to development – Kingston Town Centre is a compact centre, fronting on to the riverside and	% of new development on

Key Issues and Problems	Key Indicators
surrounded by residential areas, giving little potential for outward expansion.	previously developed land Remediation of contaminated land
Achieving good design for all development, in terms of both architecture and sustainability, including issues such as construction materials, energy efficiency.	Proportion of new buildings that are DDA compliant Access to open space
The historic environment, its preservation and enhancement. There are 2 conservation areas, the Thames Policy Area and a high proportion of listed buildings.	% of Grade I and Grade II properties at risk.
High proportion of journeys made by car both as travel to work and for other day-to-day reasons. There are high traffic levels and congestion in Kingston town centre at peak times. This causes air and noise pollution, with negative effects on health.	NO ₂ levels PM 10 levels Road noise pollution
There is a need to encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport; therefore improvements to the existing public transport system.	Proportion of people who travel to work by public transport Road traffic growth
Pressures on the local economy both in terms of retail development and office use and subsequent employment opportunities.	Net growth in business Vacancy levels
Protection and enhancement of open space and wildlife habitats.	Area of open space Sites and transport corridors with landscape enhancements
Issues regarding anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime, especially in the town centre	Incidents of crime % developments incorporating secure by design principles
Climate change. This is impacted upon greatly by greenhouse gas production from transport, energy production and construction. Flooding issues are impacted upon by climate change.	Number of properties at risk from flooding
Lack of renewable energy facilities in the borough, and the consequence dependence upon fossil fuels for most power and heating needs. Results in the production of pollution, including greenhouse gases.	% energy from renewable sources
The promotion of recycling and sustainable waste management in terms of facilities, infrastructure, and the effects on the environment.	Waste production % of waste recycled
To have a healthy population with a sense of community and social inclusion	% of population within 200m of open space Health care per head of population
To maintain and encourage a tourist sector for the borough, increasing the local economy without any detrimental environmental effects.	Visitor numbers

5.30 From the sustainability issues above, recommendations have been made for the sustainability objectives, which comprise the Sustainability Framework.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

5.31 The SA Framework (**Appendix 3**) sets out the sustainability objectives with sub-objectives and indicators in order to measure in more detail the achievability of the objective. These sustainability objectives are distinct from the objectives of the Area Action Plan, and have been developed from the sustainability issues identified. In brief, the sustainability objectives are:

1. To reduce poverty & social exclusion
2. To reduce anti-social behaviour
3. To improve accessibility to essential services and facilities
4. To provide the opportunity for everyone to live in a decent home
5. To encourage a sense of community identity and welfare.
6. To contribute towards health improvements of the borough population.
7. To allow development that sustains and enhances the vitality and viability of the town centre.
8. To ensure that an efficient, competitive retail sector is maintained.
9. To encourage sustained economic growth with a diverse employment base.
10. To encourage the need for sustainable tourism.
11. To maintain & enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes and open spaces.
12. Where appropriate conserve, value and enhance the historic environment.
13. To minimise the production of waste.
14. To maintain and enhance biodiversity.
15. To reduce contributions to climate change and pollution through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (including air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light).
16. To make an efficient use of land and infrastructure.
17. To maximise energy efficiency and reduce the use of non-renewable resources.
18. To reduce the effect of traffic on the environment.

6.0 Testing the Plan Objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

6.1 The objectives of the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan require a test of their sustainability. The Area Action Plan objectives must therefore be assessed in the appraisal framework by undertaking a comparison with the sustainability objectives. This process indicates the contribution the Area Action Plan objectives are likely to make towards the targets set out in the sustainability framework (**Appendix 3**). The aim of this process is to identify any areas of potential conflict between the Area Action Plan and the wider aims of sustainable development.

Methodology

6.2 The Area Action Plan objectives (provided in Section 3.12 –3.15) were tested against the sustainability objectives (detailed in Section 5.30 above) using a matrix format. For each comparison, a decision needs to be made as to whether the outcome falls within one of the following three categories:

- Compatible – The Area Action Plan objective and the sustainability appraisal objective are harmonious.
- Neutral – The Area Action Plan objective are neither harmonious nor in conflict with the sustainability appraisal objective.
- Conflict – Where it is possible that the Area Action Plan objective is likely to be in conflict with, or to the detriment of, a particular sustainability appraisal objective.

6.3 The test of the Area Action Plan objectives with the sustainability appraisal objectives is provided in **Table 3**.

6.4 The purpose of the compatibility test is to achieve consistency between the objective of the plan being developed, by altering them if necessary, and the sustainability appraisal objectives – the objectives of sustainable development. However, some tensions may remain, where a win-win outcome can not be achieved or is not desirable due to local circumstance. In these situations a determination of priority is required as to whether one sustainability objective is capable of having less or more importance than another.

Table 3: Test of the Plan Objectives against the Sustainability Objectives

Plan Objectives	OS																		
	1										A	A		B					
	2																		
	3																		
	4																		
	5																		
	6																		
	7																		
	8																		
	9											A	A		B				
	10																	D	
	11														B			D	
	12																	D	
	13																		
	14																		
	15																		
	16														C			C	
	17																		
	18																		
	19																		
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	21																		
	22																		
	23																		
	24																		
	25																		
	26																		
	27																		
	28																E		
	29																	F	
	30																		
	31																		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
SA Objectives																			

KEY: Positive Compatible = Neutral = Conflict =

Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives

The overarching spatial objective (OS)

"To accommodate growth – new homes and jobs; enhanced shopping, leisure and cultural facilities, with better access for all, to enhance the local economy, whilst preserving and improving the environment, the quality of life and historic character and heritage, to ensure that Kingston remains a prosperous and attractive place, where people enjoy living, working and visiting."

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | To promote and enhance the town centre's role as a key Metropolitan (sub-regional) centre within the London economy | 17 | To work with partners to improve the quality & convenience of public transport |
| 2 | To protect and enhance the town's attractive character; its historic core (around the Market Place and All Saints Church); its heritage and the riverside, including improving access to the riverside and the quality of the riverside walk | 18 | To maintain and enhance cycle routes and parking, including secure cycle parking |
| 3 | To preserve and enhance the 'best' and improve the 'rest' | 19 | To improve pedestrian routes to, from and across the town, including from points of arrival |
| 4 | To promote and enhance the town's character and identity | 20 | To provide better integration of transport |
| 5 | To promote the Thames and raise its profile as a focal point for a range of activities on & around the river, whilst respecting the natural environment | 21 | To minimise car use and journey lengths and encourage modal shift away from the car to public transport, cycling and walking |
| 6 | To achieve a balanced mix of land uses | 22 | To reduce congestion on the road network, whilst maintaining the number of people that visit and work in the town centre |
| 7 | To provide a range of new homes, including affordable & student housing | 23 | To reduce the impact of traffic on the environment and on the safety of road users |
| 8 | To maintain a healthy & sustainable local economy with a wide range of job opportunities | 24 | To improve the distribution, signing and naming of car parks |
| 9 | To maintain & enhance Kingston's position as a sub-regional retailing centre | 25 | To improve the quality of the environment; the public realm, landscaping & public spaces |
| 10 | To provide an enhanced range of cultural, leisure & entertainment facilities, including restaurants, nightlife, the theatre, cinema, visual arts and performances to attract all ages | 26 | To maintain a clean, safe, environmentally sustainable town centre |
| 11 | To provide commercial space for businesses, including quality offices | 27 | To promote high quality contemporary architecture in key locations, providing new landmarks to reinforce the town's identity and improve legibility |
| 12 | To develop tourism and recreation to boost the local economy | 28 | To ensure appropriate building heights and scale |
| 13 | To provide for community uses, local services and healthcare facilities | 29 | To protect and enhance the historic core's medieval street pattern and to 'repair' the urban grain where 'erosion' has occurred |
| 14 | To ensure Kingston is a centre for excellence for learning, with Kingston University and Kingston College playing a central role | 30 | To improve the gateways/approaches to the town centre |
| 15 | To provide a sustainable transport system that is accessible to all | 31 | To ensure sustainable development principles in new developments |
| 16 | To improve access to the town centre by all modes of transport | | |

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OBJECTIVES

- | | | | |
|---|--|----|---|
| 1 | To reduce poverty & social exclusion | 10 | To encourage the need for sustainable tourism. |
| 2 | To reduce anti-social behaviour | 11 | To maintain & enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes and open spaces. |
| 3 | To improve accessibility to essential services and facilities | 12 | Where appropriate conserve, value and enhance the historic environment. |
| 4 | To provide the opportunity for everyone to live in a decent home | 13 | To minimise the production of waste. |
| 5 | To encourage a sense of community identity and welfare. | 14 | To maintain and enhance biodiversity |
| 6 | To contribute towards health improvements of the borough population. | 15 | To reduce contributions to climate change and pollution through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (including air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light). |
| 7 | To allow development that sustains and enhances the vitality and viability of the town centre. | 16 | To make an efficient use of land and infrastructure. |
| 8 | To ensure that an efficient, competitive retail sector is maintained. | 17 | To maximise energy efficiency and reduce the use of non-renewable resources. |
| 9 | To encourage sustained economic growth with a diverse employment base. | 18 | To reduce the effect of traffic on the environment. |

Plan and Sustainability objectives comparison

- 6.5 The possible conflicts between the Area Action Plan objectives and the sustainability objectives, highlighted in the tables above, are discussed in more detail below.

A – plan objectives 1 and 9 v sustainability appraisal objectives 11 and 12

- 6.6 There is potential for conflict between the plan objectives to promote and maintain Kingston as a sub-regional and major retail centre, and the sustainability objectives to conserve and enhance the town centre's historic environment, its townscape and open spaces.
- 6.7 To maintain its role as a key metropolitan centre within the London economy, Kingston must continue to deliver sustained economic growth. In addition to making the most efficient use of its existing retail and commercial floor area, economic growth will require the provision of further development and intensification of the town centre. Such development has the potential alter the existing townscape, which in turn may impact upon the centre's historic environment and its open spaces if not managed appropriately.
- 6.8 While a potential conflict may exist, this is addressed to a significant degree through the inclusion in the plan of objectives 2, 3, 4, 25, 28 and 29, which all seek to preserve and enhance the existing character of the town centre, including its historic core. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to revise the plan objectives at this stage.

Recommendation: Consideration may be given at a later stage in the plan preparation process to ensuring that the development objectives of the Plan also reflect the need to preserve, and where possible enhance, those elements or qualities of the town centre that contribute to its valued townscape or historic environment.

B – plan objectives 1, 9 and 11 v sustainability appraisal objective 14

- 6.9 There is potential for conflict between the plan objectives promoting the town centre as a sub-regional and retail centre, including the provision of additional commercial space, and the sustainability objective to maintain and enhance biodiversity.
- 6.10 While town centres traditionally exhibit a reduced amount of biodiversity than other environments, the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity is still a valid issue for consideration in the Area Action Plan. A suitable approach may be to consider biodiversity in the design of open space and streetscape proposals, and also in the plan objectives relating to the river.

Recommendation: Policies that seek to promote or enhance the town centre's streetscape, open space or Thames River environment should also include biodiversity as an element for consideration in the design concept.

C – plan objectives 16, v sustainability objectives 15 and 18

6.11 There is potential for conflict between plan objective to improve access to the town centre by all modes of transport and the sustainability objective to reduce the effects of traffic on the environment, including the emission of greenhouse gases.

6.12 If access is made easier by all modes of transport, including travel by private car, then people may not be encouraged to consider alternative means of travelling to the town centre. However, this objective should be read alongside other plan objectives seeking to minimise private car use and encourage a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. The Mayor of London's transport strategy expects the car to remain the main mode of transport in outer London for the foreseeable future, and if the town centre is to thrive then access by car will remain important. In addition there are a number of vehicle journeys to the town centre that cannot be made by other forms of transport, such as freight and disabled people may also benefit from easier access by car.

Recommendation: There is no need to revise this objective. The provision of a wider choice in transport modes will hopefully help to encourage people to consider alternatives other than travel to the town centre by means of private vehicle. The transport policies in the Area Action Plan need to be aligned with the sustainability objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

D – plan objective 1, 9, 10, 11, 12 v sustainability appraisal objective 18

6.13 There is potential for conflict between plan objectives providing for tourism and additional commercial and leisure activities, and the sustainability objective to reduce the effect of traffic on the environment.

6.14 Providing for further commercial, leisure and tourism activities with the Kingston Town Centre may result in greater transport movements by both public and private vehicles. However, the town centre is the most appropriate location for such development to occur, enabling transport initiatives to be implemented that would not be available if such activities were located throughout the borough. In addition, the retail studies undertaken suggest that some of the extra activity will result from longer average stay per visitor.

Recommendation: While it is not considered necessary to revise the plan objective, consideration could be given at a later stage to giving a higher priority to the transport objectives of the plan. Such an approach would

ensure the delivery of much need transport initiatives ahead of any other objectives being fully realised.

E – plan objective 28 v sustainability appraisal objective 16

- 6.15 There is potential for conflict between the plan objective to ensure appropriate building height and scale, and the sustainability objective to make an efficient use of land and infrastructure.
- 6.16 Where developable land is a scarce commodity, restrictions in building height and scale may not be consistent with seeking to maximise the potential of an individual site. However, such matters need to be balanced against other sustainability objectives, which seek to retain the existing character of the town centre and deliver sound urban design.

Recommendation: Overall, this plan objective is consistent with sound urban design principles and is required to deliver sustainable development that retains the existing character and townscape of the centre.

F – plan objective 29 v sustainability appraisal objective 17

- 6.17 There is potential for conflict between the plan objective to protect and enhance the historic core's medieval, and the sustainability objective to maximise energy efficiency and reduce the use of non-renewable resources.
- 6.18 The enhancement of the historic character of the town centre may require the use of materials that are not the most cost effective in terms of energy efficiency and/or maintenance. However, to achieve an authentic look the use of traditional materials and construction is required. While a conflict may exist there are significant benefits to retaining this objective that far outweigh the consideration and use of energy efficient materials. Such benefits include reinforcing and improving the community's appreciation of the existing historic character of the town centre, their identification with Kingston and its sense of place.

Recommendation: The protection and enhancement of the town centre's historic core is a key objective of the Area Action Plan, which will contribute to a better integration between the new and the old development. As such it is not considered necessary to revise this plan objective.

7.0 Assessment of Alternatives

An assessment of alternative means of achieving the objectives of the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan

7.1 The sustainability appraisal requires that consideration be given to alternative means of achieving the objectives sought through the development and implementation of the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan. An evaluation of each potential alternative method is required to see what social, environmental and economic effect they will have on the existing and future environmental baseline compared to the implementation of an Area Action Plan. The following options have been considered, and the reasons for and against each of the options provided.

The General Approach

7.2 The town centre vision is to maintain a relatively compact town centre, building on the remaining vacant sites, conserving and enhancing the historic areas and redeveloping and intensifying the use of less sensitive parts of the centre.

7.3 A **'do nothing' policy** has been rejected as it scores particularly poorly in terms of:

- enhancing the area as a business location and encouraging sustained economic growth
- ensuring that an efficient, competitive retail sector is maintained and allowing development that sustains and enhances the vitality and viability of the town centre
- conserving and enhancing the quality of landscapes and townscapes and the historic environment
- encouraging sustainable tourism.

It would also fail to contribute to providing decent homes and health and other services and facilities, or provide a sense of community identity and welfare.

7.4 Without considerable continuing investment the centre is likely to decline in the services it provides to local communities and visitors. Already several areas have been identified as shabby and run down with sites that are underused or vacant. Competing centres are being regenerated and Kingston would lose its metropolitan status and vitality.

7.5 The only significantly positive factor would be the potential limitation on growth of greenhouse gases and pollution if fewer visitors resulted in fewer car trips. However the lack of investment available for new transport services and infrastructure could prevent improvements in non-car modes and not therefore result in a commensurate reduction in the adverse effect of traffic on the environment.

- 7.6 A **higher growth strategy** would be difficult to achieve without requiring much larger scale development or pushing out into surrounding areas. This would be likely to result in some loss of homes or open space on the fringes of the town centre and require development out of scale with the historic core and riverside. It could thus conflict with objectives of maintaining biodiversity and enhancing the character of the conservation areas and better areas of townscape.
- 7.7 It may also unbalance the mix of town centre uses, weaken community identity, and lead to more car use and pressures for significantly more car parking. This would offset the advantages of increased vitality and economic attraction of the extra commercial development.
- 7.8 The **preferred option** would allow investment in developing a balanced centre through intensification within existing boundaries and replacement of vacant, unattractive or outmoded development. This allows access to health and other services and facilities, provision of decent homes, and attraction for sustainable tourism, alongside a vital, commercially viable and economically buoyant centre. Townscape and the historic environment can be enhanced without overbearing development and without the unsustainable effects of undue car growth and parking.

The Preferred Mix of Uses

(a) Retailing

- 7.9 A significant increase in shopping floorspace of about 50,000 square metres is proposed. This is based on studies carried out for the council by Roger Tym and Partners. They looked at both the potential demand for additional floorspace from operators and the increase in available expenditure from Kingston's catchment area to support new shops. They also looked at the quality and size of units required for modern retailing operations.
- 7.10 The consultants took a cautious approach, which assumed some reduction in the expenditure drawn from more distant areas and allowed for growth in competing centres. They also considered physical capacity of the centre. Both assessments support the order of growth being proposed.
- 7.11 A '**do nothing**' option is likely to result in decline in Kingston's status as a metropolitan centre and a reduction in its range and quality of shopping. Retailing is one of the most dynamic areas of the economy and expenditure is increasing. There have been no major additions to the stock of shops since completion of John Lewis and the Bentall Centre in the early 1990s. Competitor centres such as Croydon, Guildford and Bluewater are providing new facilities. Already there are signs of slippage in Kingston's place in the town centre rankings.

7.12 Nil or minimal growth would score poorly on the following sustainability objectives:

- Ensuring an efficient, competitive retailing sector is maintained
- Enhancing the image of the area as a business location
- Sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the centre
- Encouraging sustained economic growth

It would also discourage sustainable tourism for which Kingston's shopping quality is a significant draw. The loss of investment could hamper redevelopment of unattractive parts of the town centre, resulting in declining townscapes and landscape, and failure to upgrade the historic fabric. Access to essential services for local people may also decline.

7.13 Positive outcomes would be less competition for sites for other uses such as decent homes and community or leisure facilities. Transport impacts would be mixed. The declining attraction of the centre would result in fewer visitors and less demand for car travel and parking, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and pollution and better health. On the other hand the likely longer trips made by residents to access better shopping centres further afield would add to congestion, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere.

7.14 Failure to provide additional or more efficient floorspace, against a backdrop of increasing expenditure, would also add to the pressure for out-of-centre retailing which would be more car-orientated and contrary to the above objectives.

7.15 A **higher quantum of growth** would score positively in terms of creating an efficient, competitive retailing sector, enhancing the image of the area as a business location, sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the centre and encouraging sustained economic growth. It could encourage tourism but only if the character of the centre also retains its appeal.

7.16 Problems would be similar to those identified above with the general issue of growth: pressure to push the boundaries out or increase height and massing of buildings, with possible harm to the historic environment and townscape. It would tend to draw in more shoppers from a wider catchment, adding to journey length and car use with attendant problems of congestion, pollution, parking and emissions. It could harm the viability of other centres by taking an undue share of available expenditure. Other uses could be squeezed out of Kingston, harming its character and access for the local communities to other services and facilities. More shopping would generate more waste but arguably this would only be transferred to other locations if not allowed here.

7.17 The **preferred option** is considered to strike the right balance between commercial growth and capacity, resulting in investment to fund

improvements in facilities and the historic and modern environment and not generating significant additional car use.

(b) New Housing

- 7.18 The **preferred option** is to provide up to 1500 additional dwellings, mainly flats. This is derived from a 'bottom-up' assessment of proposals with planning permission, current applications and sites with housing potential. An increasing proportion of affordable units will be sought in line with UDP policy proposals. Some student and other special needs housing is also sought. Much of the potential will be as part of mixed developments where highly profitable private housing also acts as enabling development for less profitable activities. In the core of the centre the new housing will be largely in the air space above street level commercial uses.
- 7.19 The sustainability benefits are seen as providing decent homes in a highly accessible location for public transport, reducing the need for unsustainable car use; adding to town centre vitality and surveillance, thereby reducing anti-social behaviour; and providing accommodation for workers and students to boost the economy and higher education.
- 7.20 A **do nothing** scenario would mean that the town centre would not make a further contribution to meeting local or strategic housing needs so that more people would lack a decent home. It would therefore fail to reduce poverty and social exclusion. It would also make less economic use of sites if other less profitable uses did not replace it. The enabling effect of profitable housing in subsidising other community facilities would be lost.
- 7.21 A **higher level of house building** would add to the provision of homes, counter social exclusion and provide additional local labour but would lead to either exclusion of other uses of value to the local community or ever higher densities, conflicting with preservation of the character and historic environment of the centre and its attraction for tourists.

(b) Employment Uses

- 7.22 The **preferred option** is for an increase from around 17,500 jobs to about 20,000. The mix of employment would include a range of service and office jobs, including in the 'knowledge' economy and creative industries which are strong in the area. This would be achieved by supporting mixed developments, the growth of the University and Kingston College, encouraging offices close to the rail station or on upper floors, and provision of a centre for creative industries. There is very little industrial or warehousing remaining and replacement in a prime centre with high land values is unlikely.
- 7.23 This approach would score highly in terms of enhancing the image of Kingston as a business centre and, by locating in a highly accessible

location, would allow reduced car use with less congestion, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

- 7.24 An issue not yet fully resolved is the future of much poor quality office space with high vacancy levels and little demand from businesses seeking better quality space or higher car parking. Although its refurbishment or redevelopment would be beneficial for the reasons given above, there are issues of viability because of the relatively low rental levels and competing provision in other centres in London and in Surrey. On some sites mixed development with more profitable housing may deliver.
- 7.25 A **higher level of employment provision** is problematic, but in terms of viability of uses and competition from other uses rather than because of sustainability factors. It would add further to the local economy, help reduce poverty and social exclusion and reduce commuting out of the borough. However, a large quantum of additional floorspace would begin to produce the over-development considered above.
- 7.26 **No further employment** would make the centre less economically vibrant and not help reduce poverty or social exclusion. It would potentially reduce car use but would be likely to increase work trips out of the borough to more distant locations.

(c) Leisure, Arts, Cultural and Entertainment Facilities

- 7.27 Priorities for the **preferred option** are provision of more restaurants, a quality hotel and conference facilities, completion of the Rose Theatre, a new library and learning centre, an extended museum and local studies centre and exhibition/meeting space. The emphasis is on securing a more varied mix of activities appealing to a wider range of age groups and interests.
- 7.28 Their provision would have significant sustainability benefits in terms of accessibility to services and facilities for local people and visitors and possibly a reduction in anti-social behaviour. They would encourage community identity, add to the vitality of the town centre and support a variety of additional jobs. They would also add to the tourist attraction of the centre and in some cases utilise historic buildings.
- 7.29 A **do nothing option** would produce an unbalanced centre yielding none of the above benefits and reducing the attraction of the centre for local and borough residents, visitors and tourists. The lack of variety of uses would harm the character of the centre.
- 7.30 **Additional facilities** may be encouraged if there is demand and they are viable. In general they would reinforce the sustainability benefits outlined above. However, in a few cases they may have adverse effects, for example a further influx of large pubs and bars (in the new A4 use class) would tend to further increase antisocial behaviour and discourage many

people from using the centre. This would reduce overall use of services and facilities and result in a form of social exclusion.

(d) Community Uses

- 7.31 The **preferred option** is to encourage some further expansion of Kingston University and College, provide better facilities for the voluntary sector and support new medical facilities serving the increased population stemming from the housing under construction or planned. The sustainability benefits are seen as reducing social exclusion, increasing access to essential services and facilities, improving health and community welfare, and with spin-off for the economy and local employment and some reuse of historic buildings.
- 7.32 A **do nothing** approach would produce none of these benefits, with adverse effects on welfare, exclusion and the local and wider economy.
- 7.33 Although some **additional facilities** could be provided with benefit, there will be increasing tensions if some community uses continue to grow at past rates. The University has rapidly expanded in recent years with immense benefits for the borough but also intense pressure for ever more space for academic and administrative space and student housing. No estimate of future growth and capacity in the longer term has been provided. This is producing competition for scarce sites and could lead to fewer affordable housing units being provided and more imbalance in the age groups around which the evening economy already concentrates. Student facilities and accommodation do however present the opportunity for car free developments and more patronage of entertainment and cultural facilities.

Environmental Quality

(a) Historic Environment and Heritage

- 7.34 The main elements of the **preferred option** are:
- to enhance the Old Town and Riverside North Conservation Areas, carry out major refurbishment of the Market Place, churchyard, Memorial Square and Gardens, and various passageways;
 - to safeguard and enhance Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit;
 - adopt and implement an archaeological strategy.
- 7.35 The approach scores highly in terms of conserving and enhancing the historic environment, maintaining and enhancing the quality of townscapes and landscapes and protecting and enhancing public open spaces. Retention of existing fabric minimises the need for additional resource use but could have adverse effects in terms of energy efficiency.

7.36 The effects on the image and efficiency of the town centre for business and on vitality and viability are two-edged. There could be conflicts with the provision of new floorspace and intensification. However, this leaves large swathes of the town centre where these constraints would not apply and where new investment to bring about positive environmental improvements is desirable. Any loss of potential growth and modernisation would be offset by enhancing the image of Kingston as an attractive place in which to shop, enjoy leisure pursuits, work and live and as a tourist destination. Environment and image are likely to become increasingly important as customer mobility and competition between centres intensifies.

7.37 A **do nothing** option would minimise the advantages set out above but would allow even greater intensification of new development.

7.38 Overall there are strong reasons for supporting the preferred option.

(b) The Public realm

7.39 The **preferred option** entails:

- upgrading the public realm with new and enhanced public spaces and green spaces;
- riverside improvements including the riverside walk, related sites and open spaces, links to the core of the town centre and improved moorings;
- improved gateways to the town centre and upgraded approach routes and links from public transport and car parks.

7.40 All these proposals are beneficial in terms of enhancing the image of the area for business and economic growth, increasing the vitality and viability of the town centre and its retailing performance, and encouraging sustainable tourism. They would also enhance the quality of townscape and landscaping, the historic environment and public open space, and have potential to improve biodiversity at the river margins.

7.41 The improved pedestrian environment will help reduce car use, pollution and emissions and by making the centre more accessible to people with limited mobility will reduce social exclusion. The improved routes will assist in accessing services and facilities from the surrounding area and increase a feeling of community identity. The improved environment may have a knock-on effect on reducing anti-social behaviour.

7.42 A **do nothing** policy would mean that all the above sustainability benefits would be foregone. No beneficial effects have been identified.

(c) Design Principles

7.43 The main features of the **preferred option** are:

- redeveloping vacant and underused sites;
- high quality design including landmark contemporary buildings in suitable locations and buildings of appropriate height and scale;
- inclusive design making buildings and spaces accessible to all;
- more trees and landscaping, including on 'green routes';
- improved provision of public art.

7.44 This approach scores highly through making better use of scarce land and improving the quality of townscapes and landscaping and enhancing public open spaces. There will also be benefits in terms of accessibility to services, reducing social exclusion through removing mobility barriers, improving the attraction for tourists and enhancing the image and vitality of the town centre for retailing and business. No adverse sustainability effects have been identified. A **do nothing** option would not deliver these benefits or yield others.

(e) Sustainable Development

7.45 Key facets of the **preferred option** are

- enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity on the riverside and in open spaces;
- embedding principles of sustainable design and construction;
- preparation and adoption of a flood risk strategy;
- implementing the Air Quality Action Plan;
- implementing measures to reduce waste and increase recycling.

7.46 All these have a straightforward positive correlation with the sustainability objectives, reducing contributions to climate change, making efficient use of resources, minimising waste, reducing pollution and improving health. No adverse effects have been identified. A **do nothing** policy would not yield these benefits.

Transport and Access

(a) Improving Public Transport Facilities and Access

7.47 The main elements of the **preferred option** sought are

- improved accessibility from the south and west, including developing park-and-ride services and bus/rail integration to make Surbiton station a second gateway to the town centre;
- a new or improved Kingston rail station and surroundings;
- improved frequency of train services and late night services;
- better taxi and minicab provision and facilities;

- a new bus station accessible from the relief road and an enhanced Fairfield bus station, taking buses out of Eden Street;
- improved provision of community transport.

7.48 Beneficial sustainability effects will be a reduction in car dependency and use with reduced greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, resulting in better health. There will also be reduced social exclusion, improved access to essential services and facilities, and an improved sense of community welfare. Better public transport will bolster Kingston's image and attraction as a business and retailing centre and will encourage sustainable tourism.

7.49 No adverse effects are identified though the effectiveness of the proposed new or enhanced bus stations will depend on being well keyed in to the core of the town centre to maximise their use and offset the loss of closer in stops in Eden Street. A **do nothing** scenario would fail to deliver these benefits and no positive advantages are identified.

(b) Improved access for pedestrians and cyclists and better signing

7.50 The **preferred option** proposes improved access for pedestrians both into the town centre, with easier crossing of the relief road, and within the centre. Enhanced safety, convenience and comfort will encourage walking. Improved cycle routes and more secure cycle parking will help promote cycle use. Clear and comprehensive signing of routes and attractions will further support walking and cycling.

7.51 The proposals score positively in terms of potential for reducing car use and pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, with health benefits. Walking and cycling are themselves healthy travel modes. Other benefits are the contribution to the image and vitality of the centre with benefits for the economy, retailing and sustainable tourism. These are free modes of travel, helping counter poverty and social exclusion, promote community identity and welfare and improve access to services and facilities.

7.52 The **do nothing** option would neither deliver these benefits nor make any other positive contribution to sustainability.

(c) Car Parking

7.53 The assessment of the car parking proposals in the **preferred option** is a mixed one. The proposals are for replacement of some existing parking with a possible increase of up to 700 spaces, depending on the scale of additional development which takes place in the town centre (significant increases in retailing and other uses are proposed). A re-balancing of the off-street parking is also proposed so that more incoming cars use the nearest interceptor car park rather than many travelling round the relief road to the popular north-west sector parks adding to congestion and causing longer journeys. New parking is proposed at Ashdown Road/Ladybooth Road and at the Cattle Market with Eden Walk being

phased out. This process would be helped by new signing and naming of car parks and an improved variable message signing system.

- 7.54 To the extent that there is any increase (up to 10%) in the car parking provision, there would be some encouragement for car use. The percentage increase would be considerably lower than the increase in commercial and other floorspace so that in relative terms the modal shift would be towards non-car use. Any absolute increase would however have an adverse impact in terms of pollution and generation of greenhouse gases and conflict with health improvement. The town centre is already one of the areas with the poorest air quality in the borough.
- 7.55 Offsetting factors would be the re-balancing of provision and improved signage which could shorten car journeys on the relief road and reduce peak period congestion. There is also the likelihood that the extra shopping and leisure development in the town could lengthen stay, with less turnover of spaces and traffic movements. Better provision for disabled people would reduce social exclusion.
- 7.56 Beneficial effects would be in maintaining the economy and the vitality and viability of the town. The London Plan accepts that outer south-west London will remain car-dependent for some time and shoppers benefit particularly from the convenience of being able to carry their purchases home by car. Some of the principal competitor centres are outside London in areas of high car ownership. Bluewater in particular offers extensive free car parking.
- 7.57 A **do nothing** option would have the opposite effects. There would be no extra car use but economic effects would be adverse. The opportunity to rebalance the parking - and the use of the centre generally, with attractive new facilities in the currently underused south-east sector - would be lost. This would not relieve congestion on the relief road caused by queueing for the oversubscribed Bentalls and John Lewis car parks. Nor would the pedestrian environment of the core of the centre be improved by taking out the Eden Walk multi-storey car park.
- 7.58 On balance the proposals are considered beneficial though significant extra car parking provision would have adverse effects.
- 7.59 It should be borne in mind that many of the sustainability benefits or dis-benefits can be reinforced by packages of supporting measures. For example the transport measures can reinforce each other and can combine with development to give added value.

8.0 Appraisal of the Effects of the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Options for the Spatial Vision

8.1 **Appendix 4** illustrates the compatibility of the preferred options for the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan and the sustainability objectives. The results are summarised below in **Table 4**. Each aspect of the spatial vision is addressed in turn, accompanied by a summary of the sustainability appraisal.

Table 4: Summary of spatial vision sustainability appraisal

Aspect of the spatial vision	Summary of sustainability appraisal
Landmark new shopping facilities – the Eden Quarter, (up to 85,000 sq.m gross, 50,000sqm gross additional retail floorspace), as part of mixed use redevelopment ('streets and squares' approach) to the north and south of Clarence Street, including parts of the Eden Walk shopping centre and the Ashdown Road sites, to provide new pedestrian shopping streets, a better retail circuit, with an enhanced range and quality of shops (independent & 'high street' shops), with housing, offices and community uses above.	See analysis for Proposal Site 1: Eden Quarter (page 22) and Proposal Site 2: Clarence Street North (page 23).
New housing (potential for up to 1500 flats), including affordable and student housing, as part of mixed use and single use redevelopment, (north Kingston - Power Station, Electricity sub-station, Lok'n Store site, Canbury car park & Richmond Rd; Northern riverfront; Kingston Station area; Eden Quarter; Fife Road & Bishops Palace House.	Will contribute positively to demand for new housing in London generally, and affordable housing will contribute to meeting local housing need reducing social exclusion. Issues of high density living, noise, disturbance and general amenity raise potential conflict with need for decent homes for people, but town centre living suits many people and is encouraged with benefits for accessibility to public transport and facilities, potentially reducing the need for car journeys.
Increased level of employment from around 17,500 jobs to 20,000 jobs, with a wide range and mix of job opportunities, especially in offices, in the 'knowledge' economy and creative industries.	Increasing employment levels in the town centre has positive economic benefits, and could benefit the vitality of the centre as a whole as workers spend money in the town. Possible conflict with aim to reduce greenhouse gases and pollution if increased employment means more cars coming into the town centre. This emphasises the importance of transport policy linked to employment policies.
Loss or change of use of 'viable' office floorspace resisted; new and enhanced offices/business space provided,	Positive sustainability benefits regarding the economy. Potentially losing out on market and affordable housing, but it is

Aspect of the spatial vision	Summary of sustainability appraisal
(Kingston Station area, Canbury car park, Surrey House area, Eden St area), including a centre for the creative industries	considered important to balance employment and residential uses in the town centre. If well designed will have townscape benefits.
Enhanced range of Leisure, Arts, Cultural & Entertainment facilities to attract visitors of all ages, especially in the evenings: Priority is the completion and opening of the Rose Theatre More restaurants a well appointed hotel , with conference, business & banqueting facilities in the Northern Riverfront area or on the former Power Station site a new library /learning centre, in the heart of the town centre, as part of mixed use redevelopment of Eden Quarter a unified Local Studies Centre and Museum extended into the former Kingston Library exhibition and meeting space in the rear part of the old Post Office	Positive benefits for sustainability in terms of community assets and encouraging visitors/tourists. Increasing the range of evening entertainment could have a positive impact on reducing anti-social behaviour caused by evening uses dominated by pubs and clubs.
Enhanced Community Facilities , including better meeting and operating facilities for voluntary sector	Positive social benefits identified. No sustainability conflicts identified.
Health and Social Care – nurseries and new GP surgery accommodation in North Kingston as part of mixed use redevelopment on 12 Skerne Road (the Lok'n Store site)	Positive social benefits identified. No sustainability conflicts identified.
Kingston University & Kingston College Broad based, accessible University, with a cultural focus, strong international links, focussing on technology transfer and attracting high quality employment and capital into Kingston University expansion into refurbished Surrey County Hall to create single town centre campus with sensitive redevelopment of outmoded buildings & environmental improvements, to safeguard amenities of nearby residents and improve Penryhn Rd, a gateway to the town centre Kingston College – Richmond Road Annex – sensitive redevelopment of land to the rear of the main old school building and the Penny Gallery to provide a new Arts & Media Centre, as part of mixed use college/residential redevelopment	Growth of the university and college overall a positive contributor to sustainable development, but does put pressure on land for housing. More student housing may mean less 'normal' housing can be provided. There are associated incompatible objectives such as the possibility of anti-social behaviour and the impact large numbers of students can have on the sense of community and welfare. However by having students in these areas there is generally a positive impact on the local economy, and businesses are also keen to recruit students, attracting employers to the area. Enrichment of the cultural life of the centre should also occur.
Historic Environment & Heritage Old Town Conservation Area – environmental enhancements to historic core, high street and riverside; including	Positive sustainability effects in terms of protecting and enhancing valued heritage, possibly with benefits in terms of promoting a sense of place and

Aspect of the spatial vision	Summary of sustainability appraisal
<p>major refurbishment and environmental improvements to Kingston Parish Church and churchyard Complete revitalisation of the Market Place, including re-paving with materials to complement the historic environment; market improvements, improved quality of connections to riverside, & public realm improvements Memorial Square Crown & Harrow Passages Memorial Gardens Bath Passage Listed former Post Office – Refurbishment and change of use, to include a community facility Undercroft to John Lewis – Interpretation Centre with public access to display of old bridge remains</p>	<p>community.</p>
<p>Built Form – Iconic new contemporary buildings in suitable locations, with appropriate building heights and scale</p>	<p>Only potential conflict lies with the objective to conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment. Clear policies needed in the Conservation Areas. Scope for improved energy efficiency</p>
<p>Public Realm & Public Spaces – upgraded public realm; new and enhanced public spaces and green spaces Clarence Street Clarence St/Wood Street Skerne Walk Skerne Road Sury Basin St James Square Castle Street Fife Road Old London Road Provision of new public space as part of Eden Quarter development</p>	<p>No sustainability conflicts identified.</p>
<p>Riverside – Provide enhanced focus for river and land based activities, including improvements to: The riverside walk Canbury Gardens The Barge Dock Thames-side car park Thames Side Kingston Bridge to Charter Quay Charter Quay to Queens Promenade Links to riverside Improved moorings New public spaces at Eagle Wharf and on the Northern riverfront</p>	<p>Positive benefits for ecology and wildlife and social/recreational benefits for residents and visitors. No sustainability conflicts identified.</p>

Aspect of the spatial vision	Summary of sustainability appraisal
Improved gateways to the town centre from major approach routes and from arrival points – Kingston Station, bus stops and car parks	No sustainability conflicts identified.
Redeveloped vacant sites – Vicarage Rd sites & Power Station	See analysis for Proposal Sites P5: Northern Riverfront (page 24), P12 Former Power Station/Electricity Sub-station and P13 Lok'nStore Site, Skerne Road (page 26)
New or improved Kingston Station & improved station area – short term upgrading of station with later opening of the station concourse. Longer term mixed use redevelopment including a new station	See analysis for Proposal Site 4 Kingston Station Area (page 24)
Improved frequency of train services and late night services	May reduce car journeys by late night visitors to the town centre.
New bus station as community gain from redevelopment of Eden Quarter/Ashdown/Lady Booth Road sites and enhanced Fairfield bus station, enabling removal of buses from Eden St	Will result in improvements to environment in Eden St, from lack of buses. New bus station makes public transport more attractive, generally helping reduce car travel.
Improved Public Transport accessibility from the south and west by development of permanent park and ride sites and bus/rail integration to make Surbiton Station a gateway to Kingston town centre	Improved public transport has a positive impact upon car traffic and pollution levels and therefore climate change, and overall improved accessibility to Kingston town centre.
Pedestrians – improved routes & connections, especially across the relief road, from arrival points and to the riverside, to enhance pedestrian convenience, comfort and safety and to encourage walking	Making life better for pedestrians may reduce car travel and give health benefits.
Cyclists – improved routes & secure parking, including secure parking facilities at Kingston Station and as part of landmark retail led development (Eden Quarter)	Making life better for cyclists may reduce car travel and give health benefits.
Car parking Replacement of fragmented parking in south east part of town centre, including the Eden Walk car park and Ashdown Road/Lady Booth Road surface car parks with a new high quality multi-storey car park and additional parking on Cattle Market car park, with the introduction of decked above ground parking levels If the scale of proposed development justifies it, there could be an increase in the total off-street public parking by up to 700 spaces New signing and naming of car parks to assist way finding and help reduce incidence of queuing on relief road Improved Variable Message Signing System	Additional car parking may encourage extra car use, contrary to the objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. However, in outer London the Mayor accepts that cars will remain the main mode of travel for the foreseeable future. Some additional car parking may be needed if the improved quality and range of facilities results in longer stays in the town centre, not necessarily more car trips. Adverse effects of car use need to be weighed against the economic and vitality gains to the town centre. The rebalancing of car parking should have beneficial effects on length of journeys, congestion and pollution.

Aspect of the spatial vision	Summary of sustainability appraisal
Signing - improved legibility, permeability and new signing of routes and attractions	All part of making the town centre more usable, but care must be taken to ensure that signage is not intrusive and does not have an adverse effect on the historic areas and street scene generally.

9.0 Appraisal of the Effects of the Preferred Options for Proposal Site Allocations

- 9.1 **Appendix 5** illustrates the compatibility of the preferred options for the proposed site allocations and the sustainability objectives. The following summary, draws on the earlier broad assessment of preferred policy options and takes into account also the location and characteristics of the individual site. All the proposed sites have been assessed, whether or not they are carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan. Circumstances or priorities may have changed since the UDP allocations were made and a reassessment of the appropriate site uses and requirements against sustainability criteria is considered essential.
- 9.2 The site policies have been assessed against each sustainability objective. The sites were selected because of their size or complexity: others may exist or come forward but any proposals will be left to be assessed against the broader Area Action Plan policies.
- 9.3 Where negative effects are identified, an indication is given of what action needs to be taken to ameliorate any adverse impact.

Proposal Site 1 Eden Quarter

- 9.4 This is a large complex site occupying a large part of the core of the town centre. Overall the appraisal finds a positive effect when set against the SA objectives. In general terms the use of vacant sites at Ashdown/Ladybooth Roads and potential for more intensive redevelopment elsewhere will make more efficient use of land and infrastructure and add to the vitality of the centre.
- 9.5 The mix of uses proposed will add to the centre's vitality, especially the new and replacement retailing space which will bolster the creation of an efficient and competitive retail centre and support tourism in a sustainable location. Inclusion of offices on upper floors will also encourage sustained economic growth and enhance the image of the area as a business location.
- 9.6 Housing, including affordable and student accommodation, above the commercial uses will help provide decent homes for a cross-section of people in housing need and contribute to meeting special needs.
- 9.7 A new library within the relief road is an important local facility. It will be easily reached by public transport and be readily accessible by more people from local communities, helping to increase local identity and improve access to essential facilities. It should also be a valuable asset for students and lecturers at the University and College.
- 9.8 There is an uncertain but potentially adverse impact in terms of possible conflict with the objective of conserving the historic environment and listed buildings. The guidelines note this as a constraint on height and

massing and aim to ameliorate any adverse effects. Comprehensive redevelopment offers potential for enhancing the townscape which is poor in some areas. A new public space will be a major benefit.

- 9.9 Additional car parking ostensibly will have an adverse sustainability impact in terms of encouraging more car use and contributing to climate change and pollution. However, this will depend on ameliorating the effects by the scale of provision and management policies pursued, for example favouring shopper parking over all-day commuter parking. To the extent that the improved shopping and other facilities in the town centre encourage longer stays it will modify any increase in numbers travelling by car. Replacement of the Eden Walk multi-storey car park will also have offsetting beneficial effects. It will consolidate the pedestrian core of the centre by removing car penetration, release use of 'air space' above the commercial uses for housing or offices, and by providing new state of the art facilities could reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour.
- 9.10 By 'rebalancing' the parking provision and commercial uses within the centre, the new parking will act more efficiently to intercept cars travelling from the south, reducing length of journeys to the currently over-used Bentall's and John Lewis car parks, and thereby reduce congestion and air pollution on the relief road – one of the worst affected areas in the borough.
- 9.11 Subject to the quantity of parking the net effect is not expected to be seriously adverse. It also needs to be considered against the economic and social gains when the London Plan is accepting that outer south-west London is likely to remain heavily car-dependent for a considerable time.
- 9.12 Provision of a new bus station will have a very positive sustainability effect in terms of reducing bus congestion and pedestrian conflict in Eden Street and encouraging bus use with new and better quality waiting facilities.

Proposal Site 2 Clarence Street North

- 9.13 The sustainability effects are positive. New shopping will add to the quality of provision, sustaining the vitality and viability of the town centre and encouraging tourism. A possible new pedestrian route through the site would assist movement through the town centre and enhance the townscape. Housing on upper floors will help provide decent homes.

Proposal Site 3 Eastern Gateway

- 9.14 The sustainability effects are on balance positive. More intensive development will make efficient use of scarce land and add to the vitality of the town centre. The impact of a replacement Monday Market building is uncertain. It could help maintain the market's vigour, adding to the vitality of the town centre. Better servicing and the scope for a covered

market hall could increase its attraction and possibly encourage extended operating hours. Some shoppers may be deterred by the greater enclosure of the market. Housing, including affordable housing, will help create more decent homes.

- 9.15 Relocating the library on to Proposal Site 1 will release space for reuse of the listed library building and redevelopment of the more modern extension for an expanded museum and local studies centre. This will encourage tourism, improve access to facilities, and enhance the listed building and its setting and the Fairfield/Knight's Park Conservation area. However, the additional bulk of buildings above the bus station could have an adverse impact on the adjacent open space.
- 9.16 Improved bus facilities will encourage bus use, reducing emissions and pollution. However to some extent this will be offset by additional car parking. A mitigating factor will be the ability to intercept more cars approaching the town centre from the east, reducing journey length, congestion and pollution on the relief road. Improved crossing facilities on the relief road, either at grade or by bridge, will encourage walking and public transport use.

Proposal Site 4 Kingston Station Area

- 9.17 This site brings together several UDP sites on this very busy relief road junction. The sustainability assessment is a positive one. A key element is to further improve pedestrian access across the junction, linking the rail and bus stations with the core of the town centre and enabling easier crossing of the relief road for people approaching from Richmond Road or Cromwell Road. This will encourage walking and public transport use, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. A rebuilt station will further encourage train use.
- 9.18 Housing and offices on upper floors will add to the supply of decent homes, be well placed for bus or train use, add to the vitality of the centre and boost Kingston as a business location.

Proposal Site 5 Northern Riverfront

- 9.19 On balance the sustainability assessment is positive. A quality hotel with conference facilities is lacking in Kingston and would significantly boost sustainable tourism, the vitality of the town centre and its standing as a business location. Housing, including affordable and student accommodation, would assist in providing decent homes.
- 9.20 Enhancement and completion of the riverside walk (part of the Thames National Trail) and adjacent riverside open space would encourage walking and sustainable tourism. It could also enhance the Riverside North Conservation Area though the outcome is uncertain. Unduly bulky development could adversely affect the setting of Canbury Gardens,

which is Metropolitan Open Land and within the conservation area, and views from the river.

- 9.21 Replacement car parking (as opposed to an increased level) would have a broadly neutral effect in so far as it is already well used and the improved quality of the parking would make relatively little difference to car use. [Any additional parking would have an adverse effect in drawing more traffic into this quarter of the town, adding to the current imbalance. Extra capacity could, however, reduce queuing and congestion and pollution on the relief road.]

Proposal Site 6 Bishops Palace House

- 9.22 Redevelopment as proposed on this site would on balance be beneficial. Much of the existing fabric and the approaches to the riverside are unattractive and the car parking entails significant car penetration into an otherwise predominantly pedestrian friendly area. Car access and movements are difficult and can lead to congestion and pollution.
- 9.23 Impact on the historic fabric is uncertain. If redevelopment is sensitively done it can enhance the riverside and adjacent Old Town Conservation Area. Replacement of the offices would have a beneficial impact on Kingston's image as a business centre by providing modern floorspace. Loss of the nightclub would to some extent adversely affect vitality and the evening economy but with a possible reduction of antisocial behaviour. The additional homes created on upper floors would make better use of the riverside environment and views.

Proposal Site 7 St James's Square Area

- 9.24 Much of the site is occupied by unattractive buildings and spaces. The proposed redevelopment would have a mainly positive impact on sustainability. The proposed shopping and leisure uses would add to Kingston's vitality (though with some possible neutral or adverse effect in terms of antisocial behaviour stemming from retention or replacement of the Works nightclub). Offices on upper floors would enhance the business image of the town centre and housing would provide additional homes.
- 9.25 A well designed scheme would enhance the public open space, improve landscaping and townscape and improve the setting of the Old Town Conservation Area across St James's Road, and the setting of the United Reformed Church which is a Grade 2 Listed Building.
- 9.26 Replacement car parking would have a broadly neutral effect. If a new building is provided it might attract more car users: on the other hand it would be part of the 'rebalancing' of provision within the centre and could lead to less congestion and pollution on the relief road. Any reduction of traffic in Eden Street resulting from redevelopment of the Eden Walk car park would enhance the local environment.

Proposal Site 8 Guildhall Area

- 9.27 The sustainability assessment is positive. Retailing and restaurant/café (A3 Use Class) uses on the ground floor and offices on upper floors will add to the vitality of the town centre. Community uses will add to community identity and welfare. Student or affordable housing on upper floors would secure additional homes.
- 9.28 Sensitively designed development will enhance the setting of the listed Guildhall and surrounding open space and Eagle Chambers (a building of townscape merit), all within the Old Town Conservation Area.

Proposal Site 9 1, Penrhyn Road

- 9.29 The assessment is positive. Housing will add to the stock of decent homes. The landscaped riverside walk will improve the Hogsmill which is a green corridor and area of nature conservation importance, including enhancing its landscaping and biodiversity. It will also encourage walking.

Proposal Site 10 Surrey County Hall

- 9.30 The impact is likely to be broadly neutral. If the University occupies County Hall it will reduce the office floorspace but the effect on the area as a business location will be bolstered by some replacement administrative and education jobs and there could be economic spin-off in terms of business incubation and skilled workers remaining in the area. Impact on the listed building is uncertain: it would need to be sensitively adapted. Expansion of the University would improve local access to higher education services.

Proposal Site 11 Kingston University

- 9.31 Consolidation of the higher education use will have positive effects on sustainability in terms of improving access to services and facilities, so long as on-site car parking is not increased.

Proposal Site 12 Former Power Station/Electricity Sub-station

- 9.32 The assessment is for a generally positive sustainability impact. A quality hotel and conference facilities would significantly add to the image of the centre as a business location and encourage tourists. Housing would add to the stock of decent homes.
- 9.33 The environmental impact is uncertain. Sensitive development with good landscaping can enhance the setting of Canbury Gardens and views from the river and the Skerne Road green corridor.

Proposal Site 13 Lok'nStore Site, Skerne Road

- 9.34 The impact is positive. Mixed housing will add to the stock of decent homes and the proposed GP surgery will provide essential services and facilities. Development should also contribute to landscaping of the Skerne Road green route.

Proposal Site 14 Kingston College/ Canbury Car Park, Richmond Road

- 9.35 The overall impact is positive. The benefits will be maximised with a mixed use comprehensive development.
- 9.36 Expansion of Kingston College will be beneficial in terms of access to further education services and facilities and yield economic spin-off in terms of a better educated local workforce and possible business start-ups. Shops/restaurants/cafes and upper floor offices will add to the vitality of the centre. Upper floor housing will provide more decent homes. Replacement car parking is likely to be broadly neutral and coach parking will support sustainable tourism.
- 9.37 The environmental effects are uncertain and likely to be mixed: new building could lessen the impact of the gasholders and additional greening of the Richmond Road corridor could be achieved. The effect on the college building of townscape merit is uncertain and would depend on sensitive design and building scale.

10.0 Proposals for monitoring

- 10.1 The objectives of the Area Action Plan will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report, which will monitor the performance of the Local Development Framework progress and the performance and significance of the UDP policies. The Annual Monitoring Report will specify those indicators or aspects of the environment that will be monitored, the methodology to be used, by whom, and the frequency of data collection. There are some indicators that cannot be monitored annually. This data will be collected and added to the baseline data as and when it is available.
- 10.2 Monitoring data is essential in providing additional baseline data for use in analysing changes or trends in the environment, determining whether policies are achieving their desired intention, and indicating the cause of any negative variations from the predicted future baseline.
- 10.3 The Council will monitor and review the effectiveness of implementing this Area Action Plan. However, monitoring data may be collected from a number of sources including monitoring undertaken by other statutory agencies, public surveys, the monitoring and enforcement of planning applications, and feedback from residents, the commercial sector and key stakeholders.
- 10.4 If the monitoring data indicates that the policies of the Area Action Plan are not achieving the intended objectives, the Council will review the Area Action Plan.

11.0 Glossary & List of Abbreviations

Baseline:

A description of the present and future state of an area, in the absence of any plan, taking into account changes resulting from natural events and from other human activities.

Consultation Body:

An authority which because of its environmental responsibilities is likely to be concerned by the effects of implementing plans and programmes and must be consulted under the SEA Directive. The Consultation Bodies, designated in the SEA Regulations are the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, and the Environment Agency.

Environmental appraisal:

A form of environmental assessment used in the UK (primarily for development plans) since the early 1990s, supported by 'Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A Good Practice Guide' (DoE, 1993); more recently superseded by sustainability appraisal. Some aspects of environmental appraisal foreshadow the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Environmental assessment:

Generically, a method or procedure for predicting the effects on the environment of a proposal, either for an individual project or a higher-level "strategy" (a policy, plan or programme), with the aim of taking account of these effects in decision-making. The term "Environmental Impact Assessment" (EIA) is used, as in European Directive 337/85/EEC, for assessments of projects. In the SEA Directive, an environmental assessment means "the preparation of an environmental report, the carrying out of consultations, the taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultations in decision-making and the provision of information on the decision", in accordance with the Directive's requirements.

Environmental Report:

Document required by the SEA Directive as part of an environmental assessment, which identifies, describes and appraises the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan or programme. see SA Report.

Indicator:

A measure of variables over time, often used to measure achievement of objectives.

– **Output Indicator:** An indicator that measures the direct output of the plan or programme. These indicators measure progress in achieving plan or programme objectives, targets and policies.

– **Significant Effects Indicator:** An indicator that measures the significant effects of the plan or programme.

– **Contextual indicator:** An indicator used in monitoring that measures changes in the context within which a plan or programme is being implemented.

Mitigation:

Used in this guidance to refer to measures to avoid, reduce or offset significant adverse effects.

Objective:

A statement of what is intended, specifying the desired direction of change in trends.

Responsible Authority:

In the SEA Regulations, means an organisation which prepares a plan or programme subject to the SEA Directive and is responsible for the SEA.

Scoping:

The process of deciding the scope and level of detail of an SA, including the sustainability effects and options which need to be considered, the assessment methods to be used, and the structure and contents of the SA Report.

SEA Directive:

European Directive 2001/42/EC ‘on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment’.

SEA Regulations:

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004.

Significant effect:

Effects which are significant in the context of the plan. (Appendix II of the SEA Directive gives criteria for determining the likely environmental significance of effects)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):

Generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. In this guidance, ‘SEA’ is used to refer to the type of environmental assessment required under the SEA Directive.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA):

Generic term used in this guidance to describe the form of assessment that considers social, environmental and economic effects, which fully incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Sustainability Appraisal Report:

Term used in this guidance to describe a document required to be produced as part of the SA process to describe and appraise the likely significant effects on sustainability of implementing a plan, which also meets the requirement for the Environmental Report under the SEA Directive