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ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Working Paper draws together information on the quantum and quality of student accommodation provided at eight universities in the south-east of England. It sets out each university's stated policy on the provision of student places within university controlled halls of residence and provides a review of local planning authority development plan policy relating to such provision. This report forms one of three working papers which will inform Kingston University's accommodation strategy and ultimately support future development proposals. The other two are:

- Working Paper 1: Policy
- Working Paper 3: Provision

1.2 The working papers are evolving documents and form "repositories" for a range of material of relevance to the promotion of new accommodation. Much of the information in this report is based on material published by universities on their websites and in prospectuses. The universities compared have not been approached directly for information.

1.3 In addition to university published material, this Working Paper uses the statistics published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) for the academic year 2004/05.

1.4 The following universities are considered in this report:

1. Brunel University
2. Royal Holloway University
3. University of Surrey, Roehampton
4. University of Surrey, Guildford
5. Middlesex University
6. Greenwich University
7. University of East London
8. Thames Valley University

Structure of Working Paper 2

- 1.5 Section 2.0 of this document provides statistical information on the eight chosen universities including student numbers, quantum of bedspaces, price of accommodation and type of accommodation.
- 1.6 In Section 3.0 we consider the quality of student residential accommodation at each establishment including room types, environmental quality, accessibility and rent levels.
- 1.7 Section 4.0 sets out each university's stated policy of student residential accommodation provision and local authority planning policy towards student accommodation contained in the development plans.
- 1.8 Section 5.0 provides a comparison with the level and quality of provision provided by Kingston University.
- 1.9 A range of issues arising from this comparative review are considered at Section 6.0.

2.0 STATISTICS

2.1 Annex B (included in the A3 Annex of Plans and Tables) provides a breakdown of information gathered about the eight chosen south-east of England universities. The following tables provide a comparison of student enrolment statistics for the academic year 2004/05 for the eight universities and Kingston University. The tables are based on statistics provided by HESA

Student numbers

UNIVERSITY		UNDERGRAD	POSTGRAD	OTHERS	TOTAL
1.	Brunel	10,190	5,260	5	15,455
2.	Royal Holloway	5,660	1,990	0	7,655
3.	Roehampton	6,410	1,545	0	7,955
4.	Guildford	9,465	6,460	0	15,925
5.	Middlesex	18,750	6,135	240	25,125
6.	Greenwich	16,095	6,180	0	22,275
7.	East London	11,505	4,855	0	16,360
8.	Thames Valley	18,010	2,000	32,870	52,885
9.	Kingston	16,040	4,485	120	20,645

Table 2.1: Total student numbers by level of study (2004/05)

UNIVERSITY		UNDERGRAD	POSTGRAD	OTHER	TOTAL
1.	Brunel	9,075	2,125	5	11,205
2.	Royal Holloway	5,180	1,215	0	6,395
3.	Roehampton	5,710	780	0	6,490
4.	Guildford	6,945	2,970	0	9,915
5.	Middlesex	14,500	3,180	240	17,920
6.	Greenwich	11,570	2,265	0	13,835
7.	East London	8,180	1,935	0	10,115
8.	Thames Valley	8,470	515	4,485	13,470
9.	Kingston	14,010	1,485	120	15,615

Table 2.2: Full-time students by level of study (2004/05)

Student accommodation provision

UNIVERSITY		HALLS OF RESIDENCE	BEDSPACES	AVERAGE BEDSPACES PER SITE	AVERAGE BEDSPACES PER HALL
1.	Brunel	17 (1)	3,225 ^{**}	3,225	190
2.	Royal Holloway	11 (2)	3,016 ^{***}	1,508	274
3.	Roehampton	18 (4)	1,444	361	80
4.	Guildford	11 (3)	4,028	1,343	131
5.	Middlesex [*]	9 (4)	1,916	479	213
6.	Greenwich [*]	6 (6)	2,521	420	420
7.	East London [*]	5 (1)	1,180	1,180	236
8.	Thames Valley [*]	5 (2)	911 ^{****}	456	182
9.	Kingston [*]	9 (5)	2,434	487	270
	TOTALS	86 (28)	20,675	1,005	222

Table 2.3: Halls of residence and bedspace provision in 2007 (figures in brackets refer to the number of sites)

* Former polytechnic.

** Approx. 1,360 additional bedspaces due for completion 2008 (additions after 2007 are not included in the table)

*** Includes 472 new bedspaces due for completion 2007.

**** Includes a development owned & run by Touareg Trust for Thames Valley University students

2.2 Table 2.3 demonstrates that there are significant differences in the number of halls of residence and also the number of bedspaces provided at each residential site at eight institutions. Generally, the table above suggests that the older universities have a greater number of halls of residence and bedspace provision than the former polytechnics.

2.3 It needs to be noted that, in some instances, e.g. Clayhill, Kingston a "hall of residence" may comprise a campus of buildings, whereas in other instances, e.g. Kingston Hill, there may be a number of separate halls within a campus. That said, Table 2.3 is instructive in terms of determining the average number of bedspaces per site (338 bedspaces) and bedspaces per "hall". In most cases a "hall" comprises a building or group of buildings with between 200 and 250 bedspaces.

3.0 QUALITY OF PROVISION

- 3.1 There is no definitive means of assessing the relative quality of university halls of residence. It is difficult to distinguish the degree to which a student's choice of university is influenced by the quality of residential accommodation and what are a student's priorities. Anecdotal evidence from Kingston University's Accommodation Office suggests that there has been an increase in demand for en-suite accommodation and a decrease in demand for "standard" bedroom accommodation. In conjunction with this, students appear to be less price-sensitive: many appear to be willing to pay more for quality accommodation.
- 3.2 The following provides a comparison between the eight universities based on:
- i) the quality of accommodation, based on the percentage of en-suite rooms;
 - ii) room price;
 - iii) distance to teaching sites and facilities; and,
 - iv) quality of environment.
- 3.3 Whilst the former three can be quantified, the latter cannot. Parameters (i) to (iii) are set out in the following tables.
- 3.4 There are inevitable complications in determining what constitutes "budget" and "standard" accommodation. For the purposes of this study, "standard" rooms are classed as those which share bathroom facilities: they tend to have their own wash basins. "Budget" rooms, on the other hand, are defined as those without wash basins, which share bathroom facilities. These rooms tend to be located further from amenities, or have a smaller than standard room size which places these rooms into the lowest price bracket. Shared rooms (other than twin rooms) are included in the "budget" category.
- 3.5 Within the halls of residence considered, there was a mix of catered and self-catered accommodation. For the purposes of fair comparison the top end price quoted below is for self-catered accommodation only.

UNIVERSITY		TYPE OF BEDSPACES			PRICE		RANK
		Budget (%)	Standard (%)	En-Suite (%)	Top-End £	Average £	
1.	Brunel	0	20	80	92.05	88.06	2
2.	Royal Holloway	18	20	62	105.72	91.23	=3
3.	Roehampton	46	>1	53	105.00	93.05	=4
4.	Guildford	24	31	45	110.00	81.34	=4
5.	Middlesex	15	14	71	90.44	85.57	=3
6.	Greenwich	0	32	68	158.55	91.60	=3
7.	East London	0	49	51	102.00	93.53	=4
8.	Thames Valley	0	0	100	143.00	92.56	1
9.	Kingston	20	>1	79	97.25	87.78	=3

Table 3.1: Quality/price of bedspaces

3.6 Table 3.1 demonstrates that the rent levels for student rooms is, to all intents and purposes, broadly consistent across all nine universities considered.

3.7 The following accessibility assessments are based on distances from the hall - or cluster of halls - of residence in which the largest number of students are concentrated. Where universities have more than one teaching campus, the site at which the largest number of students study has been used as the "main" teaching site.

UNIVERSITY		DISTANCES (KM)			RANK
		TEACHING SITES	TOWN CENTRE	STATION	
1.	Brunel	On campus ("never more than 10 minutes")	1.6 km Uxbridge	1.6km Uxbridge (Tube)	= 2
2.	Royal Holloway	On campus	1.4 km Egham	1.4km Egham (Train)	= 2
3.	Roehampton	On campus	1.6 km Putney	1.6km Barnes (Train)	= 2
4.	Guildford	On campus	0.8 km Guildford	0.6km Guildford (Train)	= 1
5.	Middlesex	1.6km to Hendon campus	1.5 km Hendon	0.3km Colindale (Tube)	= 5
6.	Greenwich	9.6 km from Avery Hill to Greenwich campus	1.0 km Eltham	0.6 km Eltham (Train)	9
7.	East London	On campus	2.0 km Woolwich	0 km Cypres (DLR)	= 5
8.	Thames Valley	2.4 km to Ealing campus	0.8 km Brentford	0.3 km Brentford (Train)	8
9.	Kingston University	1.2 km to Penrhyn Road Campus	1.8 km Kingston	2.3 km Kingston (Train)	= 5

Table 3.2: Accessibility of halls of residence

4.0 POLICY

University Accommodation Policy

- 4.1 All eight universities provide a statement setting out which categories of students are guaranteed a place in a hall of residence. In some cases a list of priority groups and a list of those who will generally be excluded from university accommodation is also provided. The table on the following page provides a summary of the accommodation policies and a brief assessment is provided below.
- 4.2 Greenwich, Guildford, Royal Holloway and Brunel Universities are able to provide guaranteed accommodation to first year, full-time students (who apply within the required deadlines/accept a conditional/unconditional offer from the university).
- 4.3 Roehampton, Middlesex, East London, Thames Valley and Kingston Universities cannot guarantee that university accommodation will be provided to all new first year undergraduates.
- 4.4 Middlesex, East London and Thames Valley Universities operate policies where priority is given to students whose parents/home address is furthest away from the University. Roehampton University prioritises students who live at least 50 miles away. Kingston University is the only university that implements an exclusion zone, where students within a 10 mile radius are unlikely to receive university accommodation.
- 4.5 It appears that many universities also give priority to overseas students and students with disabilities.
- 4.6 It is noted that Thames Valley University's newly opened Paragon Student Hall is owned and operated by Touareg Trust (the halls account for 97% of all TVU accommodation). It appears that all students are eligible to apply for this accommodation regardless of home address, or year of study and that priority is given to no one group. The university managed halls however do have an accommodation policy (see table below).

University	Guarantee	Priorities and Exclusions (if stated)
Brunel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to offer campus accommodation to all full time new Year 1 undergraduates 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Students, • Students in 1st yr of time study & full time PG & research students, • UG final year 4, UG final Year 3, UG Year 3, UG Year 2 Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UG entering Yr 1 who have completed a foundation year.
Royal Holloway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First year students who firmly accept a conditional/unconditional offer of a place at the university prior to UCAS deadline are guaranteed a place in hall. • Unmarried overseas students (outside EU) can live in halls for the normal duration of their degrees as long as students apply prior to deadline. 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st yr students who firmly accept a conditional/unconditional offer • Students who accept an insurance place (first come, first served) Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with families
Roehampton		Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who live at least 50 miles away
Guildford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 1st year, full time, UG, provided an offer of a course is made prior to deadline • Foundation year students can take their guaranteed year in foundation year or in first year of their UG course. • Continuing overseas fee paying UG. • UK/UE 1st year students following a foundation year may be offered housing, provided they apply prior to the deadline' (places allocated on ballot basis). • Certain student union posts are guaranteed a place • Students with disabilities or serious medical conditions 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who are new to the university.
Middlesex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First year students who have made the University their 1st choice & who are travelling the furthest distance. 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full year international students (from outside EU) • UK and EU students who live furthest away.
Greenwich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new students to the university, where application form is received before deadline (attending for standard academic session, on a full time course) 	
East London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guarantee of accommodation 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New students studying at the university for the first time, who live furthest away in the UK or are coming from abroad • Students with disabilities.
Thames Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guarantee of accommodation 	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students living furthest away from Reading • Students who are joining a course in Reading for the first time • Students with special needs (physical/mental disability) • Students with other extenuating circumstances Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students on part time courses
Kingston	<p>Try to offer a place if 1st year UG and make Kingston their firm/insurance choice If a Foundation Degree student, eligible in either Year 0 or Year 1 of your course.</p>	Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students making KU their firm/insurance choice who apply within deadline. Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who live within a 10-mile radius from Kingston Station.

Table 4.1: Statements of University Accommodation Policy
(UG = Undergraduates, PG = Postgraduate). [* Policy for university managed halls only. There is no apparent policy for the Touareg Trust Thames Valley University halls.]

Development Plan Policy

4.7 The eight universities reviewed in this report are located within sixteen different local authority areas.

UNIVERSITY		DEVELOPMENT PLAN
1.	Brunel	Runnymede Local Plan Hillingdon UDP
2.	Royal Holloway	Runnymede Local Plan
3.	Roehampton	Wandsworth UDP
4.	Guildford	Guildford Borough Local Plan
5.	Middlesex	Barnet UDP Haringey UDP Enfield UDP
6.	Greenwich	Greenwich UDP Medway Local Plan
7.	East London	Newham UDP Tower Hamlets UDP
8.	Thames Valley	Ealing UDP (SPD2 Community Facilities) Reading Borough Local Plan Local Plan for Slough
9.	Kingston	Kingston UDP Richmond UDP Wandsworth UDP

Table 4.2: Relevant Development Plan

4.8 The following considers:

- i) the extent to which development plan policy deals with existing university sites;
- ii) the degree to which planning policy deals with university expansion generally;
and,
- iii) the extent to which student accommodation is specifically mentioned.

4.9 With the exception of Middlesex University, future university development and expansion is considered for all the above mentioned institutions within the relevant local planning policy documents. Beyond a commitment to supporting the expansion of academic facilities, explicit reference to future residential accommodation development is very limited.

- 4.10 Within the Hillingdon UDP (1998) and the Runnymede Local Plan (2001), Brunel University is identified as a major developed site in the green belt (Hillingdon Policy PR22; Runnymede Policy GB10). Limited infilling and redevelopment is permitted in accordance with a comprehensive scheme for the site. Within the Hillingdon UDP, the Brunel University campus is reserved for development associated with the university's functioning as a site for academic learning and research (Policy PR22). Whilst not mentioned explicitly it could be argued that residential accommodation is central to the university's functioning and could be included.
- 4.11 Similarly, Royal Holloway is identified as a major developed site in the green belt with limited infilling and redevelopment in accordance with a comprehensive scheme for the site as detailed in the Runnymede Local Plan (GB10).
- 4.12 Recognising the employment benefits of university expansion, an entire chapter (Chapter 16) within the Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003) is devoted to the development of the University of Surrey (a copy of this chapter is contained at appendix 2.1). Objectives of the policy (para 16.6) are to assist the continued growth of the university, within an agreed planning framework and to facilitate the future expansion of the university by providing a site for a campus at Manor Park, which has since been developed providing an additional 700 extra bedspaces. The new site which opened in September 2006, reflects policy and local authority support for the expansion of student accommodation at the University of Surrey.
- 4.13 The Medway Local Plan (1999), in regard to Greenwich University, is less explicit but nonetheless states a commitment to the expansion of the existing campuses at Chatham Maritime and Chatham Historic Dockyard (Para. 9.29 and 9.2.10). The Greenwich UDP (2006) refers to Greenwich University fleetingly with the Council broadly supporting proposals for new or extended community facilities particularly where these meet the needs of disadvantaged groups (Policy C1).
- 4.14 The Tower Hamlets UDP (1998) supports in principle the expansion of the University of East London, and seeks to ensure there is sufficient land and buildings available to meet all existing and future needs (Policy ST45). Beyond this, however, no further commitment is made, however this broad policy commitment can be seen to support expansion of residential student accommodation.
- 4.15 Reference to the future expansion of Roehampton University is very limited within the Wandsworth UDP (2003) with only limited reference made to the substantial

- 4.16 The Kingston UDP (2005) contains strategic and detailed policies and proposals to guide development within the borough. The introduction to the Strategic Policies identifies four objectives for land-use planning within the borough (para 2.22). One of the objectives seeks to promote developments that secure appropriate educational, medical and recreational facilities.
- 4.17 The UDP identifies that student halls of residence and hostels for single people are *“valuable forms of residential accommodation which relieve pressure on the main stock of housing in the borough, but their location and design need to be carefully considered.”* (paragraph 3.8). Policy STR1 identifies that the Council will seek to provide 1,900 non self-contained units includes units between 1997 and 2016. The UDP clarifies that ‘non self-contained units’ includes units *“...such as student accommodation and homes for elderly people with high care needs”* (Note, Table H1)
- 4.18 Policy STR3 is a strategic policy addressing housing need it identifies that:
- “The council will seek to ensure that all residents of the borough enjoy a standard of accommodation to meet their needs. Particular consideration will need to be given to groups which have special needs or limited access to the housing market including people with disabilities, elderly people, students and people on low incomes.”*
- 4.19 There is therefore reference to the need to i) promote educational developments; and ii) provide student accommodation, but they are not specifically promoted in the context of the University.
- 4.20 The Richmond UDP (2005) identifies that local colleges, hotels and other institutions will be encouraged to provide additional accommodation for their students and/or staff (Policy HSG10). It also identifies that existing staff/student accommodation should normally be retained. Reference to Kingston University is not made, but the Brunel University College site is identified for as a potential site for redevelopment (Twickenham, Proposal site T24).

5.0 COMPARISON WITH KINGSTON UNIVERSITY

Quantitative

5.1 It has not been possible to establish either how many first-year students, or how many students at each university are eligible for a hall place - if different - are catered for by each university. As a means of comparing provision, the following table provides a ratio of bedspaces per full-time student. Clearly each institution will have a slightly different proportion of first-year students but, as an indication of relative provision, the figures are useful and can be refined if more information can be gained from the eight universities.

	UNIVERSITY	FULL TIME STUDENTS	BEDSPACES	BEDSPACES/ STUDENT	RANKING
1.	Brunel	11,205	3,225 [4,585*]	0.29 (0.21) [0.41*]	3 [=2*]
2.	Royal Holloway	6,395	3,016	0.47 (0.41)	1
3.	Roehampton	6,490	1,444	0.22 (0.32)	4
4.	Guildford	9,915	4,028	0.41 (0.21)	2
5.	Middlesex	17,920	1,916	0.11	8
6.	Greenwich	13,835	2,521	0.18	5
7.	East London	10,115	1,180	0.12	7
8.	Thames Valley	13,470	911	0.07	9
9.	Kingston	15,615	2,434	0.16 (0.13)	6

Table 5.1: Bedspaces per full-time student.

Bedspaces/student figures shown in round brackets are those stated in the Grimley "Town Planning Strategy" report (February 2005).

[*] Including approx. 1,360 additional bedspaces due for completion 2008

5.2 What is apparent from Table 5.1 is that those institutions located in urban areas - namely Thames Valley, East London and Middlesex - have the lowest provision of bedspaces per student. This may be largely attributed to these institutions traditionally providing for local educational need and/or the capacity of the surrounding rental

property markets to absorb the student numbers. In addition, a number of private halls of residence are located in proximity to these institutions. For example, there are Unite developments at Stratford (Poland House, High Street, Stratford) and Forest Gate (Donald Hunter House 284 rooms). Both sites are suitably located for the University of East London. Another in South Tottenham is in proximity to Middlesex University (This development has 225 en-suite rooms). There are also Cass and Claredale Halls Association developments in Bethnal Green and Hackney which are convenient to East London and Middlesex university students respectively (Sir John Cass in Hackney has 131 rooms Claredale House in Bethnal Green. provides 265 single study rooms, grouped into 68 flats.)

- 5.3 These private halls of residence are operated independently of academic institutions, yet provide a similar quality of accommodation. Whilst the Cass and Claredale Halls are not en suite, the Unite developments both provide en suite facilities, reflecting the accommodation mix found across university halls of residence. This again is reflected in the range of room prices. In the lowest price bracket single rooms with shared bathroom facilities are available at Claredale House for £82 per week, whilst a premium room with en suite facilities at Station Court is £115 per week.
- 5.4 In contrast, there is a necessity for the more suburban and campus orientated universities to provide more residential accommodation due to limitations on provision of properties in the local rental market

Qualitative

- 5.5 The following ranks the eight universities, together with Kingston University in terms of proportion of en-suite rooms provided; value for money, and accessibility. Each is ranked on a scale of 1 (best) to 5 (worst).

UNIVERSITY	ROOM QUALITY	VALUE FOR MONEY	ACCESSIBILITY	RANKING
1. Brunel	2	3	2	1
2. Royal Holloway	3	4	2	= 3
3. Roehampton	4	4	2	7
4. Guildford	4	2	2	2
5. Middlesex	3	3	3	= 3
6. Greenwich	3	4	4	= 8
7. East London	4	4	3	= 8
8. Thames Valley	1	4	4	= 3
9. Kingston	3	3	3	= 3

Table 5.2: Qualitative ranking

5.6 Table 5.2 suggests that Kingston University has an average rank, if compared to the other eight universities in terms of room quality, room value for money and accessibility of accommodation to facilities. It is notable that three of the four west of London universities rank above (Brunel and Guildford) or similarly (Royal Holloway) to Kingston University.

6.0 SUMMARY

- 6.1 Kingston University is one of largest universities in the region outside central London. Of the eight universities compared in this study, only Middlesex has a greater number of full-time students. However, Kingston has less halls of residence bedspaces than Brunel University, Royal Holloway and the University of Surrey in Guildford. In terms of bedspaces per student, Kingston at 0.16 spaces per student, ranks below Brunel, (0.29); Royal Holloway (0.40); Roehampton (0.22); Guildford (0.41) and Greenwich (0.18).
- 6.2 When compared to the other eight universities Kingston gains an average ranking in terms of accommodation quality, price of accommodation and accessibility.
- 6.3 Of the eight universities assessed, two operate an accommodation policy that prioritises students who live furthest from the university (East London and Middlesex). Three either guarantee (Royal Holloway and Surrey (Guildford)) or “virtually guarantee” (Brunel) accommodation for all new first year students. Of the others, Roehampton operates a “first come, first served” policy and Greenwich offers places in private approved accommodation if places in halls of residence are not available.

APPENDIX 2.1:

CHAPTER 16: GUILFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (JANUARY 2003)