KINGSTON TOWN CENTRE
AREA ACTION PLAN

Adopted July 2008
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PART A

THE PLAN AND ITS CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction and Background
2.0 Strategic and Local Policy Context
3.0 Characteristics and Key Issues
4.0 Vision, Objectives and Proposals
chapter 1 introduction and background
1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This Area Action Plan (AAP) for Kingston town centre is part of the Council’s emerging Local Development Framework for the borough, as set out in the Local Development Scheme. It sets out planning policy for Kingston town centre over the period to 2020 and on adoption it will form part of the statutory development plan for the borough.

1.2 The need for action to shape the future development and regeneration of the town centre was recognised in 2001. Kingston is a successful metropolitan centre, but there were concerns about its attractiveness and vitality, following a loss of daytime visitors and an increasingly vibrant night-time economy. Several large development schemes were nearing completion and there was pressure for further development, set against a shortage of sites and land for town centre expansion.

1.3 These factors indicated a need to review existing planning policy for the town centre, as set out in the Unitary Development Plan, and to have a clear vision for the future. The Council’s Executive endorsed the proposal to prepare a strategy for the town centre, to be known as K+20, in November 2002.

1.4 Specialist studies have been completed to provide a sound evidence base to guide the formulation of this AAP. They are available separately from the Council and through its K+20 website: www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus20

- Retail Studies 2003 and 2006
- Parking Study 2004 and Parking Strategy 2005
- Old Town Conservation Area Studies 2003 - 2005
- Transport Assessment 2004-2006
- Secure Cycle Parking Study and Strategy 2004
- Park and Ride Study 2002
- Rapid Transit Study 2004
- Office Survey 2005
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2007
- Archaeology Overview 2006
- Hotel Feasibility Study 2007
A high level of public and stakeholder involvement has been sought throughout the various stages in the preparation of the AAP. There was a community/stakeholder event in June 2003 to launch K+20 and identify key issues affecting the future development and well-being of the town centre, followed by consultation on Issues in 2004. In June 2005 there was a community/stakeholder event to launch the Preferred Option, followed by exhibitions and a statutory six week consultation period. There was informal consultation with key stakeholders on an initial draft of the AAP in 2006. Full details are set out in the Consultation Statement, which accompanies this Plan and which is available separately from the Council and through the Council’s K+20 website www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus20. The Council is satisfied that the preparation of the AAP accords with the requirements of its Statement of Community Involvement.

The direction of the AAP has been shaped by the following factors:

- The policy context (national, London Plan and local planning policies)
- The Community Strategy and other relevant borough strategies
- The findings of the specialist studies
- Stakeholder and community engagement
- The characteristics and issues facing the town centre
- Transport considerations
- Development pressures
- Sustainability Appraisal of the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Plan including the need for sustainable development, to protect the quality of life and ensure access for all

The Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR) which accompanies this Plan is available separately from the Council and through the Council’s K+20 website. www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus20
The Plan addresses key issues and provides the spatial framework to guide future development and improvement. It involves a pro-active approach to promoting and managing change to ensure that Kingston remains a thriving and environmentally sustainable town centre. Failure to take action and to plan for growth and change could result in stagnation and loss of investment, pressure for inappropriate development and out of town development. The Plan sets out a Vision for the future, with objectives, policies and proposals to achieve the vision. It details how regeneration will be delivered and co-ordinated by the public and private sectors working in partnership together with other agencies. It will be used to assess development proposals and planning applications. There are many opportunities for beneficial change to improve the natural, built and historic environment, as well as the quality and range of attractions and services to strengthen the local economy. The Plan identifies areas suitable for major change to accommodate new development and key areas for conservation and enhancement, notably the Old Town around the Market Place and the riverside, which have significant natural and cultural heritage value.
chapter 2

strategic and local policy context
2.0 STRATEGIC AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The policy context for this AAP is provided by:
- National planning policy, as set out in Government Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Circulars
- Regional planning policy, as set out in The Mayor’s London Plan and its related strategies and the South London Sub-Regional Development Framework
- Local plans and strategies for the borough, including the Unitary Development Plan First Alteration 2005, the Local Implementation Plan (Transport) 2005 and The Community Plan 2004

2.2 This AAP accords with national planning policies and is in general conformity with existing and emerging London Plan policies. Figure 1 identifies the plans and strategies which provide the context and supporting information that have underpinned the AAP preparation. The Plan’s focus on investment and regeneration of the town centre is consistent with the overall aims and priorities in those plans and strategies.

National Planning Policy

2.3 A key objective of PPS6 Planning and Town Centres is to promote the viability and vitality of town centres by:
“Planning for the growth and development of existing centres by promoting and enhancing them and by focusing development and a wide range of services there in a good environment which is accessible to all”.

2.4 Action plans, alongside other initiatives, can be used to actively plan for growth and to manage change or conservation. Town centres should continue to meet community needs by consolidating and building on their strengths and addressing key issues. Plans should: provide for a range of shopping, leisure and local services; improve accessibility; promote social inclusion, economic growth, tourism, the efficient use of land, high quality and inclusive design, improvements to the public realm and open spaces and protect heritage.
National
- Planning Legislation
- Government Circulars
- PPG’s / PPS’s
- Good Practice Guidance

Regional London
- The Mayor’s London Plan 2008
- Associated Strategies
  - Noise
  - Waste
  - Culture
  - Air Quality
  - Biodiversity
  - Economic Development
  - Housing
  - Transport

London Sub-Regional
- South London Sub-Regional Development Framework 2006

Kingston Town Centre
- Retail Studies 2003 and 2006
- Parking Study 2003
- Parking Strategy 2005
- Integrated Transport Feasibility Study 2004
- Park and Ride Study and Strategy 2003
- Secure Cycle Parking Study and Strategy 2004
- Old Town Conservation Area Studies 2003-05
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2007
- Urban Design Studies 2005
- Archaeology Overview 2006
- Kingston Town Neighbourhood Policy Programme
- Kingston First BID Business Plan
- Transport Assessment 2004-2006
- Office Survey 2005
- Hotel Feasibility Study 2007

RBK Borough wide
- Community Plan 2004-2009
- Cultural Strategy 2002-2006
- Licensing Policy 2004
- Housing Studies
- Affordable Housing SPD 2005
- Local Implementation Plan Transport 2006
- Air Quality Action Plan
- Biodiversity Action Plan 2004
- Hogsmill Walk Strategy update 2006
- Waste Strategy
- Cycling Strategy 2005
- Council Policy Programme
- Unitary Development Plan first alteration 2005

Figure 1
POLICY CONTEXT

K + 20
AAP

Thames Landscape Strategy 1994
- 10 year review 2005
- Putting the Thames back into Kingston launch July 2005
- Thames Waterway Plan 2006
2.5 The London Plan is part of the statutory development plan for the borough. Key objectives are to:
- Accommodate growth without encroaching onto open spaces
- Make London a better place to live
- Make London a more prosperous city with strong and diverse economic growth
- Promote social inclusion and tackle deprivation and discrimination
- Improve accessibility
- Make London a more attractive, well designed and green city

2.6 Policy 2A.5 Town Centres sets out the over-arching policy to support and regenerate town centres, which are important in accommodating economic growth, meeting the needs of Londoners and improving the sustainability of development.

2.7 Other relevant London Plan policies cover: London’s Economy (3B.1); Integrating transport and development (3C.1); Supporting Town Centres (3D.1); Sustainable Design Principles (4B.1); Housing Targets (3A.2); Higher and Further Education (3A.25); the Blue Ribbon Network (4C.1) and Strategic Priorities for South West London (5E.1). The AAP text cross-references to relevant London Plan and AAP policies.

2.8 London Plan policies aim to exploit the strength of metropolitan town centres. They support the development of a competitive retail sector; promoting the complementary, competitive offers of town centres and engaging with developers and operators to find appropriate sites. Development Plan Documents (DPDs), such as this AAP, need to undertake local assessments to identify future retail and other requirements and capacity to meet these needs.

2.9 Policy 2A.9 Supporting Sustainable Communities reinforces the need for DPD policies to focus retail, leisure, key commercial activity and community services in town centres and to address structural economic changes, including changes in the office market, improving provision for small and medium-sized enterprises and refreshing the local skills base.

2.10 The London Plan proposes that Kingston will form part of a new South West London sub-region for which strategic priorities are to:
- Further exploit the strength of the metropolitan town centres and encourage sensitive restructuring of some town centres to reflect changes in the office market and the need for a range of economic activities and housing
- Ensure that new housing has adequate social and other infrastructure provision
- Consolidate the attractiveness of SW London by addressing areas in need of regeneration and by improving the quality of the public realm
- Promote improvements to the national rail network
- Improve orbital movement by public transport and access to Heathrow
South London Sub-Regional Development Framework May 2006

2.11 The South London Sub-Regional Development Framework (SRDF) is a non-statutory planning document, prepared to inform the London Plan review. It identifies significant scope for town centres to absorb much of the forecast growth for South London, through mixed-use schemes and increased densities.

2.12 The SRDF (para.126), supports the scope and growth envisaged in this AAP stating that: “Implementation of Kingston’s K+20 vision will strengthen its metropolitan role further and build upon its main attractions including the ancient market, major department stores, the River Thames and expanding leisure offer”. It refers to the need for improved public transport provision to match the opportunities for growth, in order to maximise modal shift from the private car, to improvements to encourage walking and cycling (Annex 4 Table 2B.1) and to Kingston’s potential for substantial new retail, residential and leisure development, modest office based employment growth and as a primary location for hotel development.

Local Policy Context
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Unitary Development Plan First Alteration 2005 and the relationship between this AAP and the UDP.

2.13 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is part of the statutory development plan for the borough, along with the London Plan. It sets out strategic and detailed planning policies for the borough and key objectives for land use planning, which are also relevant to this Area Action Plan:

- Encouraging new development to be sustainable
- Encouraging strong sustainable communities
- Safeguarding and enhancing the existing environment for future generations
- Practising equal opportunities

2.14 The UDP will be replaced by the emerging Local Development Framework for the borough, which will comprise a series of local development documents, including this Area Action Plan for Kingston town centre, which is a Development Plan Document (DPD) as set out in the Local Development Scheme. Most strategic and many general policies in the UDP will remain in use, some being ‘saved’ until September 2007 and others until August 2008 or longer, subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State, until they are superseded by the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies.

2.15 For Kingston town centre this AAP, on adoption, supersedes all the policies for the town centre as set out in Chapter 12 of the UDP that is:

- the three strategic policies STR21 Range of Functions, STR22 Townscape Strategy and STR23 Accessibility, detailed policies KTC1-KTC27
- and policies for town centre Proposal Sites PS1-PS22a and PS29a.
The reasons why this AAP replaces the strategic policies for the town centre relate to the pressing need to address issues such as the lack of new comparison shopping development in the town centre over the last decade.

UDP Policy STR21 Range of Functions affords priority to residential, recreational, leisure and community uses and open space in the town centre and does not envisage growth and significant retail development. It stems from the early 1990s when substantial retail and office development had been completed and diversification to other uses was required. Diversification has been achieved over the past few years with significant residential and leisure development. Retail studies show that there is now significant need, demand and capacity for additional town centre retail development and that need will grow in future years. In addition, the changing policy context, in directing the appropriate scale of retail development to reflect a centre’s position in the retail hierarchy, concerns about the vitality of the town centre, reflecting increasing competition from retail development in other major town centres and renewed developer interest, reaffirm the importance of the town centre for a whole range of uses, including retail. These factors indicate a need for a shift in priorities concerning town centre uses, consistent with Kingston’s role as a metropolitan centre and with the London Plan and PPS6, which promote economic growth and a full range of uses.

UDP Policy STR22 Townscape Strategy included a general height restriction for new development in the town centre, which is now considered to be too prescriptive. New policies covering the high quality design of buildings and public spaces are a more appropriate means of safeguarding Kingston’s character and securing a high quality environment. (Policy STR22 has now been deleted from the UDP, under direction of the Secretary of State, as Townscape issues are addressed elsewhere).

This AAP implements UDP Policy STR5 Shopping and Town Centres which seeks to enhance Kingston’s role as a regional retail centre and strategic centre. It will also rely on the remaining ‘saved’ UDP strategic policies (excluding STR21, STR22 and STR23), until they are replaced by other development plan documents.

In addition, the AAP is responding to Policy 2A.8 of the London Plan, which designates Kingston as a metropolitan town centre and requires local policies that:

- Seek to exploit and enhance the accessibility of town centres from the areas which they serve, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling
- Provide for a full range of town centre functions including retail, leisure, employment services and community facilities, in line with other policies of this plan
- Seek to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres including maximising housing provision through high density, mixed use development and environmental improvement

On adoption, this AAP will become part of the development plan for the borough, along with the remaining ‘saved’ UDP policies and the Mayor’s London Plan. Once the Core Strategy is adopted, the strategic policy framework for this AAP will comprise national planning guidance, the London Plan and the Core Strategy DPD.
2.22 In accordance with government requirements, this AAP has been prepared with regard to The Community Plan, prepared by the Kingston Community Leadership Forum. This sets out a Vision for the Borough with key themes and priorities, a number of which focus on the town centre, and have thus informed the proposals in this AAP. A draft of the new Community Plan (Sustainable Communities Strategy) was consulted upon in mid 2008 and is due to be finalised for adoption and publication in Autumn 2008.
2.23 Through its policies and through proposals for individual sites, the AAP will deliver the following aspects of the Community Plan:

- A clean, safe and environmentally sustainable town centre
- A centre of excellence for learning, with Kingston University and Kingston College playing a central role
- A diversified and balanced economy with the town centre:
  - remaining attractive to businesses
  - providing employment that is attractive to residents, including highly skilled jobs with high added value
  - maintaining a strong service sector and providing for creative industries
  - maintaining its position as a regional retailing centre with a diverse choice and a pleasant environment
- A regional entertainment and cultural centre with vibrant and exciting entertainment options for the whole age range and the Thames providing a focal point for a range of activities on and around the river
- A focus for tourism and recreation, with a quality hotel and conference facilities
- Well maintained, sustainable housing meeting the needs of the whole community
- A transport system accessible to all

Further references are made to the Community Plan throughout the text of this AAP.

2.24 The Local Implementation Plan (LIP), which is a statutory document approved by the Mayor for London that sets out the Transport Strategy for the borough to 2011, has informed the policies in this AAP.
3.0 CHARACTERISTICS AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 Kingston is a successful Metropolitan town centre, one of ten in Greater London, which attracts over 18 million visitors per year. It is the main centre in the borough (Plan 1) and a sub-regional shopping centre. It is also a significant leisure destination, especially in the evenings; a centre for legal (Crown, County and Magistrates Courts), business and public services; and a higher and further education centre (Kingston University and Kingston College), serving southwest London and northeast Surrey.

3.2 Kingston has an attractive and distinctive character stemming from its riverside location and rich blend of old and new attractions. It grew up around a crossing point on the River Thames and its name derives from "King's Tun" meaning a royal estate. By medieval times it had developed into a thriving market town. The 1086 Domesday Survey records that it had five mills and three salmon fisheries and the latter is now reflected in the borough’s official emblem of three salmon. The first bridge across the Thames and the Clattern bridge across the Hogsmill were built around 1200. Royal Charters in 1200, 1208 and 1481 recognised Kingston as a town and granted it independent status. The historic Old Town, focused on the Market Place is one of the best preserved examples of a medieval street pattern in southeast England.

3.3 Local industries developed and inns and public houses flourished when Kingston was a stopping-off point on the London to Portsmouth coach route. In the 19th Century there was rapid expansion following the construction of a new bridge across the Thames in 1828 and the completion of the railway in 1838. During the 20th Century industry declined and the town’s role as a retail and public administration centre developed. In the late 1980’s and early 1990s, substantial office and retail development followed the construction of the relief road system, whilst more recently there has been significant housing and leisure development.
Plan 1
STRATEGIC CONTEXT

characteristics and key issues
Characteristics and key issues

Area Action Plan Boundary
Main Road Network
1. Canbury Gardens
2. Sainsbury’s Store
3. Power Station/EDF Site
4. Royal Quarter (residential)
5. Kingston College Annex
6. Kingston Station
7. Cromwell Road Bus Station
8. Rotunda Leisure/Entertainment
9. Bentall Shopping Centre
10. Vicarage Road Sites
11. John Lewis Department Store
12. Centre of Retail Area
13. Oceana Nightclub
14. All Saints Church
15. Historic Core of Old Town
16. Market Place
17. Eden Walk Shopping Centre
18. Cattle Market & Fairfield Bus Station
19. Kingfisher Leisure Centre
20. Kingston Library and Museum
21. Ashdown Road Sites
22. Charter Quay (residential, shops, theatre, restaurant, bars)
23. RBK Guildhall
24. Kingston College
25. Crown Court
26. Surrey County Hall
27. Kingston University
Local Economy, Employment and Range of Functions

3.4 There is a diverse economy with around 700 employers providing 17,500 jobs across a range of sectors (see Figure 3). Retail dominates, with just over half the businesses and nearly half the jobs, but there is a significant private office sector, as well as public sector administration, entertainment and leisure, higher and further education. Retaining this diversity is key to maintaining a balanced economy with a range of job opportunities.

3.5 Kingston is one of the top retail centres in the southeast (ranked 17th nationally in 2005) with around 400 shops, two department stores and two markets (the Ancient daily market in the Market Place and a Monday Market on the Cattle Market car park). A loss of shoppers to other centres and the lack of new retail facilities have raised concerns. The 2003 Retail Studies, updated in 2006, found that Kingston serves a wide area for comparison shopping, has a shortage of large shop units and a range of retailers seeking accommodation. They identify significant need, demand and capacity for new shopping facilities and conclude that Kingston needs to enhance its retail offer in order to strengthen its role as a metropolitan and sub-regional shopping centre and maintain its attraction to catchment area shoppers, retailers and investors. The conclusions of these studies in terms of capacity for new retail floorspace were confirmed by the Greater London Authority’s own studies.

3.6 Since 2003, the Council has been working in partnership to identify opportunities for new shopping facilities, as part of mixed-use development within the primary shopping area and by extending it and these proposals form a key element of this AAP.

Figure 2
Employment and businesses by sector

Number of businesses by sector

![Number of businesses by sector](image1)

Employment within each sector

![Employment within each sector](image2)
3.7 Outside the town centre, the borough’s three district centres (Surbiton, New Malden and Tolworth) (Plan 1) and shopping parades provide for more local needs.

3.8 Kingston’s status as an office centre is weak, much of its office stock is poor quality and its rail services and connections are comparatively poor, which has led to low demand and low office rents. Measures are needed to enhance its attractiveness to commercial office based businesses, especially in the growing creative, knowledge, and information sectors. The vibrant and growing University (see para.3.13) is seen as a positive factor in helping to enhance the image sought for Kingston.

3.9 The range of entertainment and leisure attractions has increased significantly and now includes: the Rotunda leisure development with its flagship 14 screen Odeon cinema in the listed Bentall’s Depository; three nightclubs; plus cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants, some focussed on the riverside Charter Quay; bingo, health and fitness clubs, the Working Men’s Institute, Kingfisher leisure centre, Kingston College sports hall, sailing clubs and Sea Cadets. Arts and cultural facilities include: Kingston Library, Kingston Museum and Art Gallery; the Penny School Gallery; the ‘Toilet’ Gallery; the College’s Arthur Cotterell Theatre, Kingston University facilities and All Saint’s Church, which provides a venue for performance music. There is only one hotel, of budget quality without restaurant facilities. A Feasibility Study has assessed the centre’s prospects for a quality full service hotel.
3.10 The vibrant facilities attract large numbers of young people in the evenings, which results in some disturbance, crime and anti-social behaviour late at night. There is support for an increased range of attractions to appeal to a wider cross section of the community, especially in the early evening and at weekends, to promote Kingston as a leisure destination drawing upon its heritage and riverside assets and to implement a strategy to better manage the town centre at night, so that it is as pleasant and attractive to visit in the evenings, as it is in the daytime. The opening of the Rose Theatre and the provision of a quality hotel will help to achieve this. The AAP also seeks to provide a better spread of daytime and evening attractions across the centre.

3.11 Faith, Community and Voluntary Sector facilities include the five churches and the Friends Meeting House. The sector adds to the centre’s vitality and diversity by providing a range of activities and services for the local community, but requires improved facilities to meet local service needs.

3.12 There has been a substantial increase in the number of people living in the town centre, with 1400 homes completed since 1995, the majority in four high-density schemes (Charter Quay, Royal Quarter, Skerne Walk and Avante). Due to other UDP requirements (eg. theatre and hotel), affordable housing provision has been limited to 170 homes. Some concerns have been raised about increasing densities, lack of amenity space, compatibility of housing and other uses, lack of family and affordable housing and the availability of supporting facilities such as schools and GP surgeries. There is scope for more housing, including affordable, family and student housing, as part of mixed-use development, to address some of the concerns and a new GP surgery is planned.

3.13 Kingston University and Kingston College with 19,000 and 9,000 (3,900 full-time) students respectively, play a very important role in the local economy providing education, training, employment, plus a range of facilities and events. The University is continuing to expand and this has raised some concerns, which are being addressed through improved liaison with the local community. They had planned to acquire Surrey County Hall to enhance their facilities, but with Surrey County Council now due to remain in Kingston, other options for the expansion/enhancement of its facilities are being considered. Kingston College have new facilities in Kingston Hall Road and plan further improvements there and at their Richmond Road Annex.

3.14 Central and local government services, the Police and the Courts (Crown, County and Magistrates) are all located in the southern part of the town centre. A range of improved facilities is required to meet changing service needs, including Courts.
Environmental Quality

3.15 Kingston has an attractive character overall, with its riverside setting and distinctive historic core. Outside these areas, a large swathe of the town centre was affected by development in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, which cut across its historic grain. There are few high quality modern buildings and the quality of the environment and public spaces needs upgrading. There is potential for high quality contemporary architecture in key locations and improvements to the public realm, especially on approach routes.

3.16 Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is key to maintaining Kingston’s attractive character and distinctiveness, especially in the Old Town Conservation Area around the Market Place. There are four peripheral conservation areas; 50 listed buildings, including two Grade I and five Grade II*; and 34 Buildings of Townscape Merit. The Clattern Bridge is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the whole of the town centre is an Area of Archaeological Significance.

3.17 Kingston has a stunning riverside setting beside the listed Kingston Bridge. Recent development has completed the riverside walk and improved riverside access and facilities. There is potential to further improve riverside attractions to increase use and enjoyment of the river and to enhance biodiversity.

Transport and Access

3.18 Traffic, access and parking are key issues. The town centre relief road system carries high levels of traffic, much of it through traffic using Kingston Bridge, as well as local traffic resulting in some congestion in peak periods. Within the relief road, a large part of the centre is free of traffic with pedestrian and cycle priority.

3.19 The quality and distribution of the 7,000 parking spaces results in queuing for popular car parks at peak shopping periods, which causes congestion, when other car parks have spaces. The aim is to make better use of existing parking capacity and reduce queuing.

3.20 The town centre has a comprehensive and frequent network of bus services, which has led to increased bus use. Rail services are less satisfactory with a half hour frequency on both the Waterloo to Richmond loop and Shepperton lines. The main issues are the need to improve: rail services, Kingston Station, public transport from the west and southwest parts of Kingston’s catchment area and bus facilities. Permanent Park and Ride facilities would improve access to the town centre, but potential sites are outside the borough and will be difficult to deliver. A Rapid Transit Study was unable to identify any feasible tram scheme on the transport corridors studied and bus based alternatives were too marginal to pursue.

3.21 The flat topography, proximity to surrounding residential areas and network of cycle routes, mean that many people can choose to walk or cycle into the town centre. Cycle theft is a particular issue which needs to be addressed. Further improving public transport, walking and cycle routes and providing secure cycle parking will help to reduce car use, improve sustainability and enable growth and new development to take place without increasing congestion.
Kingston Town Centre Management and Kingston First Business Improvement District

3.22 There is an active Kingston Town Centre Management (KTCM), which promoted and established Kingston as the UK’s first Business Improvement District, Kingston First, in January 2005, in partnership with the Council and supported by the London Development Agency. The BID addresses short term operational and management issues and aims to promote the town centre to attract more visitors; secure a safer, cleaner environment with added security; better transport and access; and support for small independent businesses in the commercial sector. It is the role of this AAP to provide the longer term strategy for the town centre.

Flood Risk

3.23 Flood risk is a serious issue as most of the town centre is within zones identified by the Environment Agency as being liable to flooding from the Thames and the Hogsmill. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared for the town centre, in association with the Environment Agency, to complement PPS25 and set out measures to manage and reduce flood risk, especially on major development sites.

Accommodating new development and rebalancing the town centre

3.24 The town centre’s spatial characteristics provide constraints and opportunities, which affected the selection of the Preferred Option in 2005 and its range of sub-options for town centre uses; transport, access and environmental improvements. These are set out more fully in the Sustainability Appraisal.
3.25 The town centre covers a compact area between the River Thames and surrounding housing, open space and schools. There is no potential to extend outwards beyond existing boundaries to provide land for new development. Within the town centre, the Old Town Conservation Area, peripheral conservation areas, areas with special character, open spaces and listed buildings, need to be safeguarded and enhanced and are not suitable for redevelopment. Substantial areas of the town centre were redeveloped between 1985 and 2005, in two main periods of development activity (1988-1992 and 2000-2004), which also limits the availability of land for new development in the period up to 2020. Transport infrastructure, including Kingston Bridge, the railway line which is on the embankment and the relief road system also act as constraints, which affect the way in which the town centre can develop.

3.26 There are significant opportunities to accommodate growth within the existing centre in the remaining areas, many of which would benefit from major change, such as vacant, underused and poor quality sites, which are suitable for redevelopment and intensification. Townscape analysis has found that the grouping of land uses and built fabric form a series of ten character areas, each with its own attributes (Part C of this AAP), which have shaped the policies and proposals in this AAP.

3.27 There is an uneven distribution of attractions across the town centre, with major shopping facilities concentrated at the western end of Clarence Street with associated parking, whilst parts of the centre, especially in the southeast (Ashdown Road sites) and northwest (Vicarage Road sites), are underused or vacant and lack attractions. This AAP offers the opportunity to rebalance the town centre by providing a better distribution of attractions, in particular new facilities in the south and east.
chapter 4
vision, objectives and proposals, sustainability appraisal
4.0 VISION, OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSALS

4.1 The Vision for the town centre by 2020 is:

“A thriving metropolitan centre serving the needs of its catchment and providing a sustainable and enhanced range of town centre services including: retail, leisure, employment, education and community facilities, as well as new homes and improved job opportunities, in a high quality environment, that is safe, clean, and easily accessible to all. High quality new development will maximise the potential of vacant, outmoded and underused sites. Kingston’s distinctive character, especially its historic environment and riverside, will be safeguarded and enhanced. A range of improvements to transport, access, public spaces and the natural environment will enhance its attractiveness for residents, businesses, workers, shoppers, students and visitors, in the daytime and in the evenings.”

4.2 The Vision (Plan 3) has been developed from the strategic and local policy context (Chapter 2), the analysis of spatial characteristics and issues (Chapter 3), the evidence base provided by the specialist studies, sustainability appraisal and from community and stakeholder engagement. It reflects the Community Plan vision for the town centre (para.2.23) and takes account of the London Plan and relevant local strategies and plans, as set out in Figure 1. At Preferred Options stage in 2005, 77% of respondents supported a summarised version of this Vision.

4.3 To achieve the Vision, Kingston will build upon its strengths as identified through community/stakeholder engagement: its attractive character; riverside; historic core; and high quality shopping, cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities, by improving its range of attractions so that it maintains its role as a successful metropolitan centre and by protecting and enhancing its riverside and historic environment to reinforce its character and distinctiveness. This AAP addresses its weaknesses: its peak time congestion and parking issues with a range of access and parking improvements, its poor approaches and the quality of its streetscape with environmental improvements; its weak status as an office centre with better quality offices and transport improvements and the problems associated with its vibrant night-time economy with an ‘After Dark’ Strategy to better manage the town centre at night and provide a broader range of visitor attractions, especially in the early evenings.
Key spatial objectives have been developed to achieve the Vision. They will assist in delivering Community Plan objectives and realising its Vision. They are designed to ensure that Kingston maintains and enhances its attractive and distinctive character and its status as a metropolitan centre, in particular its role for shopping, business, education, culture and entertainment.

1. To maintain a diverse and sustainable economy, providing for business and employment development needs, with a wide range of employment opportunities
2. To enhance the quality and range of town centre uses and provide housing, including affordable housing
3. To provide a high quality environment with well designed buildings and spaces
4. To protect and enhance the distinctive historic environment
5. To promote and enhance use of the River and Riverside
6. To improve transport, access and connectivity for all
7. To provide a clean, safe, friendly, well managed and well maintained town centre in the daytime and at night
8. To ensure that new development is supported by adequate infrastructure and services and minimises flood risk

The AAP Vision proposes a shift in priorities concerning uses in the town centre, consistent with the London Plan and PPS6, with emphasis now placed on supporting and enhancing Kingston’s role as a metropolitan centre by promoting new retail and commercial development, alongside a range of other uses and facilities.

The Vision will be realised through this Plan by identifying and promoting sites suitable for new development and regeneration, through redevelopment and intensification; by identifying key areas for conservation and enhancement and by promoting a range of access, transport and environmental improvements.

The precise scale of change and development will evolve as the Plan’s anticipated proposals are brought to fruition. The policies and proposals have been drafted to accommodate appropriate levels of new development, whilst conserving and enhancing the historic environment and the attractive character of the town centre and by improving the quality of the built environment and the public realm.
4.8 The AAP policies are designed to be flexible to accommodate change over the lifetime of the Plan, however the broad scope of development envisaged by 2020 includes:

- New retail facilities to provide up to 50,000m² gross additional floorspace for comparison goods by 2016, focussing on the primary shopping area and extending it to complement existing facilities and enhancing secondary frontages and markets
- Around 1,000 new homes as part of mixed use development, including family and affordable housing, together with managed student accommodation for around 500 students
- New and upgraded offices, including small business space
- New facilities for Kingston University and Kingston College
- Enhanced cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities, including the theatre and an improved library/museum
- A high quality full service hotel
- Enhanced Court facilities
- Improved facilities for the faith, community and voluntary sector
- The protection and enhancement of the Old Town Conservation Area and other areas of historic interest, and the designation of Old London Road and Castle Street as Areas of Special Character
- Significant improvements to the quality of buildings and spaces, the approaches to the town centre, landscaping, signage, public art and lighting
- Improved facilities for leisure along the riverside and environmental improvements
- A new bus station, to enable the removal of buses from Eden Street; improvements to the Fairfield bus station and Kingston Station; new and improved car parks to maintain around 7,000 parking spaces; improved walking and cycling routes and secure cycle parking; and a potential permanent park and ride facility

4.9 The AAP also proposes a range of measures unrelated to built development to enhance the town centre including: promoting tourism and the riverside; attracting a wider spectrum of visitors in the evenings; attracting creative and knowledge based businesses; providing an improved range of job opportunities; improving public transport and travel planning; enhancing biodiversity; supporting town centre management, especially in the evenings and at night and training and cultural initiatives, together with measures to protect the town centre from flooding and ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided to support new development.
Plan 3

VISION - KEY DIAGRAM

- Proposal sites/potential redevelopment sites
- Main road network - crossing and environmental improvements
- Key area for conservation - The Old Town
- Primary shopping area
- Primary shopping area extension
- Motor vehicle restricted area
- Existing local open space
- New public spaces
- Key improved pedestrian links
- Gateway improvements
- Riverside improvements
- Proposed landmark sites
- New or improved car park
- Parking to be relocated
- New bus station
- Improved bus station
- Improved railway station
4.10 Implementation of the Plan’s proposed retail, residential, leisure and education growth is expected to result in an increased number of trips to the town centre and potentially longer stays. A combination of transport and travel demand measures are proposed, as set out in Policies K16 – K20, which aim to cater for growth without adverse impact on the main road network or additional parking demand. New development is located on the Proposal Sites so as to redistribute and rebalance town centre attractions, including retail and car parking (see paras.3.27 and 9.27) and to make better use of current parking capacity.

4.11 A Transport Assessment has been undertaken by consultants, in association with developer Hammerson, TfL and the Council to test the feasibility of accommodating the significant increase in retail and residential development, consistent with London Plan aspirations, as well as other town centre facilities, with associated highway and transport improvements. This used a VISSIM model with modified highway layouts including new bus and cycle lanes, and a new bus station. Subject to the redistribution of uses and the measures set out in paras.4.8 and 4.9 to improve public transport, walking and cycling and rebalance parking (excluding the potential permanent park and ride facility), the model demonstrates that the transport infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate the level of growth proposed and that acceptable traffic circulation can be maintained on the town centre’s road network. The Council will not allow the scale of development proposed in the Plan to proceed in the absence of necessary transport improvements.

4.12 The Plan’s policies and proposals to deliver the objectives and the Vision for the town centre are set out as follows:

- Part B – Policies related to the eight key spatial objectives
- Part C – Character Area objectives, Proposal Site and key Conservation Policies

The policies are interrelated and should be read together, alongside relevant ‘saved’ UDP policies (until they are superseded by other local development plan documents), national planning policies and the London Plan.
Sustainability Appraisal

4.13 This AAP is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR), which assesses the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Plan, building upon the earlier SAR, prepared at Preferred Options Stage. Sustainability issues include the need for sustainable development, to protect the quality of life and ensure access for all. Sustainability appraisal is an integral part of the planning process, which has informed the vision and policies in this AAP.

4.14 The findings of the SA indicate that overall, new proposals delivered through the plan will have positive social, economic and environmental impacts on sustainability and will allow for further growth and enhancement of the town centre. The proposed increase in retail floorspace and enhancement of office accommodation will help maintain a diverse and balanced economy, providing local employment opportunities for residents. The enhanced range of cultural, entertainment and community facilities will benefit residents and visitors, catering for a wider spectrum of ages and social groups. New housing, including affordable housing will help to meet local housing needs. A range of public transport improvements, together with a better distribution of parking associated with new attractions should reduce congestion from cars queuing for popular car parks, with spin-off benefits for environmental quality and accessibility. Environmental improvements will ensure that Kingston remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

4.15 Some areas of potential conflict have been identified, including the need to safeguard the historic environment and open spaces, to improve biodiversity and minimise flood risk, whilst accommodating significant new development. The AAP policies and detailed proposals for individual sites have been drafted to ensure that any potentially adverse social, economic or environmental effects will be minimised, and that appropriate mitigation is secured. (SAR page 67 paras. 5.63 - 5.64). The Plan endorses the use of sustainable forms of construction and renewable energy in new development. Adopting the measures set out in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will manage and reduce flood risk and minimise adverse impact on the environment.
PART B POLICIES

5. Range of Uses, Employment Development and Housing
6. Urban Design and Environmental Quality
7. The Historic Environment
8. The Riverside
9. Transport and Access
10. Town Centre Management
11. Infrastructure Provision and Flood Risk
chapter 5

range of uses, employment development and housing
NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT FOR AAP POLICIES

Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3: Housing
- PPS6: Planning for Town Centres
- PPS12: Local Development Frameworks
- PPG13: Transport
- PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- PPG16: Archaeology and Planning
- PPG17: Planning and Open Space
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk

KEY OBJECTIVES 1 and 2:
- To maintain a diverse and sustainable economy, providing for business and employment development needs with a wide range of employment opportunities
- To enhance the quality and range of town centre uses and attractions and provide housing, including affordable housing

5.1 It is vital that Kingston’s strategic role as a location for business, shopping, services, culture, leisure and community facilities, higher and further education and public administration, is maintained and its range of attractions enhanced, so that it retains its diversity and vitality, in line with its status as a metropolitan centre. Realising the potential to provide additional homes, in mixed-use development, will help meet housing needs and achieve sustainable development. This approach is supported by PPS6 and the London Plan (see Chapter 2).
5.2 The AAP contains detailed policies that seek to implement Objectives 1 & 2 including:

- Proposals for significant retail development to enhance Kingston’s status as a sub-regional and Metropolitan shopping centre (policies K1–K3)
- Proposals to enhance Kingston’s attraction to office based businesses, especially ‘creative industries’, by providing new offices as part of mixed use development and upgrading the existing office stock (policy K4)
- Maintaining and improving facilities for public administration, the police and court services (policy K5)
- Proposals to promote, enhance and diversify Kingston’s attraction as a centre for culture, entertainment, hospitality, leisure and tourism (policy K6), including the opening of the Rose Theatre and the development of a quality hotel
- Maintaining and improving facilities for the faith, community and voluntary sectors (policy K6)
- Provision of housing as part of mixed use development (policy K7)
- Proposals for improving facilities for higher and further education (policy K8)

5.3 The scale of development proposed and mix of uses takes account of Kingston’s role and catchment area, its physical capacity, the capacity of transport and other infrastructure, and the need to protect and enhance the character of the centre, its historic, built and natural environment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY CONTEXT FOR CHAPTER 5</th>
<th>RANGE OF USES, EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| London Plan                 | • 2A.9 The Suburbs: supporting sustainable communities  
                                  • 3A.1 – 3A.10 Housing  
                                  • 3A.11 Affordable Housing Thresholds  
                                  • 3A.18 Social Infrastructure and Community Facilities  
                                  • 3A.19 Voluntary and Community Sector  
                                  • 3A.25 Higher and Further Education  
                                  • 3B.1 – 3B.2 Economy and Offices  
                                  • 3B.8 Creative Industries  
                                  • 3B.9 Tourism Industry  
                                  • 3B.11 Improving Employment Opportunities  
                                  • 3D.1 – 3D.4 and 3D.6 – 3D.7 Town Centres; Retail; Arts and Culture; Sports Facilities; Visitors Accommodation and Facilities  
                                  • 5E.1 Strategic Priorities for the South West London |
| UDP                         | • STR1 Housing Supply  
                                  • STR2 Housing Need  
                                  • STR4 Local Economy  
                                  • STR5 Shopping and Town Centres  
                                  • STR8 Diversifying Leisure Facilities  
                                  • STR9 Community Services  
                                  • H9 Low Cost and Affordable Housing |
| Community Strategy          | Vision:  
                                  • A diversified and balanced economy  
                                  • A regional entertainment and cultural centre  
                                  • A focus for tourism and leisure  
                                  • Well maintained sustainable housing  
                                  • A Learning community with Kingston University and Kingston College playing a central role  
                                  Local Economy:  
                                  • Priority 2 – Employment Growth  
                                  • Priority 3 – Support and enhance Kingston town centre’s role as a key Metropolitan (sub-regional) centre within the London economy  
                                  • Priority 6 – Support the growth of creative and innovative enterprises that can enhance the borough’s offer in tourism, culture and other sectors  
                                  • Priority 7 – Delivering a knowledge and technology based economy, especially through working closely with Kingston University  
                                  • Local Housing Priorities 1-4 |
| Other Sources               | • RBK Retail Update Study (2006)  
                                  • RBK Retail Studies (2003)  
                                  • RBK Hotel Feasibility Study 2007  
                                  • RBK Affordable Housing SPD 2006  
                                  • RBK Shopfront Design Guidance 2005  
                                  • Community and Voluntary Sector Background Paper 2006  
                                  • South London Office Capacity Study  
                                  • Mayor of London: Town Centre Assessment (retail) 2004  
                                  • Mayor of London Creative London Strategy  
                                  • Mayor of London SPG Affordable Housing  
                                  • London Development Agency Economic Strategy |
POLICY K1: NEW AND ENHANCED SHOPPING FACILITIES
(Plan 4 and Proposals Map)

The Council will:

- Work with private sector land and property owners to provide 50,000m² gross additional retail floorspace for comparison goods by 2016, subject to the provision of necessary transport infrastructure as specified elsewhere in this Plan, through the promotion of new retail development on Proposal Sites P1, P2 and P3 to enhance and extend the Primary Shopping Area, improve vitality and viability and meet the needs of retailers and catchment area shoppers to maintain Kingston’s retail role and status as a metropolitan centre and sub-regional shopping centre.
- Seek to maintain the existing level of convenience goods floorspace.
- Maintain and enhance the character of shopping streets.
- Retain a mix of shop sizes within the Primary Shopping Area and require a mix of shop sizes within significant new retail development.
- Grant planning permission for:
  - Landmark new retail facilities, as part of mixed use development on Proposal Sites P1, P2 and P3, provided that they complement existing facilities and are fully integrated and well connected to them, so as to improve the retail circuit for shoppers.
  - Improvements and extensions to existing shops and shopping centres, provided that they achieve a high standard of design and relate well to their surroundings.
- Keep under review the need and capacity for additional retail facilities.

K1 replaces UDP Policies KTC1 Shopping Facilities in Kingston town centre and KTC3 Small Shop Units

5.4 The retail sector is crucial to the health of the local economy in terms of its attraction to businesses, investment and visitors. Kingston’s high quality shopping facilities were identified as one of its top attractions in the early stages of community engagement. At Preferred Options stage, 58% of respondents supported the provision of landmark new shopping facilities. The existing Primary Shopping Area is relatively compact and focussed on Clarence Street (Plan 4). With the exception of a new supermarket on Richmond Road, there has been no major retail development since the completion of the Bentall Centre and John Lewis department store in 1992.

5.5 The Retail Studies (2003 and 2006), which underpin this AAP, identify significant expenditure growth for comparison goods within Kingston’s wide catchment area (Plan 5). They recommend that Kingston needs to enhance its retail offer and provide new facilities to meet the needs of catchment area shoppers and remain attractive to them, so that it does not lose market share from the main part of the catchment area to other centres, including Croydon and Guildford, both of which have new shopping facilities planned. The 2003 Capacity Study and further work since then identify physical capacity for around 50,000 sqm (gross) additional floorspace in the town centre, through redevelopment and intensification of existing facilities within the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) and through its extension onto underused sites. Insufficient capacity was identified within the existing PSA to accommodate the forecast need. There is more than sufficient retail expenditure growth to support 50,000 sqm (gross) additional floorspace for comparison goods (a 20% increase) up to 2016. The Studies found that there is relatively limited need for additional floorspace for convenience goods to serve Kingston’s relatively local catchment area and no requirement to allocate sites.
Plan 4
RETAIL

Existing primary shopping area
Proposed extension to primary shopping area and primary frontages
Primary frontages
Secondary frontages
Other shopping frontages

KINGSTON TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN
5.6 The Retail Studies estimate floorspace needs to 2016, rather than to the end of the Plan period in 2020. This is because there are inherent uncertainties involved with extending estimates that far into the future. The reliability of the expenditure, population and other base data sets reduces as the time period lengthens. In common with the approach of the London Plan, which extends to 2026 but estimates retail need only to 2016, the Council will keep the need and capacity for additional retail facilities under review. Appendix 1 considers the retail hierarchy, the impact of the Plan’s proposals on neighbouring town centres and Kingston’s relationship with other strategic shopping centres.

5.7 The provision of new shopping facilities advocated by this policy (K1) would address issues raised in the Retail Studies and provide larger shops to meet retailer requirements, allow the relocation of existing retailers requiring more space, provide space for new retailers, and enhance shopping facilities overall. The London Plan and supporting documents, the SRDF and the Community Plan support the growth and enhancement of shopping facilities proposed in this AAP.

5.8 The provision of a range of shop sizes is important to meet shopper and retailer needs, from small independent traders to high street multiples and department stores, and to maintain diversity and interest. In some areas including the Old Town Conservation Area, Castle Street, Fife Road, Old London Road and Richmond Road, small shops form an important part of the character of the area. They offer variety and individuality, and provide premises for local independent and specialist traders, which community engagement has emphasised as being very important.

5.9 The Retail Studies and the work with developer Hammerson (see paras.3.6 and 12.8) have identified opportunities for new retail facilities, through redevelopment and intensification of some existing facilities within the primary shopping area, to the north and south of Clarence Street (Plan 3 Sites P1 and P2), including parts of the Eden Walk Shopping Centre and through extending the primary shopping area to the south and east to revitalise and develop the underused and unattractive Ashdown Road car park sites (P3) and parts of site P4. This would provide high quality retail in the southeast part of the town centre which lacks attractions and a better distribution of retail facilities across the town centre. At present major retail attractions are focussed at the western end of Clarence Street. Part C of this AAP details policies for Proposal Sites P1-P4.
POLICY K2: SHOPPING FRONTAGES AND USE OF FLOORS ABOVE SHOPS
(Plan 4 and Proposals Map)

The Council will control the use of premises in shopping streets through the exercise of its planning powers to safeguard and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre:

• Primary Frontages: proposals for a change of use, including through redevelopment, from retail (Class A1) to other uses at ground floor level will not be permitted.

• Secondary Frontages: proposals for a change of use, including through redevelopment, from retail (Class A1) to financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurants and cafes (Class A3) at ground floor level will be permitted, provided that the proposal would not result in a concentration of non-retail uses.

• Other Frontages: changes of use, including through redevelopment, of existing shops (Class A1) to other uses appropriate to a shopping frontage, such as: drinking establishments (Class A4), hot food take-away (Class A5), community service offices and meeting places, surgeries and consulting rooms, entertainment and recreation uses, police use and facilities for public administration will be considered on their merits.

The Council will use its planning powers and Supplementary Planning Documents to improve the design of shopfronts to enhance the quality of the streetscene.

Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of upper floors above shops to residential, offices or other appropriate service or community uses, which maintain or enhance the character and vitality of the centre and broaden the range of services.

K2 replaces UDP Policies KTC2 and KTC5

5.10 The character and attractiveness of Kingston’s shopping streets are attributes which the Council and the community seek to maintain. The control of changes of use from A1 retail is necessary to protect the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Area. Primary frontages are focussed on Clarence Street, Church Street, the Market Place and the Eden Walk Centre (Plan 4 and Proposals Map).
New retail facilities will extend the Primary Shopping Area and provide additional primary frontages.

5.11 Secondary frontages complement the main retail core and are appropriate locations for a range of services ancillary to retail uses, such as banks and building societies (A2 uses), restaurants and cafes (A3 uses), which meet customer needs, add to the centre’s diversity and vitality and provide activity outside shopping hours. However, the cumulative impact of non-retail uses in a shopping street can adversely affect customer footfall and overall attraction by creating inactive frontages and a change in character.

5.12 Space above shops, if not required for storage, is often underused or vacant and can provide useful office accommodation, consulting rooms for small businesses and employment, or relatively cheap residential accommodation, suitable for students.

5.13 The Market Place is Primary Frontage and retail activity contributes to its vitality in the daytime. At night the Market Place lacks activity and attractions. The opening of the theatre, may bring with it pressures for A3 restaurant uses which would be open on Sundays and in the evenings and could add vitality to the Market Place. Additionally, the provision of larger shop units, as part of the significant retail development planned on Proposal Sites P1 – P3 as part of the Eden Quarter, could lead to a relocation of retailers to the new shops and the need for a strategy to manage change in the Market Place and its environs. Attention was drawn to this by the Council’s retail consultants, who have assessed the impact of proposed new retail on the existing primary shopping area. The Council will keep this situation under review.
POLICY K3: MARKETS AND STREET STALLS

The Council will retain and enhance the Ancient Market and the Monday Market through its role in managing and licensing markets and will maintain the number of street stalls and ensure that they are well designed and well sited.

K3 replaces UDP Policy KTC4

5.14 The Ancient Market in the Market Place and the Monday Market on the Cattle Market car park are important features which contribute to local choice and diversity and add vitality to Kingston’s shopping attraction. The Ancient Market is protected by Royal Charters.

5.15 The Council needs to promote and invest in both markets to improve their facilities and ensure that they remain attractive and competitive to shoppers. It will continue to attract specialist markets to the Market Place to encourage more visitors and trade and will keep under review improvements to arrangements for servicing, refuse collection, litter control and storage and the design of market stalls.

5.16 Street stalls can also add diversity, though they need to be well designed and well sited, so that there is no adverse impact on retail frontages, pedestrian movement or the streetscene.
POLICY K4:
EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will promote the town centre as an office and business centre and improve the quality and range of office and business accommodation by encouraging and supporting:

- development proposals that incorporate high specification B1 office space, in a range of unit sizes, especially in the vicinity of Kingston Station (Proposal Site P10);
- the redevelopment and improvement of the existing office stock;
- the provision of workshop, studio, exhibition space and offices suited to the needs of the ‘creative industries’ sector.

Development proposals resulting in a net loss of B1 office floorspace will only be acceptable if office floorspace is re-provided as part of mixed-use development of the site, or the loss of the office floorspace is outweighed by the achievement of other AAP objectives through the proposed development. The Council will achieve these policy aims through promoting the development of the Proposal Sites identified in Part C of this Plan, and through the consideration of planning applications for the development of these and other sites in the town centre. The Council will play an active role with partner organisations to increase the number of jobs and maintain a wide range of employment opportunities and to identify and address skill and training needs for town centre businesses.

K4 replaces UDP Policies STR21 and KTC7

5.17 The London Plan, the London Development Agency’s Economic Strategy and the Mayor of London’s Creative London Strategy recognise the importance of strong and diverse economic growth, especially in fast growing sectors such as the creative industries (fashion, design, information communication technologies (ICT), publishing, arts and media) and tourism. They recognise the need to support creative industries through the provision of suitable premises (flexible office, studio, workshop, exhibition and incubator space), business advice and improving skills. This can help local communities to be more sustainable. The London Plan places greater emphasis on enhancing the business environment and strengthening suburban office markets, which have been losing their attraction and need to be consolidated and rejuvenated.

5.18 Maintaining “A diversified and balanced economy” which is healthy and sustainable is one of the main elements of the Community Plan Vision for the Borough. The Council wishes to ensure that a sufficient range of rewarding employment is available for local residents, to reduce the need to commute out of the borough to work and aid sustainability; to support the growth of Kingston’s existing business sectors and attract activities in the growing sectors referred to in para. 5.17.
5.19 Recognising the town centre’s strategic role as a centre for employment and economic development and revitalising it as a business location as well as a retail centre, through the variety of measures identified is vital in order to achieve a balanced approach to sustainable economic growth. The town centre is a sustainable location for some of the significant employment growth forecast for London overall, concentrated in service sectors that require quality offices such as finance and business services and knowledge based creative industries and tourism. Office based businesses and organisations already provide over 6,000 jobs in the public and private sectors (33% of town centre employment) and make an important contribution to the local economy, (see Employment Analysis Background Paper).

5.20 Providing good quality offices and improving the skills base of residents are particularly important as they will help to meet business needs and make the town centre more attractive to businesses. The Office Survey graded two thirds of the office stock as B – quality. The majority of businesses employ less than 50 people and unmet demand has been identified for small, quality offices in a range of sizes up to 465m² (5,000 sq ft). At Preferred Options stage, 59% of respondents supported the provision of new or refurbished offices.

5.21 The knowledge intensive, innovative and high value-added creative industries sector is a particular strength of Kingston University with around 3,000 students studying creative subjects. Kingston College also plays an important role in this sector. A feasibility study for a Creative Industries Centre, commissioned by the Council and partners Kingston University, Kingston Innovation Centre and South London Business in 2005, supported the need and potential for an incubation facility, in the form of a suitable low cost property, to help entrepreneurs in the creative industries sector start and develop their businesses. It also identified a need for a range of move-on space including workspace, studio space and offices. Partnership working will help to address issues such as the mismatch between the skills of the local workforce and the needs of businesses in the town centre, including the retail sector. Through the Local Area Agreement, the Council is seeking to provide training to improve retail skills in partnership with Kingston College’s Centre of Vocational Excellence in Learning.
POLICY K5: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, POLICE AND HER MAJESTY’S COURTS SERVICE

The Council will work with partner organisations, including central government agencies, the Metropolitan Police and Her Majesty’s Courts Service (HMCS) to maintain and enhance facilities to meet changing service and accommodation needs. Kingston’s judicial role should be maintained and enhanced and the Council will work with HMCS to help them meet requirements for improved Court facilities.

5.22 As a metropolitan centre, Kingston is an appropriate, accessible location for a range of central and local government, Police and Court services. They provide a range of employment opportunities and a significant number of jobs, both of which are important in maintaining the diversity of the local economy. The town centre plays an important judicial role with Crown, County and Magistrates’ Courts, plus associated support services, including legal practices. Engagement with HMCS and the Police has identified requirements for improved facilities to meet a range of changing needs.
POLICY K6:
PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR ARTS, CULTURE, TOURISM
ENTERTAINMENT, LEISURE, RECREATION, THE COMMUNITY, FAITH AND
VOLUNTARY SECTORS AND HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

The Council will:

• Grant planning permission for proposals which enhance or diversify the range of arts, culture, entertainment, leisure and recreational facilities, subject to an assessment of the scale, character, location and impact of the proposal on existing facilities and residential uses

• Refuse planning permission for proposals involving the loss of such uses, unless replacement facilities are provided

• Grant planning permission for a high quality full service hotel with conference and banqueting facilities on Proposal Sites P12 or P17, subject to satisfactory access and parking provision, and assess other hotel proposals on their merits against relevant policies

• Work in partnership with faith, community and voluntary sector organisations to maintain and enhance their facilities and resist proposals which involve a net loss of such facilities

K6 replaces UDP Policies KTC9 and KTC12

5.23 Further enhancement and diversification of the range of arts, cultural, entertainment, leisure and recreation attractions was supported by 82% of respondents at Preferred Options stage, especially evening attractions to appeal to a wider range of residents and visitors. The After Dark Strategy, which will address concerns about the evening and night-time economy through improved management and maintenance of the town centre and improved late night transport is discussed in Chapter 10 of this AAP.
5.24 Tourism is a key driver of London’s economy and ranks second only to financial services (in terms of employment and wealth creation). It includes visitor accommodation, attractions, events, festivals, restaurants and sporting facilities. The town centre is well placed to promote tourism and attract more visitors to support its facilities, as well as heritage and shopping attractions and the riverside. The Olympics, together with the Pan London and South London tourism strategic approach of promoting a wide range of facilities away from Central London to accessible locations, provides an important opportunity for Kingston.

5.25 The Hotel Feasibility Study confirms that Kingston requires additional quality hotel provision in the town centre to provide accommodation for business and leisure visitors, including a large format events facility, to add to the range of attractions and increase tourism. Part C of this AAP allocates Proposal Sites P12 Northern Riverside and P17 the former Power Station/EDF site for hotel development. A Library Feasibility Study has also been completed to assist in formulating proposals to improve Kingston Library, either on its existing site or within the core of the centre.

5.26 Faith (religious) and community facilities provide accommodation for a wide range of activities and services, including worship, meetings, advice and events, which play an important role in the social infrastructure of the town centre and add to its diversity and interest. The vibrant and developing community and voluntary sector has over 30 organisations working in partnership with the Council and other statutory organisations to provide advice and services. Improved facilities are needed, including accessible and affordable premises, with reception facilities, offices, meeting rooms, storage and exhibition space to meet the requirements of Government programmes which aim to build capacity in the sector to increase the scale and scope of their public service delivery. There are advantages of locating organisations together so that they can share resources, network and support small developing organisations. The emerging Local Infrastructure Development Plan, led by Kingston Voluntary Action, is examining opportunities for premises in the town centre to house these organisations.
POLICY K7: HOUSING

Provision is made for around 1000 new homes to be built in the town centre over the period 2006 – 2020 as part of mixed use development to meet a range of housing needs, including private and affordable housing with a range of flat sizes together with around 500 bedspaces in managed student accommodation. Affordable housing is required in accordance with UDP Policy H9 and the Affordable Housing SPD (2006) or subsequent Local Development Documents. New housing should meet Lifetime Home (or subsequent) standards, incorporate renewable energy and sustainable construction techniques and at least 10% of new housing should be designed to be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users.

K7 replaces UDP Policy KTC8

5.27 Community engagement at Issues Stage revealed 59% support for more housing, including mixed-use developments above shops. At Preferred Options, there was less support (52%) and concerns were raised about increasing densities, lack of family and affordable housing and availability of support facilities such as schools. Additional housing will meet a range of housing needs, mainly in higher density flats as part of mixed use development, but also through the conversion of upper floors above shops.

5.28 All Proposal Sites except P14, P15 and P16 have potential for housing and an initial assessment of suitable sites indicates that there is scope for around 1000 additional homes and 500 bedspaces in managed student accommodation. More detailed assessments taking account of massing, townscape and infrastructure considerations may result in this figure being revised. This approach is consistent with GLA support for maximising housing provision through high density, mixed-use development in town centres, subject to adequate social and other infrastructure being provided. The importance of adequate infrastructure provision is addressed in Chapter 11 of this AAP Policy K22.
5.29 The majority of recently built housing in the centre comprises one and two bedroom flats. A wider mix of flat sizes, including larger flats is required to meet a wider range of needs, including family housing. The detailed siting of housing within individual Proposal Sites will need to take account of the location of other town centre uses to provide a satisfactory residential environment.

5.30 Meeting Lifetime Home standards and requirements for wheelchair accessibility will promote social inclusion and accord with the London Plan (Policy 3A.5). New housing should incorporate best environmental practice, with sustainable construction and renewable energy measures (Policy K9) in order to contribute to sustainability.

5.31 The University has a shortfall of managed student accommodation, which has implications for the local housing market, as increasing numbers of houses and flats, within and around the town centre are rented out to students, reducing the supply of locally available family housing. At present there is no managed student housing in the town centre, though a scheme is due for completion on Proposal Site P12. The provision of student housing in the town centre within Proposal Sites P4, P8, P10, P11, P19, and P20 will help to address this issue and the Council will work with the University to ensure suitable provision.
POLICY K8: HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION

The Council will work with Kingston University and Kingston College and will support in principle, the provision of improved facilities on the University’s Penryhn Road campus (Proposal Site P16) and College sites in Kingston Hall Road and Richmond Road (part of Proposal Site P19). Proposals should be of a high standard of design, relate well to their surroundings and safeguard visual and residential amenity.

5.32 Kingston University and Kingston College play a major role in the town centre and creating ‘A centre of excellence for learning’, with the University and the College playing a central role is a Community Plan priority. At Preferred Options, 62% of respondents supported new University and College Facilities. Partnership working between the Council and the University in 2005/2006 looked at various aspects of the University, including its wider social and economic benefits, in connection with community concerns about its impact on the town centre and surrounding area.

5.33 A Strategic Liaison Committee has been set up to formalise this dialogue and the University has improved its liaison and communication with the local community through regular meetings and newsletters.

5.34 The University is continuing to expand and their Penryhn Road campus requires significant improvement to the quality of the buildings and spaces to provide a satisfactory standard of academic, teaching and ancillary space and to accommodate growth. The new John Galsworthy building was completed in 2007 and additional proposals emerged in 2007. Student residential accommodation is covered under Policy K7.

5.35 Kingston College completed development at their Kingston Hall Road site in 2003/04, which provided new teaching space, residential accommodation, a sports hall and a theatre, but some further enhancements are required. Significant improvement of the Richmond Road site is dependent upon decommissioning of the adjacent gas holder site, as a result of policies adopted by the Health and Safety Executive. In the meantime, there is potential for smaller scale improvements. In view of the uncertainty about the future of the gas holder site, the College will need to investigate additional accommodation elsewhere for the short to medium term.
chapter 6 urban design and environmental quality
KEY OBJECTIVE 3:
To provide a high quality environment with well designed buildings and spaces

6.1 Overall, the town centre has an attractive character, defined by its historic core around the Market Place, its riverside setting and Clarence Street, its ‘pedestrianised’ main shopping street. There are some areas of poor environmental quality, especially in the southeast part of the town centre, which is generally of undistinguished character, despite some interesting buildings of historic interest.

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<tr>
<th>POLICY CONTEXT FOR CHAPTER 6</th>
<th>URBAN DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>London Plan</td>
<td>• 4B.1 - 4B.9 Design Policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 4A.1 - Tackling Climate Change</td>
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<td>The Community Plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• An environmentally conscious community and a sustainable borough</td>
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<td>• The safest borough in Greater London</td>
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<td>Environment</td>
<td>Priority 3 – Local Environment – To safeguard and enhance the local environment, enabling development to meet the needs of residents without undermining the value of the natural environment</td>
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<td>• Ensure sustainable development principles in all developments</td>
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<td>• Clean and safe streets, parks and communal spaces</td>
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<td>UDP</td>
<td>STR6 Conserving and Enhancing the Built Environment</td>
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<td>STR10 Sustainable Energy, Minerals and Waste Policies MW3 and MW4 – Energy Efficiency and Renewables</td>
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<td>Other Sources</td>
<td>RBK SPD: Designing Inclusive Buildings Access for All 2005</td>
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<td>RBK SPA: Design, Access and Sustainability Statements 2006</td>
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<td>RBK SPG: Sustainable Construction 2004</td>
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<td>RBK Shopfront Design Guidance 2005</td>
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<td>RBK Townscape Analysis</td>
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<td>Old Town Conservation Area Studies 2003-2005</td>
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6.2 The Council recognises the need to capitalise on the physical assets of the town centre, including its historic environment and riverside location, and to encourage the high quality redevelopment of poor quality, vacant and underused sites to improve the environment.

6.3 Strategic policy supports the need for attention to be paid to high quality and inclusive design to provide attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and help achieve sustainable development. Design should be appropriate to its context and should improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

6.4 Early community and stakeholder engagement identified Kingston’s attractive character, historic buildings, variety of architecture and streets as key strengths, in particular the riverside and riverside developments and the Market Place. Poor streetscape, with mixed styles and uncoordinated street furniture and ‘clutter’ were identified as weaknesses. Improvements were sought to the quality of the streets and to parts of the town centre, including Kingston Station, Old London Road, Vicarage Road and the riverside.

6.5 At Issues stage a cleaner tidier environment with more green areas, trees and places to sit, were high priorities for environmental improvements. At Preferred Options, there was a very high level of support for environmental improvements to streets, public spaces and the riverside.

6.6 The quality of buildings, spaces and routes has been assessed and features such as views and landmarks that are worthy of protection have been identified. This analysis, which is set out in Part C of this AAP, together with the policy context and feedback from community and stakeholder engagement have informed the drafting of two design policies for the town centre (K9 Design Quality and K10 Public Realm) and proposals for improvements to achieve the key objective.
POLICY K9:
DESIGN QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will require the highest standard of design in all new development and proposals should:

• Respect and enhance the town centre’s distinctive character and historic environment
• Respond to local context, scale and character, in terms of historic street patterns, siting, density, massing, height, appearance, plot widths, building lines and materials
• Safeguard the panorama and key views (Plan 6)
• Make best use of redevelopment opportunities
• Be accessible and inclusive
• Provide active and attractive frontages to adjoining streets and spaces
• Create high quality landscaped spaces and connections to surrounding streets
• Incorporate best environmental practice in design and layout, use sustainable construction techniques and renewable technology, appropriate to the type and scale of development
• Reduce opportunities for crime and achieve Metropolitan Police ‘Secured by Design’ (or subsequent) accreditation

The Council will promote the redevelopment and improvement of areas of lesser quality, including vacant and underused sites and the provision of distinctive exemplary quality contemporary architecture in key locations on the following Proposal Sites to provide new landmarks to reinforce identity and improve legibility:

1. Eden Quarter area (P2 and P3)
2. Kingston Station (P10)
3. Town House Site, Kingston University (P16)

K9 replaces UDP Policies: KTC 13 Design Standards; KTC 14 Implementation of townscape strategy. It supplements saved Policies on the Built Environment in Chapter 4 of the UDP (or subsequent DPD policies)

6.7 Kingston’s distinctive character and historic environment are key assets, which need to be safeguarded and enhanced. This was reflected at all stages of community/stakeholder engagement. The Council is committed to better design and the creation of an attractive, exciting and sustainable town centre. It will implement this policy through: pro-active work with land and property owners and developers, especially in relation to the 20 Proposal Sites identified in this AAP; the determination of planning applications and the implementation of environmental improvement schemes.
urban design and environmental quality

Plan 6
PROTECTION OF KEY VIEWS

1. Panoramic view from Thatched House Lodge Richmond Park towards Kingston town centre and the Guildhall
2. View from Thatched House Lodge towards Guildhall
3. View from Hampton Court Palace down The Avenue towards All Saints Church
4. View from Fairfield North to All Saints Church
5. View from College roundabout to All Saints Church
6.8 Key views to landmarks and wider panoramas (Plan 6), together with local views, (Chapter 7 and Part C of this AAP) contribute variety and interest to Kingston’s townscape, they reinforce its sense of place and are a valuable part of its built heritage.

6.9 Making best use of redevelopment opportunities will provide new attractions and uses, to help meet housing, retail and other needs and achieve sustainable development. Active frontages add interest and vitality, blank frontages can be very unattractive.

6.10 Design and Access Statements are required for certain types of planning applications to ensure that proposals deliver inclusive design, meet access and sustainability requirements. It is important that the town centre is permeable and well connected so that people can access attractions and spaces easily on foot. Developments should create spaces and routes which are accessible and open at all times. Implementing best environmental practice will help to achieve sustainable development. The creation of high quality landscaped spaces, including green spaces, is important as they can enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, as well as improving the townscape and contributing to a better quality of life and sense of well-being.

6.11 Key historic and civic buildings including All Saints’ Church, the Market House and the Guildhall are positive landmarks which contribute to townscape quality and legibility. Promoting three new sites for ‘landmarks’ in key locations on Proposal Sites P2, P10 and P16 (Plan 7 and Proposals Map) will provide identity and reinforce legibility. Details are set out in Part C of this AAP. “Landmark” status does not imply tall buildings, as can be seen from Kingston’s existing landmarks, which are all of modest scale. In some circumstances, buildings which are taller than their surroundings can provide identity, improve legibility and emphasise the hierarchy of a place.
POLICY K10:
TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM (Plan 7)

The Council will pursue a high quality, well designed and well connected public realm, to improve the appearance and attractiveness of the town centre. Through the design of public realm improvement schemes; the development of Proposal Sites; the determination of planning applications and partnership working with land and property owners and developers the Council will:

• Implement a rolling programme of improvements to streets and public spaces, using high quality co-ordinated materials which are durable and easy to maintain (Figure 3)
• Improve the quality of public spaces and require the provision of new public spaces, including two destination spaces, as part of major development proposals, on the riverside within the Northern Riverside area (Proposal Site P12) and within the Eden Quarter (Proposal Sites P2 and P3)
• Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment, ensuring that routes are clear, legible, safe and convenient
• Improve the environment of the relief road and crossings (Figures 4 and 5)
• Create attractive ‘gateways’ to mark and enhance the five main approaches to the town centre and the approach from the river to achieve a sense of arrival and identity (Plan 7 and Figure 6)
• Require environmental improvements and landscaping in association with new development
• Enhance the quality of public spaces, streets and passageways in the Old Town Conservation Area
• Promote riverside improvements to the Thames and the Hogsmill, linking open spaces and improved links to the riverside from the rest of the centre
• Prepare and implement a creative Lighting Strategy
• Prepare a Public Art Strategy identifying opportunities for public art and seek the provision of public art or contributions towards it in association with major development

K10 replaces UDP Policies: KTC11 Open Space in Kingston Town Centre; KTC14 Implementation of Townscape Strategy; KTC24 Pedestrian Network. It supplements Policies on the Built Environment in Chapter 4 of the UDP (or subsequent LDD policies)
Plan 7
PUBLIC REALM

Pedestrian priority area
Main road network - Environment improvements
Linked riverside improvements
Improved riverside spaces
New public spaces
Improved pedestrian links
Gateway improvements
Gateway routes; improvements to the approaches to the town centre
Improvements to riverside gateways
Riverside walks
6.12 Early consultation on K+20 highlighted the need for significant improvements to the quality of the public realm to provide a coordinated, high quality environment. This policy aims to create a network of places from its key public space the Market Place, to new destination spaces by the riverside, revitalised streetscapes, refurbished green spaces and small areas of incidental seating and planting. The townscape analysis and character area guidelines in Part C identify proposed improvements, which are listed in Appendix 2.

Figure 3
PUBLIC REALM PALETTE - ILLUSTRATIONS

Seating

- Stainless steel seating various options
  Location: Urban streets and squares

- Timber seating
  Location: Riverside and green spaces

- Granite benches
  Location: Formal urban schemes

- Seating specials one off commissions
  Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes

Bollards

- Bollard specials: Granite or york stone individual commissions
  Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes

- Stainless steel bollard
  Location: General use throughout

- Special traditional commissions
  Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes
**Signage**

- Stainless steel fingerposts
  - Location: General use throughout

- Cast iron finger post
  - Location: Conservation Areas

**Cycle Stands**

- Stainless steel cycle stands
  - Location: General use throughout

**Tree Guards**

- Stainless steel tree guards
  - Location: General use throughout

**Tree Grilles**

- Stainless steel:
  - Options available, square, round, inset uplighters
  - Location: General use throughout

**Materials**

- Smooth ground yorkstone aggregate paving
  - Colour: Natural
  - Location: General use throughout the town centre for pavements and other pedestrian areas

- Granite Location: Shared surface areas in key improvement schemes

- Yorkstone Location: Pavements and other pedestrian areas in conservation areas and riverside. Shared surface carriageways in conservation area

- Bonded gravel Location: Riverside and parks and gardens

- Timber deck Location: Limited adjacent to riverside
6.13 Pedestrian approaches to the town centre, links to the riverside and from arrival points, including bus stops, Kingston Station and car parks are generally of poor environmental quality and need to be improved. There are opportunities to improve the environment of the relief road and its crossings, as illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, as part of the Council’s ongoing programme of highway and public realm improvements. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought towards these improvements, (by means of legal agreement) from development proposals adjacent to the relief road.

6.14 Environmental enhancements are required to the main approaches to the town centre (Plan 7) to improve their appearance and create attractive gateways to achieve a sense of arrival and identity, as illustrated in Figure 6. Improvements including: signage, landscaping, high quality buildings, lighting, public art, public realm and highway improvements, will be implemented as part of the Council’s ongoing programme and through the implementation of development proposals along the approach routes to the town centre. Details are included in Part C of this AAP. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought towards these improvements, (by means of legal agreement) from development proposals in gateway locations. The approaches from the river will be enhanced by improved mooring facilities, signage and pedestrian links to the rest of the centre.
6.15 Functional and creative lighting schemes would visually enrich the town centre at night, enhance the pedestrian environment and create interest, identity and distinctiveness. Statues and other public art, as well as attractive historic or contemporary landmark buildings are suitable for creative lighting. A Lighting Strategy will ensure a high quality co-ordinated approach to creative lighting.

6.16 It is appropriate for major development proposals to incorporate an element of public art as an integral part of the design process or provide a financial contribution towards the cost of artistic features. Public art, including sculpture, murals, land works, unusual street furniture, lighting and architectural design can enrich new development (either as part of the detailed design of a building or incorporated into public space within or around it), enhance the townscape, create interest and identity, reinforce local distinctiveness and contribute to the creation of a sense of place. A public art strategy will identify opportunities and provide guidance on the provision of public art. Locations for freestanding pieces of public art are identified in Part C of this AAP.
chapter 7

the historic environment
KEY OBJECTIVE 4:
To protect and enhance the distinctive historic environment

7.1 Kingston retains its unique historic character around the Market Place, which is the heart of the Old Town Conservation Area (OTCA). The Old Town has a medieval street pattern and contains an impressive range of good quality vernacular architecture dating from the 15th Century onwards, including many Listed Buildings. It retains its trading role, with shops and the daily Ancient market and has significant cultural heritage value.

7.2 Safeguarding and enhancing Kingston’s historic environment, especially around the Market Place has been a key issue throughout all the stages of this AAP. Old Town Conservation Area Studies were commissioned in 2003 and at workshops with key stakeholders in 2003 and 2005 there was general support for the findings of the Character Area Appraisal and the Management Proposals. In 2006, there was consultation with owners, occupiers, businesses and stakeholders on the Old Town Character Appraisal, Management Proposals and some boundary changes. There was support for the Management Proposals, but some objections to the boundary changes, which removed three peripheral areas from the Conservation Area.

7.3 Outside the historic core, it is also important to retain and where possible re-establish the town’s fine urban grain, in relation to historic streets, frontage lines and plots. The four peripheral conservation areas are: Fairfield/Knights Park; Grove Crescent; Riverside North and Riverside South. Listed buildings (Plan 8 and Appendix 3) have generally been in full use and well maintained and several act as primary landmarks: the tower to All Saints’ Church; the Guildhall; Kingston Bridge; Surrey County Hall and Bentall’s Depository. Some have experienced significant changes, including the latter, which is now a multiplex cinema. The Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM’s) also contribute to the townscape and environment of the town centre (Plan 8 and Appendix 3).
the historic environment


Plan 8
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Listed Buildings
Buildings of Townscape Merit
Clattern Bridge
Scheduled Ancient Monument

Conservation areas:
1 Kingston Old Town
2 Riverside North
3 Fairfield/Knights Park
4 Grove Crescent
5 Riverside South

Areas of special character
1 Castle Street
2 Old London Road
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<tr>
<th>POLICY CONTEXT FOR CHAPTER 7</th>
<th>HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</th>
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| London Plan                   | **4B.1 Design principles for a compact city**  
|                               | **4B.8 Respect local context and communities**  
|                               | **4B.11 London’s built heritage**  
|                               | **4B.12 Heritage conservation**  
|                               | **4B.13 Historic conservation-led regeneration**  
|                               | **4B.15 Archaeology**  |
| English Heritage Guidance     | **Conservation Area Appraisals and the Management of Conservation Areas (2005)**  
|                               | **Retail Development in Historic Areas (2005).**  
|                               | **“Streets for All: A guide to the management of London’s streets” (2000).**  |
| UDP                           | **STR6 Conserving and Enhancing the Built Environment**  
|                               | **BE3 – BE4 Conservation Areas**  
|                               | **BE5 – BE7 Listed Buildings**  
|                               | **BE6 Works Affecting the Character of Listed Buildings**  
|                               | **BE8 Buildings of Townscape Merit**  
|                               | **BE19 Areas of Archaeological Significance**  
|                               | **BE20 Ancient Monuments**  |
| Other relevant studies        | **Kingston Old Town Conservation Area Designation Report 1968**  
|                               | **Kingston Old Town Conservation Area Studies:**  
|                               | • Character Appraisal 2003  
|                               | • Character Appraisal and Management Proposals 2005  
|                               | • Public Realm Enhancement Strategy 2005  
|                               | • Archaeological Overview 2006  |
This AAP relies on PPG15, London Plan and UDP historic environment (or subsequent LDD) policies, plus a detailed policy for the OTCA to achieve the key objective and implement proposals to:

- Protect and enhance the historic core, its medieval street pattern, riverside heritage and key views
- Maintain and enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the OTCA, particularly its historic core by promoting opportunities for further trading in its principal spaces, providing for recreation and leisure activities along the riverside and use of upper floors above shops
- Protect and enhance the historic routes into the centre and other areas of quality Victorian and 20th century development that retain their original fabric and character
- Ensure that development proposals in conservation areas preserve or enhance their character and appearance; retain buildings, trees and other features which make a positive contribution to their character and appearance and replace buildings, features and spaces that detract from their quality with sympathetic redevelopment, alterations and other improvement

- Provide a range of public realm improvements to conservation areas, including new paving in the Market Place in keeping with its historic status and improved links to the riverside
- Provide enhancements to listed buildings and other buildings of historic interest, including refurbishment and reuse of the listed former Post Office building to include a community use and protection and public access to the undercroft to the John Lewis building to view the Old Bridge remains
- Protect the archaeological resource and interest

Development proposals within, or with the potential to affect, conservation areas will be assessed against the policies and guidance identified above.
POLICY K11: THE OLD TOWN CONSERVATION AREA (OTCA)

The Council will seek a range of enhancements to the OTCA through: the development control process; the management of the Ancient Market Place and Market House; pro-active work with land and property owners and improvements to the public realm. Development proposals should preserve or enhance the character, appearance, setting and medieval layout of the OTCA, as well as its vibrancy and vitality, and will be required to:

- Achieve a high standard of design, with appropriate scale, height, massing and materials, which relates well to surrounding buildings and frontage lines, demonstrating the impact on the OTCA in a Design Statement
- Retain buildings which make a positive contribution including listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Enhance or replace buildings/structures which detract from the appearance and character of the area
- Safeguard important views to, from and within the area
- Maintain the variety of architectural styles and richness of traditional detailing
- Retain historically significant features such as boundaries, plot widths, building lines and open spaces and natural features such as trees
- Retain and restore traditional features such as shop fronts, walls, paving

Proposals for development within the OTCA or within 200m of its boundary that exceed 20m in height above street level, will require a visual impact study to demonstrate its impact on the conservation area and views.

Streetscape clutter and unnecessary signage will be removed, inappropriate street furniture will be replaced and where possible lighting columns will be removed and appropriate replacement lamps positioned on buildings.

K11 policy supplements PPG15 and UDP Policies BE3, BE4 and BE6 (or subsequent LDD policies)
7.6 The Old Town Conservation Area (OTCA) is a key feature contributing to Kingston’s attractive and distinctive character. It is important that features, which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the OTCA and add to its diversity, are retained and enhanced. These include its retail and hospitality role, especially in the historic core and Ancient Market Place, where these activities are key to its vibrancy and vitality, (whilst respecting functional and amenity requirements). They also include the medieval street pattern, with its irregularly shaped spaces, narrow streets, passages, narrow plots, intimate scale and diverse mix of architectural styles and materials. Objectives and policies for each of its three Character Areas: Historic Core, Riverside and High Street, are set out in Part C of this AAP. The Council intends to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document for the OTCA based on the consultant’s Studies, to supplement these policies and provide detailed policies and proposals for the pro-active enhancement and management of the area.

7.7 Primary landmarks within the OTCA include the towers to All Saint’s Church and the Guildhall and Kingston Bridge, which need to be protected, along with the important views and vista towards and within the OTCA. Protection should be through sensitive control of height and massing of any new development.
POLICY K12
AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER
(Plan 8 and Proposals Map)

The townscape of two areas of special character: Old London Road and Castle Street will be safeguarded and enhanced, by resisting development proposals that would adversely affect their individual character or historic interest and by implementing public realm improvements.

7.8 Old London Road and Castle Street are not within conservation areas but contain buildings and features of architectural and historic importance, which contribute to Kingston’s character and are worthy of preservation.

7.9 Old London Road is an important strategic route into Kingston from London dating from the medieval period. It functions as a secondary shopping street and has a number of listed buildings (Grade II and II*), including Cleaves’ Almshouses which date from the 17th century. The street environment is poor and it is included on the rolling programme of public realm improvements identified in Part C of this AAP.

7.10 Castle Street is a secondary shopping street, which developed as an entity in the late 1930s and has a cohesive architectural design with two three storey terraced blocks in neo Georgian style, with regular window design and a common brick on the upper floors. An environmental improvement scheme was completed in 2006. In appropriate circumstances, the Council will consider the making of Directions under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, to protect these areas.
ARCHAEOLOGY (Plan 9)

7.11 The town centre is designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance. The Council will rely on PPG16 and UDP Policy BE19 (or subsequent LDD policies) to safeguard and manage the archaeological resource and ensure the preservation of sites of archaeological interest. An Archaeological Study was completed in 2006 to provide a strategic overview of the results of past archaeological investigations and guidance to help manage the archaeological resource as part of the planning process, where development proposals may affect it. The Study reveals evidence of Prehistoric, Roman and early Saxon farmsteads, an important late Saxon and Norman Estate Centre and a thriving Medieval and Post Medieval market town. Overall, a significant proportion of the archaeological resource remains intact and there is a presumption in favour of preservation in situ.
chapter 8 the riverside
KEY OBJECTIVE 5:
To promote and enhance use of the River and the Riverside

8.1 Kingston’s origins and development are intrinsically linked to the River Thames, which provided food and transportation and led to the development of trade and industry, with wharves to transport goods. Much of the riverside was privately owned and not publicly accessible, so the town turned its back on the river. The decline of riverside industries over the last 50 years led to large scale redevelopment, notably Bishops Palace House, the John Lewis store and Charter Quay. Residential, retail and restaurant/cafeteria/bar uses now occupy the riverside and attract visitors. Charter Quay completed the riverside walk in 2001 and improved the link between the Market Place and the riverside. Some poor links between the core and the riverside remain.

8.2 The Council is an active and committed partner in the Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS), a partnership organisation formed in 1994 to promote and co-ordinate policies and proposals to protect and enhance the use of the river and the riverside. Early community engagement on this AAP identified the riverside as a major strength, but an underused asset requiring a range of improvements. This led to the Council in partnership with the TLS launching the "Putting the Thames Back into Kingston" initiative in July 2005. This involved identifying river-related issues with residents and a survey of river users to provide information for a Moorings Business Plan. The initiative has generated the vision to create a welcoming, attractive and interesting waterspace and riverside to encourage visitors and provide a positive experience for all.

8.3 London Plan policy (4C.1 Blue Ribbon Network) seeks to protect the River Thames as part of London’s open space network, to improve riverside access, enhance its potential for sport, recreation, leisure and educational activities and tourism.
8.4 To accord with the London Plan, the 2005 UDP designated the Thames Policy Area (Policy OL14). The Thames Landscape Strategy – Hampton to Kew (1994) provides a detailed appraisal of the river and its environs and a strategy to protect and enhance the riverside, but needs updating. The Council is working with the TLS on revising the Strategy, as it applies to Kingston.

8.5 The riverside north of Kingston Bridge is part of the Thames Path National Trail. Most of the town centre’s 1,250m stretch of riverside is within the Old Town Conservation Area or the Riverside North Conservation Area. The northern stretch in Canbury Gardens is Metropolitan Open Land (UDP Policy OL4) and the Thames is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (UDP Policy OL11). The Community Plan includes a series of priorities that will be embraced by a strategy for the riverside.

8.6 The Thames Waterway Plan, prepared by the Environment Agency on behalf of the River Thames Alliance in 2006 will also guide improvements. Partnership working will be required to implement its key objectives which are to:

- Improve and promote access and information for water and land based visitors
- Improve and maintain river infrastructure, facilities and services
- Contribute to enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape value
- Increase use of the river and its corridor
POLICY K13: RIVERSIDE STRATEGY (Plan 10)

The Council, through the exercise of its planning powers and through initiatives with partners, will promote the River Thames to encourage greater use of the river and riverside and seek improvements to:

- River-based and riverside recreation and leisure activities and attractions
- Facilities for boat users, including moorings,支持 facilities (wharfs, jetties, landing stages and slipways), club facilities and information
- The quality of the riverside environment, including the riverside walk, open spaces, biodiversity and links to the riverside from the rest of the centre including from Kingston Station and bus stops
- The quality of riverside development

Financial contributions may be sought towards riverside improvements in connection with major development proposals, through S106 planning obligations.

Proposals for riverside development and improved facilities will need to demonstrate that there will be no unacceptable impact upon navigation, biodiversity, flood risk or the special character and appearance of the river and riverside. Visual impact assessment may be required.

K13 replaces relevant parts of Policy OL16

8.7 There are significant opportunities to capitalise on the river and its riverside, which is a very special asset. Promoting the river to raise its profile will encourage greater use and enjoyment of the river and riverside for a wide range of sport, recreation and leisure activities, including special events such as river festivals and regattas, whilst respecting the natural environment. The Council will implement this riverside strategy policy through: partnership working with the Thames Landscape Strategy, the Environment Agency, boat clubs and river user associations; the promotion of development on Proposal Sites P12, P13 and P14; and through the determination of planning applications.

8.8 Improving facilities will encourage and attract more river users and visitors and cater for leisure demand and tourism. Moorings and support facilities are vital components of an active and attractive riverside. Boating activity brings the river to life, adds interest and provides opportunities for sport and recreation. The Moorings Business Plan aims to provide improved facilities to help reverse the dramatic decline in boating activity on the Thames. A number of the boat clubs operate from substandard premises and improvements are required to help retain and attract more users.
**Plan 10**

**RIVERSIDE STRATEGY**

- Proposed new/improved mooring facilities
- Proposed riverside environmental improvements
- A riverside cycle route via a boardwalk is proposed in the longer term
8.9 The quality of the riverside walk is variable and requires improvement. In some places it is narrow, in others it lacks a continuous footway or has poor surfacing, seating, lighting and landscaping. Opportunities will also be investigated to provide a riverside cycle route in the longer term. The quality and nature of the pedestrian links to the riverside from the rest of the centre are poor especially from Clarence Street, Thames Street, Wood Street, Vicarage Road, Down Hall Road and from Kingston Station and bus stops and need to be enhanced to improved access to the riverside.

8.10 There is potential to improve open spaces which are linked by the riverside walk and to provide new ones. Eagle Wharf (Character Area 7 in Part C) is a poor quality space that has the potential to become a major attraction as a destination space for informal leisure activity, public art and special events including outdoor performance. The Northern Riverside (Character Area 5 Proposal Site P12 in Part C) is identified for the provision of a new riverside public space, adjacent to Horsefair Quay, in association with major development. The potential redevelopment and improvement of Bishop’s Palace House (P13) also provides scope to enhance the links to the riverside and riverside open space.

8.11 There is generally limited scope for ecological enhancement along the riverside as it runs through the town centre, due to the hard engineered sheet piled riverside walls. There are some opportunities to improve biodiversity in Canbury Gardens by introducing small inlets and shorelines to provide habitats for waterfowl to nest and at Horsefair Quay (part of P12), a shallow backwater prone to silting, by providing reed beds with floating rafts to provide a nesting habitat.

8.12 The Hogsmill River, runs through the town centre, via the Guildhall Complex, under the ancient Clattern Bridge, through the Charter Quay development and into the Thames, via a culverted concrete channel. When the water level is low and the flow slow, the river provides for bird life, wildfowl and fish, but there is limited flora. It is desirable to try and improve biodiversity and there are some opportunities. However they are limited, as the river is subject to swift and substantial changes in depth and flow, as a result of rainfall and outflow from the Thames Water Hogsmill Sewage Treatment Works about a mile upstream and can change to a deep ranging torrent within a very short space of time.

8.13 The Hogsmill Valley Walk begins/ends in the town centre where the Hogsmill River joins the River Thames and runs to the south of the borough, forming part of a long distance walk (the London Loop and Thames Down Link Path). Enhancements are required to complete the walk (in places it deviates from the river) and improve its environment.

**POLICY K14: THE HOGSMILL RIVER**

The Council will seek to enhance the Hogsmill Walk and biodiversity along the Hogsmill River.
chapter 9 transport and access
KEY OBJECTIVE 6: To improve transport, access and connectivity for all

9.1 Town centres are sustainable locations for major development and facilities, as they are accessible by various means of transport and can cater for multi-purpose trips, which helps to reduce overall travel demand and car use. Ease of access plays an important role in maintaining vital and viable town centres and can affect a centre’s attraction to visitors and businesses and its local economy. This is particularly so in the case of Kingston where access to the town centre is a significant local issue. In early stakeholder engagement, issues relating to congestion and the relief road featured as weaknesses, and the need to resolve transport issues as a major aspiration.

• Five main roads feed into the relief road system, which carries high levels of through traffic, much of it to cross Kingston Bridge, as well as town centre traffic, which results in some congestion at peak times

• The relief road frees a large part of the centre from traffic and congestion, allowing vehicle restrictions and pedestrian and cycle priority

• The focus of major shopping facilities with associated car parks in parts of the town centre, and driver preference, leads to motorists queuing to access these car parks having driven past other car parks with spaces

• Rail accessibility is poor as Kingston is not on the main rail network, but served by the Waterloo to Richmond loop and Shepperton branch lines (both with half hour services)

• There is a comprehensive network of frequent and reliable bus services

• Public transport from the south and west, especially from Surrey districts is poor and so car use from these areas is high

• There is a comprehensive network of cycle routes forming part of the London Cycle Network

• The close proximity of surrounding residential areas and flat topography mean that many people can choose to walk or cycle into the town centre

• The Mayor of London’s Transport Strategy expects the car to remain the most popular means of travel in outer London for the foreseeable future
Plan 11
TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

- Fully pedestrianised areas
- Pedestrian/vehicle time sharing
- Pedestrian priority/vehicle restricted area
- Environmental improvements to the road network
- Existing car park
- Proposed new/improved car park
- Parking to be relocated
- Bus lane/area
- Bus stop
- Proposed bus station
- Improved bus station
- Improved railway station
- Taxi Ranks
- Private hire vehicle/night time kiosk

For cycle routes and cycle parking refer to Plan 12 Cycling.
9.3 Recent trends have seen a growth in trips, a decline in traffic levels and a significant increase in bus usage, following bus service improvements. The Council is committed to maintaining such trends and improving accessibility to the town centre through the sustainable development of the various transport networks, to meet increasing travel needs resulting from new development and facilities, improve the environment and reduce traffic congestion. One of the aims is to manage travel demand, especially car use and achieve mode shift to more sustainable forms of transport. A sensitive approach is required so as not to put the town centre at a commercial disadvantage, which would affect the local economy. The Council recognises that its powers are very limited as it does not control the rail or bus networks and parts of the road network and that it needs to work in partnership to achieve its key objective.

9.4 This AAP proposes a number of policies and measures, within the context of the Mayor’s London Plan and Transport Strategy, the Community Plan, the Council’s UDP and Local Implementation Plan (Transport) 2006, transport constraints and community/stakeholder responses, which seek to:

- Balance the need to keep traffic flowing on the main road network to minimise congestion, especially delay to buses, with opportunities to give greater priority to pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities (K15)
- Further improve public transport, especially from the south and west, orbital and late night transport and provide a new bus station and improvements to Kingston Station (K16)
- Continue the programme of pedestrian improvements to provide safe, attractive and legible routes (K17)
- Further improve cycle routes and provide secure cycle parking (K18)
- Improve provision for taxis, community transport and Shopmobility and promote permanent park and ride schemes (K19)
- Make better use of parking capacity by providing clear signing and high quality car parks associated with major attractions (K20)
- Promote Transport Demand Management (TDM), including the provision of travel plans to promote sustainable ways of travelling and thereby reduce demand for car parking (K16)
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Transport and access
POLICY K15:
TOWN CENTRE ROAD NETWORK

Through partnership working with Transport for London, the implementation of the Proposal Sites and policies in this AAP and the determination of planning applications, the Council will:

• Seek to balance competing needs on the town centre road network, including the need to maintain traffic circulation and minimise congestion with opportunities to give greater priority to pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and people with disabilities

• Continue to reduce vehicle access, where feasible, within the Motor Vehicle Restricted Area (Plan 11 and Proposals Map) and implement pedestrian and cycle priority schemes to improve the environmental quality of the streets

• Seek to ensure that servicing and delivery arrangements meet the reasonable needs of business through improved off-street servicing and loading facilities. Where possible, these should be underground or through rear servicing and should also provide for adjacent properties

• Review signing and implement an integrated signing strategy for vehicles, buses, freight, pedestrians and cyclists

K15 replaces UDP Policy KTC25 Servicing Facilities in the Pedestrian Priority Area
9.5 The relief road system, which is part of the Mayor of London’s strategic road network, caters for through and local traffic and carries around 64,000 vehicles daily 7am-7pm, including 18,000 each way across Kingston Bridge. Although the weekday morning and evening peaks are very busy, traffic does continue to flow. Congestion occurs during the middle of the day at weekends and over the Christmas period due to queuing for already full car parks. The road system is also vulnerable to congestion if an incident reduces normal road capacity and this results in Kingston having an undeserved reputation for congestion, which can deter visitors and affect businesses.

9.6 Whilst there are not considered to be any feasible major alterations to the relief road system which would be beneficial, through new development and partnership working, there are opportunities for some alterations to be made to the road system and traffic management to benefit pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport (see also policies K16, K17 and K18), whilst maintaining traffic capacity and dealing with local safety and capacity constraints. Clearer signing can also improve traffic circulation and reinforce the interceptor parking strategy (K20), by directing people to their destinations.

9.7 Suitable servicing arrangements need to be made for businesses, which minimise the need for on-street servicing, improve road safety and the street environment, optimise traffic capacity and extend pedestrian priority. Significant parts of the main retail area already have basement service areas and new development should be similarly served to minimise impact on shoppers and shopping streets. Where this is not possible, for example in the historic core, the Council will minimise conflict and adverse effects on pedestrians and cyclists by controlling delivery and servicing hours through planning conditions, agreements or Traffic Management Orders.
POLICY K16:
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Council will work with partners including TfL, London Rail, Network Rail, the Department for Transport, transport providers, including London Buses and South West Trains, SWELTRAC, landowners and developers and seek to ensure that the following improvements to public transport infrastructure and services are implemented:

- More frequent and reliable rail services, including more late night rail services on the Richmond to Kingston loop line
- Significant improvements to Kingston Station including: a new entrance and ticketing hall, better interchange facilities, lifts, secure cycle parking, later opening, better security, staffing and information and in the longer term a new station with development above (Proposal Site P10)
- Improved bus services to the town centre including:
  - Better late night/24 hour services
  - Additional bus priority measures
  - Better cross GLA/Surrey boundary bus services
  - Provision of an express bus link between Kingston and Surbiton to improve public transport access from Surrey districts to Kingston town centre by rail + bus via Surbiton Station
- A new bus station on Proposal Site P3, associated bus priority measures on the relief road and the removal of buses from Eden Street
- Improvements to the Fairfield bus station (Proposal Site P5)
- Improved safety and security on public transport
- Better service information and promotion of public transport

K16 replaces UDP KTC23 Public Transport Interchange.

9.8 Improvements to public transport infrastructure and services will improve accessibility to the town centre and encourage increased use of public transport. This will help reduce reliance on car use, achieve mode shift and contribute to sustainability objectives. The Council will work with the operators and other partners to promote and lobby for the wide range of improvements identified. As well as service improvements, safety and security measures to reduce crime or fear of crime and the provision of good public transport information and marketing can increase patronage of public transport.

9.9 Improving the quality and frequency of rail services would encourage more people, particularly shoppers living to the west and northwest, where there are only two trains per hour, to use the train and increase the low 7% share that rail has of overall travel to Kingston. The provision of new rail services will need to be developed in conjunction with the sub-regional partnership group – SWELTRAC (The South and West London Transport Conference).
9.10 The quality of Kingston Station, which is owned by Network Rail and operated by South West Trains, is the least satisfactory of the borough’s ten stations relative to its usage and the status of the town centre. Access to and within the station fails to meet Disability Discrimination Act requirements and its appearance, layout and functioning is unsatisfactory and requires improvement. Later opening of the main entrance after 10pm is essential to make access to late night train services easier and safer.

9.11 Improved affordability, frequency and reliability of Kingston’s extensive system of bus routes (19 day and 5 all night services) has led to a significant increase in bus use. The Mayor’s Transport Strategy seeks a further increase in bus services and bus use. The provision of a new bus station on Site P3 would cater for such an increase, provide better facilities for bus passengers and enable the removal of buses from Eden Street, where the waiting environment for bus passengers is poor and there is an unacceptably high accident rate. Improvements to the Fairfield bus station are required to create additional space for terminating buses to stop and stand. Further improvements to night services will improve transport home from nightclubs in the early morning to areas of high demand. Bus priority measures such as contra-flow bus lanes can assist in improving journey times and bus reliability.

9.12 There is no direct rail service to Kingston from parts of its catchment area which are within the Surrey districts of Epsom and Ewell, Elmbridge, Spelthorne and Runnymede and there is a significant deficiency in bus services from these areas, which results in high car use. Improving cross border bus services and fares and promoting rail plus bus services via Surbiton Station would improve public transport accessibility to Kingston, offer a viable alternative to the car and help reduce car use.
9.13 Improving the pedestrian environment, routes and crossings will encourage more people to walk and aid sustainability. Kingston is fortunate to have a large area of the centre, which is free from through motor traffic, where the implementation of further pedestrian and cycle priority schemes, will further improve the pedestrian environment. Schemes in Memorial Square, Harrow Passage, Castle Street and Skerne Walk (outside the core) were completed in 2006.

9.14 Community engagement in the early stages of AAP preparation identified the relief road as a barrier, due to its width and heavy traffic. Most people walking to the centre from residential areas, Kingston Station, bus stations and some car parks need to cross the relief road. Whilst there are no realistic options to radically alter the relief road, improving the environment of the crossings will reduce its impact and assist pedestrians (see also Policy K10 Public Realm).

9.15 Providing attractive leisure routes, including the Thames Path national trail, the rest of the riverside walk and the Hogsmill Walk (see Policy K14) is important as they attract visitors, encourage walking and contribute to health and well-being.

**POLICY K17: PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT**

The Council will improve the walking environment by continuing the programme of pedestrian priority schemes and improvements to pedestrian routes including: crossings on the relief road; from points of arrival (bus stations, Kingston station and car parks) to the core of the centre and the riverside; the riverside walk, the Thames Path and the Hogsmill Walk.

K17 replaces UDP Policy KTC24 Pedestrian Networks
The Council will:
• Maintain and extend cycle routes
• Improve secure cycle parking, requiring development proposals to provide secure cycle parking commensurate with user needs in accordance with relevant standards (Appendix 4) and the provision of secure off-street public cycle parking centres on Proposal Sites P10 Kingston Station, P3 Eden Quarter and P13 Bishops Palace House
• Work with businesses and other organisations through travel planning initiatives, to secure improved cycle parking provision and changing facilities for employees at the workplace, shops, transport interchanges and other trip generators

9.16 Promoting sustainable travel, including cycling, will help reduce reliance on car use. The town centre and the borough generally have above average levels of cycling. The Cycling Strategy aims to double the mode share of cycling from 3% in 2001 to 6% by 2011. This will require further enhancements to: the comprehensive network of routes within and around the town centre catering for through journeys and town centre trips, including dedicated cycle crossing points to improve convenience and safety; the provision of secure cycle parking for residents, visitors and employees and the promotion of cycling. Increasing cycling will also help to reduce congestion, air and noise pollution, improve social inclusion and achieve health and well-being objectives.

9.17 Improved off-street and on-street cycle parking is required to address the issue of cycle theft in the town centre which deters cycling. There are approximately 600 on-street secure cycle parking spaces in Kingston Town Centre and on busy weekend summer afternoons these can be full to capacity. There is limited space on the highway to accommodate substantially more parked cycles. The Secure Cycle Parking Strategy, which adopted the recommendations of the Secure Cycle Parking Study, proposed increased on-street secure cycle parking and identified three main cycle gateways to the town centre (Northern, Southern and Western) where off-street cycle parking facilities should be provided in a secure compound or centre.
9.18 The provision of secure cycle parking centres on the three Proposal Sites (P3, P10 and P13) in conjunction with proposed improvements and comprehensive mixed-use development will meet the identified need. They should include some or all of the following: supervised and secure off-street cycle parking; showers and changing facilities; lockers for clothing and accessories; bicycle hire; services of a retail shop and repair facility; information about cycling and other sustainable travel facilities.

9.19 The Council will implement this Policy through Proposal Site policies (Part C of this AAP), the determination of planning applications and bids for funding from Transport for London through the London Cycle Network and Borough Spending Plan process.
1. Wheatfield Way between Eden St and Penrhyn Rd
2. Wood St (south side) between Clarence St and Skerne Rd
3. Fife Rd/Dolphin St between Castle St and Wood St
4. Horsefair between Kingston Bridge and Skerne Rd
5. Thameside/Vicarage Rd between Down Hall Road and Horsefair
6. Proposed riverside pedestrian/cycle boardwalk (long term)

- Existing cycle routes
- Proposed cycle routes
- Pedestrianised area
- Existing on street cycle parking
- National cycle route (Thames Cycle Route)
- Cycle route number
- Proposed secure off street cycle parking centre
The seasonal (November to January) Park and Ride service from Chessington World of Adventures to the town centre removes about 30,000 cars from the A243 and other local roads. Its success justifies this policy to provide permanent park and ride schemes to improve access to the town centre. Potential sites were identified by the Park and Ride Study and a Strategy was adopted in 2003. Kempton Park racecourse is viewed as a suitable site by the Council utilising the existing rail station on the Shepperton to Kingston line. However the project relies on co-operation from other partners, including Surrey County Council, Spelthorne District Council and United Racecourses.

Community Transport helps those unable to drive or use conventional public transport and makes a vital contribution to improving social inclusion. The Council assists by funding and running the Taxi Voucher Scheme and contributing to Dial a Ride and voluntary care schemes. Shopmobility provides improved mobility and access for older people and people with disabilities and it currently operates from the first floor of the Eden Walk car park. Improving the scheme through expansion and relocation to one or more easily accessible ground level sites within or adjacent to the core pedestrian priority area would improve ‘access for all’ and promote social inclusion.

Taxis and PHV’s (mainly mini-cabs) serve a variety of journey purposes, some of which help achieve environmental and mode shift objectives, such as travelling to or from train and bus stations. They are used by all social groups, are socially inclusive, help households without a car and are very important late at night to take people home from night-time attractions. There are 7 taxi ranks in the town centre (see Plan 11). The December 2003 pilot scheme funded and operated by TfL Public Carriage Office, which involved marshalling for the taxi rank outside the Oceana nightclub in Clarence Street was a great success and led to another pilot scheme for both taxis and PHV’s and the introduction of a permanent scheme. This involves the provision of kiosks by KTCM to act as designated pick-up points and facilitate the pre-booking of mini-cabs, which has improved late night transport, as well as safety and security and has reduced public disorder offences.

Travel planning can provide information on alternative ways of accessing the town centre, encourage the use of sustainable means of travel and reduce car use. The Kingston Travel Plan Network is a forum of private and public sector organisations that focus on transport issues.
POLICY K20: TOWN CENTRE PARKING

The Council will work with partners, including businesses, car park operators, Kingston Town Centre Management, landowners and developers to implement the Parking Strategy which aims to make better use of parking capacity and will:

- Maintain public off-street parking at around 7,000 spaces
- Implement Proposal Site policies to provide high quality car parks outside the Motor Vehicle Restricted Area, including new and improved parking on Sites P3, P4, P5 and P12 and the removal of public parking from Sites P2 and P13 (which are within the MVRA) associated with major development
- Publicise car parks, consider optimum pricing arrangements and improve signing

Through the determination of planning applications, the Council will:

- Require parking provision for development sites within the MVRA (Plan 11 and Proposals Map) to be within the high quality interceptor car parks and/or contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements
- Accept reduced parking provision for residential development i.e. less than the maximum of 1 parking space per flat
- Require the development of student accommodation to be car-free and provide S106 contributions towards town centre transport, access and environmental improvements
- Seek parking provision for other development/uses in accordance with relevant standards (Appendix 5) or S106 financial contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements and improvements to car parks

Through its roles as a highway authority and car park operator the Council will:

- Ensure generous and convenient on and off street parking provision for blue badge holders in accordance with relevant standards
- Maintain and improve parking for ‘powered two wheelers’ (motor bikes and scooters)
- Keep under review the provision and need for coach parking

K20 replaces UDP Policies KTC26 Provision of Public Parking and KTC27 Inner Area of Parking Restriction
9.24 Parking is a significant local issue and parking strategy is a key element of overall transport strategy for this AAP. Sufficient parking is required to enable commercial, cultural and entertainment activity to flourish, whilst taking account of environmental objectives on air quality, noise, safety and ambiencce. The UDP target of 7,000 off street public parking spaces was achieved in 2003 with the completion of the Seven Kings car park. In 2008, with the Bentalls B car park closed for reconstruction (P12), there are 6,400 spaces. The aim has been to provide large public car parks around the edge of the town centre to intercept traffic on the approach roads and discourage cross-town traffic on the relief road system.

9.25 The 2003 Parking Study found that the overall capacity of the town centre’s car parks (7000 spaces) was adequate to satisfy demand as a whole for most of the year. It recommended measures to make better use of parking capacity, including providing good quality, less fragmented parking, better signing and information and use of pricing. The aim is to address the issue of queuing for the most popular car parks (John Lewis and Bentalls) which are often full during peak shopping hours, whilst other car parks (Bittoms, Drapers and Cattle Market) have spaces. In the peak Christmas and New Year period it is accepted that demand for parking regularly exceeds supply and that queuing for car parks will cause some congestion.

9.26 Based on the findings and recommendations of the Parking Study, a Parking Strategy was adopted in 2005 to support this AAP. The Parking Strategy supports long term parking objectives, as set out in Local Implementation Plan Policy 29, which aim to achieve mode shift, which in turn support this Plan and the Community Plan’s Vision of a thriving town centre with an attractive environment. The Parking Strategy will be kept under review through the monitoring of this AAP.

9.27 The provision of high quality car parks outside the MVRA on Sites P3 Eden Quarter, P4 St James and P5 Cattle Market associated with major development, replacing poor quality fragmented parking will address the current imbalance between major attractions and parking and make better use of parking capacity. The continued existence of car parks within the MVRA on Sites P2 Eden Walk and P13 Bishops Palace House, where traffic is gradually being excluded to allow pedestrian and cycle priority and improve the environment, is inappropriate and the AAP seeks their relocation in conjunction with development proposals.

9.28 The provision of convenient parking for disabled persons is important to improve ‘access for all’ and promote social inclusion. Current standards for designated provision in off-street car parks are set out in the London Plan and BS 8300:2001 incorporating Amendment No 1 June 2005. Disabled persons with a Blue Badge are entitled to free parking without time limit in on-street metered bays and to park for up to 3 hours on yellow lines without loading restrictions.

9.29 Reduced parking is appropriate for town centre housing as there is convenient access to facilities and public transport. For similar reasons, student accommodation should be car-free. S106 contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements, plus restrictions on eligibility for on street residents’ parking permits can all assist in reducing the need for parking and car use.
town centre management
KEY OBJECTIVE 7:
To provide a clean, safe, friendly, well managed and well maintained town centre in the daytime and at night

10.1 Kingston has an attractive and distinctive character overall, but parts of the town centre have a poor quality environment and there are issues associated with the adverse effects of the vibrant night-time economy.

10.2 In early engagement on this AAP with the community and stakeholders, the poor street environment was identified as a weakness and improvements to the quality of the streetscene ranked highly as an aspiration. The Issues consultation (2004) identified dislikes about the town centre as follows: unsafe at night (34%); litter/dirty (23%); anti-social behaviour (22%); the evening economy caters for teenagers/binge drinkers (16%); too many nightclubs/theme pubs (12% responses); run down/lack of ambience (9% responses). A cleaner/tidier environment (38% responses) ranked first as an improvement that people would like to see to the quality of the environment. Local concerns about the evening and night-time economy have featured consistently throughout the preparation of this AAP.
### POLICY CONTEXT FOR POLICY K21

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<td>• The safest borough in Greater London</td>
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<th>Other Sources</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Good Practice Guide to the Evening and Late Night Economy ODPM 2004</td>
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<td>• Consultation Draft Managing the Night Time Economy Mayor of London 2006</td>
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### POLICY K21: MANAGING THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will work with partners:
- Kingston First/Kingston Town Centre Management (KTCM) and private land and property owners to provide a clean, safe, friendly, attractive and well maintained town centre
- KTCM, the Police, businesses and the community to prepare, adopt and implement an After Dark Strategy to better manage the evening and night-time economy so that the town centre is a safe and welcoming place to visit at night

10.3 Following concerns about falling visitor numbers, research showed that current services in terms of cleanliness and the appearance of the streetscape were not meeting the expectations of visitors and businesses. A clean, safe, friendly and well-maintained town centre, which balances the needs of its users, is a basic civic requirement and will make the town centre more attractive to residents, visitors and investors. It is a key supporting activity for the achievement of other spatial objectives, which seek to boost the economy, enhance the range of attractions and improve the quality of the environment.
10.4 The town centre was designated as a Business Improvement District in January 2005. Within the BID area, the Council provide baseline services and KTCM provide additional services to provide a safer, cleaner environment with added security. These include: improved on street cleansing; gum removal; planting; street furniture and lighting. Three streetscape schemes (Memorial Square, Skerne Walk and Castle Street) were completed in 2006 through partnership working and funding to improve the town centre environment.

10.5 Initiatives to provide ‘Safer’ streets and help overcome fear of crime are important and include: the provision of uniformed and trained community rangers, co-ordinated with CCTV, police and community support officers to manage anti-social behaviour; installing help points; upgrading street lighting in areas of need; assisting all town centre car parks to achieve the ‘Park Mark’ award and the implementation of a scheme for improved mini-cab facilities in 2006.

10.6 Kingston is a significant attraction as a hub of evening entertainment serving southwest London and northeast Surrey. The After Dark Strategy will help to guide and improve the management of the town centre at night to reduce associated adverse impacts. It is linked to this Area Action Plan and to the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy and complements other borough strategies that deal with crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and visitor management. It aims to promote the night-time economy whilst balancing the need to protect the amenities and quality of life of residents living in and around the town centre. It addresses issues related to licensing, planning, management, maintenance, policing, crime and anti-social behaviour and late night transport in a holistic manner and sets out a series of key actions. The After Dark Strategy was adopted in October 2007.
infrastructure provision to support new development and flood risk
KEY OBJECTIVE 8:
To ensure that new development is supported by adequate infrastructure and services and to manage flood risk

11.1 New development, redevelopment and the intensification of existing activities and uses can all generate additional demand for services or works, including new roads and improved access, community and health facilities and utilities. This AAP proposes significant new development, commensurate with Kingston’s physical capacity and role as a metropolitan centre and additional infrastructure may be required to support this growth. Inadequate infrastructure can result in unacceptable impact on the environment, through sewage flooding of residential and commercial property, pollution of land and watercourses plus water shortages with associated low water pressure. In accordance with PPS12 and sustainability objectives for this AAP, the Council will work with service providers and identify requirements for any new infrastructure and services, so that such provision can be properly planned for, funded and programmed. The Council recognises the need to ensure that the proposals in this AAP are not compromised by unrealistic expectations about the future availability of social, transport and utilities infrastructure and resources.

11.2 The AAP relies on the provision of school places in existing schools in the areas surrounding the town centre, for which capacity has been identified. The provision of an enlarged/replacement GP healthcare facility has been planned within the North Kingston area on Proposal Site P18 and planning permission has been granted. The provision of enhanced faith, community and voluntary sector facilities (Policy K6) has been identified in this AAP so that they can continue to meet local needs and assist in increasing the scale and scope of their public service delivery. Transport infrastructure is dealt with in Chapter 9 of this Plan.
POLICY K22:
TOWN CENTRE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Council will keep under review infrastructure capacity and additional requirements for education, healthcare and community facilities, waste disposal and utilities resulting from the development proposals set out in this AAP and will work with developers, utility companies and the Primary Care Trust to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure to support proposed development.

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<td>• RES6 Provision of Adequate Infrastructure</td>
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11.3 In respect of water supply, drainage and sewerage infrastructure, engagement with Thames Water has identified a need for investigations to establish infrastructure requirements and the impact of the development proposed in this AAP on the existing network. Associated studies and upgrading of the network may be required, which may need to be funded by developers. Developers will need to assess the waste water capacity both on and off the site to serve new development and demonstrate that proposals will not lead to overloading of existing waste water infrastructure and problems for existing or new users. New development will require separate foul and surface water drainage/sewerage, as drainage of surface water to foul sewers is a major contributor to sewer flooding. Provision should be made for surface water to drain to ground, watercourses or surface water sewers. In terms of water supply, developers will be required to pay for any mains diversions and new off-site infrastructure resulting from development proposals.

For individual development schemes, developers need to contact Thames Water at an early stage to discuss sewerage and sewage treatment, available capacity and infrastructure requirements to ensure that these essential services are provided effectively.

11.4 Town centre activities generate significant amounts of waste and the challenge of managing waste in a sustainable way in the future is considerable. The Council adopted a Waste Strategy in 2004 that sets out the framework and criteria for decisions to reduce waste and meet waste targets over a long timescale. The Council is preparing a Joint Waste DPD with neighbouring authorities. Development proposals should include appropriate facilities to minimise waste and maximise recycling.
POLICY K23: S106 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

There is a presumption that appropriate new development within the town centre will contribute towards the cost of delivering public infrastructure, including improvements to facilities and the environment and provide affordable housing by means of Planning Obligations, in accordance with Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations (or subsequent legislation) and saved UDP Policies H9, T22, and RES 8 (or subsequent LDD policies).

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115 The Council will enter into negotiations with applicants for planning permission and prospective developers to seek the provision of facilities, or a contribution towards the full cost of requirements made necessary by and related to the proposed development, that is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and its impact on the wider area. Further guidance will be provided in a subsequent SPD on the Council’s approach to planning obligations and developer contributions across the Borough. Such improvements to facilities or the environment may include: affordable housing; access, public transport, walking, cycling and car park improvements; safety and security measures; public realm, open space and environmental improvements; public art; learning and skills; healthcare facilities and services; education, community and voluntary sector facilities; children’s play and childcare provision; and utilities infrastructure.
POLICY K24: FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT (Plan 13)

Flood risk assessment (FRA) will be required for major development proposals within Flood Zone 1 and all new development within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (3a and 3b). The FRA should be commensurate with the degree of flood risk posed to and by the proposed development and take account of the advice and recommendations set out in the Kingston town centre Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2007 (SFRA), including measures to be adopted by new development to reduce flood risk and meet the requirements of PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk).

Within Flood Zone 3b, functional floodplain, only water compatible uses and essential infrastructure (PPS25 Table D3) will be permitted, unless the site specific recommendations in the SFRA state otherwise.

Within High Risk Zone 3a, development proposals should include the flood mitigation measures set out below as an integral part of the design process:

- Land use on the ground floor must be limited to non-residential uses
- Floor levels must be situated above the 1% predicted maximum flood level plus climate change, incorporating an allowance for freeboard. The SFRA, figure 4 and section 6.4.4 provide further guidance on raised floor levels and predicted flood depths
- Safe escape routes must be provided for evacuation in times of flood
- Access to basement areas must be situated above the predicted maximum flood level plus freeboard and all basements must be of a waterproof construction;
- Development must not result in an increase in maximum flood levels within adjoining properties

Within Medium Probability Zone 2 development proposals must have:

- Floor levels situated above the 1% (100 year) predicted maximum flood level plus climate change. The SFRA, figure 4 and section 6.4.5 provide further guidance on raised floor levels and predicted flood depths
- Safe escape routes must be provided for evacuation in times of flood, even within areas where buildings are not directly affected

Within all areas of the town centre (including Low Flood Risk Zone 1), development proposals should, where appropriate, include SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) to reduce surface water runoff rates, or as a minimum ensure that future redevelopment does not increase runoff.

11.6 The town centre has a history of flooding from the River Thames and the Hogsmill River and falls mainly within the Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 (lower risk) and Flood Zone 3 (higher risk) viewable on the Environment Agency website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

11.7 To minimise risk of flooding, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Flood Risk Management Study of the town centre has been prepared and agreed with the Environment Agency. This reviews the delineation of flood risk and provides detailed flood zone maps (Plan 13 and Figure 1 of the SFRA) for further reference, after initially consulting the EA flood zone maps. It makes recommendations for future development based on the probability and consequence of flooding and promotes future sustainability within areas that are at risk from flooding. It has informed the application of the sequential test required by PPS25 that underpins the allocation of sites and the assessment of development proposals in this AAP.
In areas identified as being at risk from flooding, detailed site based FRA is necessary to: assess the predicted flooding regime, ascertain the risk of flooding to the development and the impact that the proposed development may have upon existing flood levels; appraise the options to manage and reduce flood risk throughout the lifetime of the development and address the residual risk to the site. Proposed flood risk management measures should demonstrate future sustainability. The SFRA provides further guidance and is available separately from the Council and through the K+20 website www.kingston.gov.uk/kplus20.

The town centre is a highly developed area, which generates a significant amount of surface water run-off due to large areas of impermeable paving. This can contribute to increased risk of flooding down stream, poor levels of groundwater replenishment, pollution and habitat damage. The use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) in new development, in consultation with Thames Water and the Environment Agency and in accordance with PPS25 (para.63), can help to reduce surface water run-off and reduce risk of flooding. Please also refer to para.11.3 of this AAP.

The cost of flood protection measures required by new development will need to be fully met by the developer and the Council may seek to cover this matter by a S106 planning obligation/agreement in accordance with Circular 5/05 and PPS25 (see Policy K23).
Plan 13
FLOOD RISK

Infrastructure provision to support new development and flood risk

Plan based on Figure 1 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Kingston town centre