

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

August 2019



Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	
• Background	3
• Purpose, Objectives and Status	3
• Relationship with other plans/strategies and Council activities	4
• Approach and Methodology	6
• Scope of the Report	6
2. Housing Delivery Analysis	
• Local Context	7
• Current Home Building	7
• Housing Delivery Analysis	8
• Matters Affecting Housing Delivery	11
3. Key Actions & Responses	
• Ensure Housing Delivery remains a Council Priority	18
• Kingston's Housing Policy	18
• Improving our Planning Application Processes	21
• Marketing, Placemaking and Partnership Working	22
4. Project Management, Monitoring, Engagement and Next Steps	
• Project Management	26
• Monitoring	26
• Engagement and Next Steps	26

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Government has introduced the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) to determine whether local areas are building enough homes to meet housing needs. This HDT compares the number of new homes delivered over the previous three years with the authority's housing requirement. The HDT will be used to determine the buffer to apply in housing supply assessments and whether the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply.
- 1.2 The Government and Greater London Authority (GLA) are committed to the improved delivery of more new homes through their agendas and strategies. A number of measures and reforms to the planning system have been implemented to deliver more housing, improve housing affordability and remove barriers to development. In particular these are highlighted in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and draft new London Plan 2017.
- 1.3 Local planning authorities are being required to be more proactive in increasing the speed and quantity of housing supply to meet the identified housing needs of their local area. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is responding to this request through this HDT and also its emerging new strategic planning documents (in particular the new Local Plan) to increase and accelerate the delivery of new housing in the borough.
- 1.4 In November 2018 the Government published the first HDT results (Government Housing Delivery Test 2018 measurement). Against the HDT, Kingston's delivery rate was identified as 75%. As a consequence, for Kingston, a 20% buffer has been applied to the supply of deliverable sites for the purposes of housing delivery assessment.
- 1.5 The Housing Delivery Test is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, over a rolling three year period. A review and analysis of housing delivery in the borough over the three year period (2015/16 to 2017/18) has been undertaken and is set out in greater detail in Section 2 of this Plan.

Purpose, Objectives and Status

- 1.6 This Action Plan sets out why this authority has not delivered against its housing requirements (as detailed above) and identifies a strategy to increase and maintain housing delivery in Kingston. However, it should be recognised that housing delivery is a complex matter with many interacting forces including the involvement of a number of bodies involved with the delivery of new homes. Consequently, if this strategy is to succeed, then the cooperation of a number of key partners will be essential, for example, the construction industry and land/property owners.

Relationship with other Plans/Strategies and Council activities

- 1.7 This Action Plan will work with other Council and London Plans/Strategies (both existing and emerging) to provide a mechanism for delivery of Government and GLA housing targets. The key plans and strategies are detailed below.

a) Existing Council documents

Corporate Plan

- 1.8 The Corporate Plan is the Council's most important strategic document that will frame policy development and resource allocation, setting the vision for the borough and creating the Golden Thread. It refers to the need for a sustainable approach to the delivery of the required new homes, other development and associated infrastructure across the borough to the benefit of our communities.

Kingston Core Strategy (2012)

- 1.9 The Core Strategy looks to take advantage of opportunities to deliver new housing and, in particular, maximise the delivery of affordable housing. The Council seeks to meet and exceed the Borough's annual housing target of 375 new units as set out in the London Plan (2012/13 to 2026/27). The Plan identified preferred locations for new housing as Kingston Town Centre, the three District Centres, areas with the greatest Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) and areas in need of improvement or renewal. However, the Core Strategy (and the Council's other current Development Plan documents) do not adequately demonstrate how it intends to deliver the needs of a rapidly rising population, particularly in relation to guidance contained in latest strategic London documents such as the draft new London Plan.

Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008)

- 1.10 The Area Action Plan is now outdated, but identifies provision for around 1000 new homes to be built in the town centre over the period 2006 - 2020 to meet a range of housing needs. The Plan states that the majority of recently built housing in the centre comprises one and two bedroom flats, and that a wider mix of flat sizes, including larger flats is required to meet a wider range of needs, including family housing.

Kingston Housing Strategy (2015 - 20)

- 1.11 This strategy document provides the Council's long term strategic housing framework to deliver improved housing to the people of Kingston over the five year period. It identifies our broad strategic approach to meeting future housing challenges, however, it acknowledges that we face a number of difficult challenges with the period of the plan being one of enormous change. Work will soon begin on an updated plan

to prioritise emerging challenges and provide new information on housing need and supply across the borough. There are opportunities to update and renew council owned stock for a range of local needs whilst working with the private sector and other housing providers.

Economic Growth and Development Strategy (2018)

- 1.12 This more recently adopted strategy supports growth to create new opportunities, new jobs and new homes for existing and future residents. It also addresses the need to twin track the physical and social change which is happening as a result of many external factors.

b) Emerging Council documents

Kingston Local Plan

- 1.13 The emerging new Local Plan is a key document which will set out the overall development strategy for the Borough for the period 2019-2041. A Local Plan is needed to conform with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), and to identify how the Council intends to meet the new housing and employment needs to successfully deliver government requirements and those of the London Plan. The new Local Plan will gather weight as it proceeds through production, and, when adopted, will replace the Core Strategy and Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Homelessness Strategy for Kingston 2019 - 2024

- 1.14 Kingston's emerging plans for housing are to increase housing provision in line with existing and likely future planning policies and to increase the quantity of affordable housing. Also to increase the number of properties which meet the decent homes standard and to decrease the numbers who are in temporary accommodation or living in overcrowded properties.

c) Existing London/National plans:

Current London Plan (Further Alterations to the London Plan, 2016)

- 1.15 This is the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years. The document brings together the geographic and locational aspects of the Mayor's other strategies including those dealing with housing.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 1.16 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

d) Emerging London/National documents:

Draft New London Plan

- 1.17 The London Plan is the statutory Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London including the Mayor's general policies in respect of the development and use of land. The Mayor is required to have regard to the need to ensure that the London Plan is consistent with national policies. Of particular note are the ambitious new plans for housing delivery across London; in a similar fashion to many other outer London Boroughs, the Mayor's apportionment to Kingston sees a doubling of our housing delivery target to 1,364 homes per year and the overall delivery of 30,000 new homes between 2019 and 2041.

Approach and Methodology

- 1.18 This Action Plan has been informed by the regular work the Council has been undertaking on housing delivery through its monitoring plans and strategies. Reports such as the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) provide regular updates regarding the housing land supply position. Through this monitoring the council has identified that there are significant challenges to the delivery of housing which are typical of an outer London borough that is struggling to meet its housing targets. Many of the key matters are outside of the control of the authority, for example many of the approved applications are slow to commence on site and to be built.
- 1.19 To gain a better understanding of the housing situation in London, the Council attends regular meetings with other boroughs to discuss key matters and attempt to identify further relevant information and solutions to the problems. For example the Council attends regular meetings of the ALBPO Group (Association of London Borough Planning Officers) at which the issue of housing targets is a regular agenda item for discussion.

Scope of the Report

- 1.20 This Action Plan includes the following key Sections:
- **Housing Delivery Analysis**
 - **Key Actions and Responses**
 - **Project Management, Monitoring and Engagement**

2. Housing Delivery Analysis

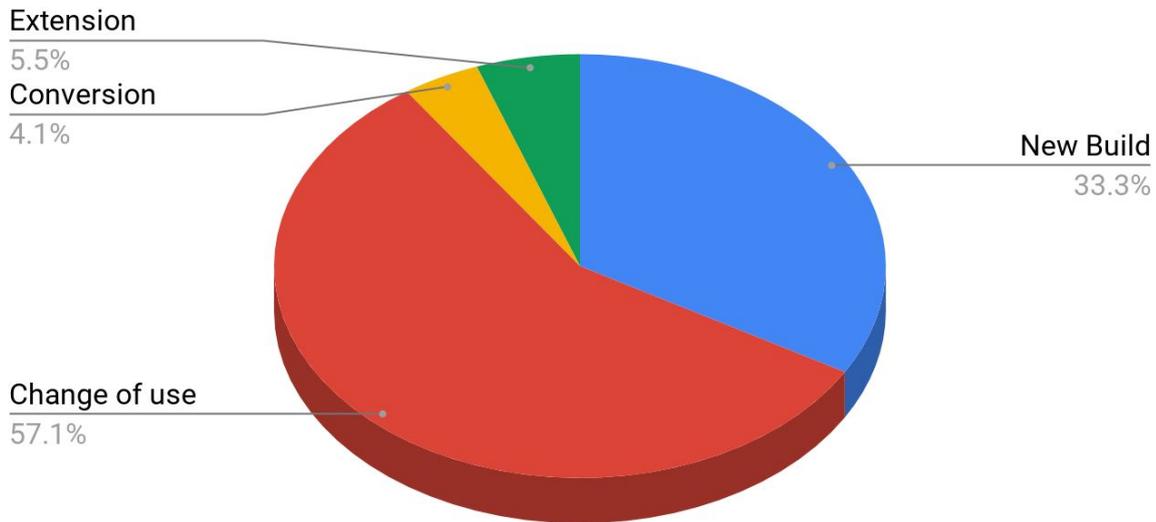
Local Context

- 2.1 Kingston is situated in outer South West London and is bordered by the London Boroughs of Richmond, Wandsworth, Merton, and Sutton, as well as the Surrey districts of Elmbridge, Mole Valley, and Epsom and Ewell. The borough has a population approaching 180,000 and covers an area of 38.66 square kilometres, which makes it the seventh smallest London borough in terms of its geographical area. The Borough has one Metropolitan Town Centre (Kingston), and three District Centres (Surbiton, New Malden, and Tolworth).
- 2.2 Kingston is an attractive place to live and work being a regional retail and commercial centre: it is an entertainment and leisure destination of choice as well as having a reputation as one of the best places in the country for education. The borough also benefits from widespread green spaces and parks while Kingston town has a riverfront and other district centres each have their own distinctive characters. The borough has seen huge change and innovation throughout its history, with the last few decades seeing steady growth.
- 2.3 Over 60% of the current housing stock in the borough is houses, the remainder being flats, although the majority of recent completions comprise flats with only a relatively small number of houses currently being built in Kingston. There is a particularly pressing need to increase the amount of affordable housing which is accessible to those people whose incomes are insufficient to enable them to afford adequate housing locally on the open market.
- 2.4 Looking to the future, the borough of Kingston will see further significant growth to meet the ever increasing demand for new homes, jobs and infrastructure. Kingston is challenging the targets set out in the draft new London Plan but, whatever the outcome, it is clear that we need to see a step change in building more homes to meet the needs of our residents. Kingston's emerging new Local Plan is the document that will set out our long term vision for the required growth.

Home Building

- 2.5 There are currently about 1,000 homes under construction across the borough. There are another 1,500 homes which have planning permission, but work hasn't started to build them. It's acknowledged that a small number of these may never be built. Additionally, every year planning applications come forward for sites the authority isn't aware of: adding these to the sites already being built and sites we have granted planning permission, the borough has about 5,000 homes in the pipeline.

Homes Built by Development Types Completed 2017/18

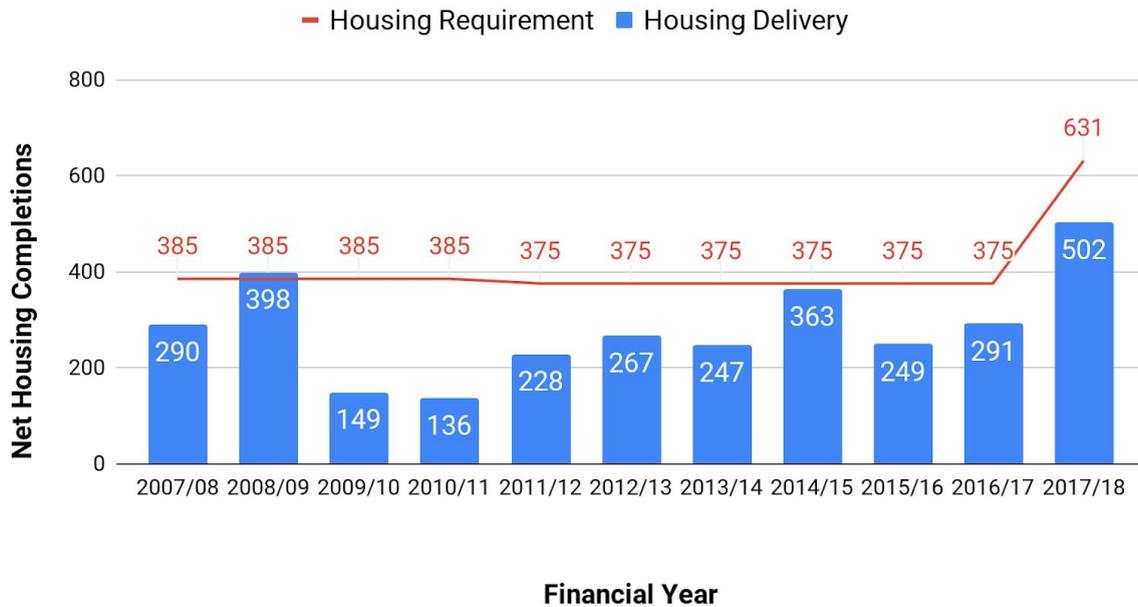


- 2.6 The chart demonstrates the homes built in Kingston by development type during 2017/18. It is clear that most new homes are achieved either through new build or a change of existing use. A small proportion are also achieved through extension or conversion of existing properties.
- 2.7 The Council has been working closely with the Greater London Authority to identify sites where we can expect housing to come forward in the future on large sites, with the estimated number of homes being based on the existing London Plan density matrix. Including all of these sites, there could be a total of 15,700 homes delivered by 2041. These sites are the basis for about half of the proposed new London Plan housing target for the borough.

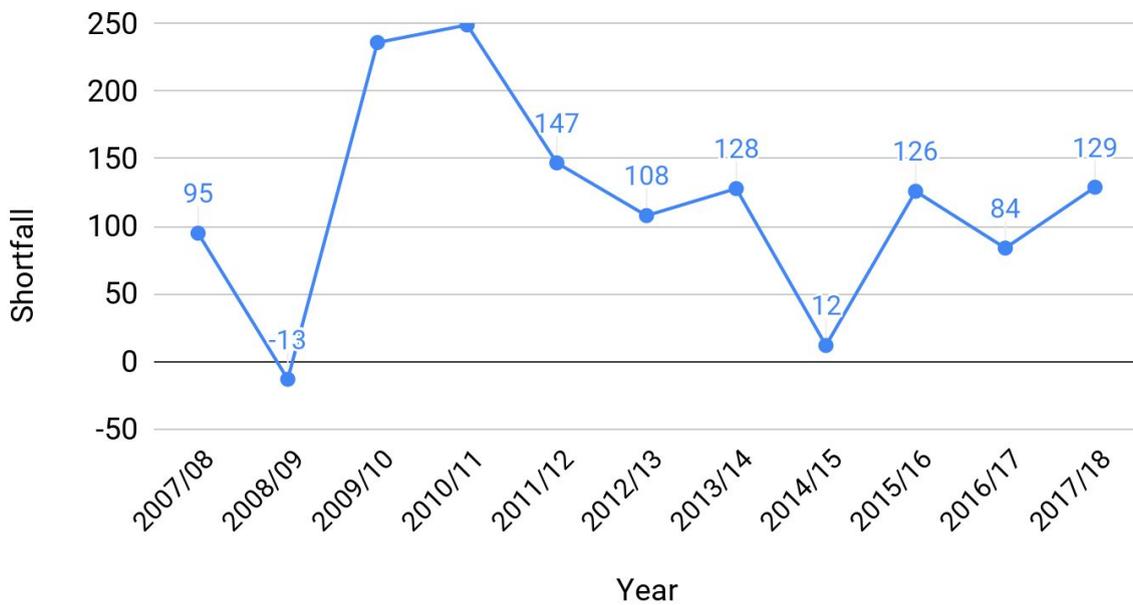
Housing Delivery Analysis

- 2.8 The charts below illustrate the delivery of new homes in Kingston over the last ten years and compares this to the targets specified in key planning policy documents during that period. It is clear that Kingston is not delivering its annual housing target which has resulted in an overall shortfall of homes over this period. When measured against the new Housing Delivery Test, Kingston's delivery rate is 75% over the three year period 2015/16 to 2017/18: Kingston delivered a total of 1,042 homes during this period against a target of 1,381 units, resulting in a shortfall of 339 units. Additionally there is also estimated to be a significant shortfall against the affordable housing target. The Council's affordable housing target is 2,000 new affordable housing units over the period 2012/13 to 2026/27, a total of 133 units per year. The Council delivered 111 affordable homes in 2016/17 and 37 in 2017/18.

Total Net Housing Completions 2007/08 - 2017/18



Target Shortfall vs Year 2007/08 - 2017/18



2.9 The targets have been derived as follows: Kingston’s Core Strategy identifies delivery of 375 homes per year between 2011 and 2014, a target set out in the 2011 London Plan. This target was almost doubled in the 2015 London Plan, to 643, which is the current target we are measured against by government. The targets also reflect guidance in the government’s Housing Delivery Test: 2018 Measurement Technical note.

2.10 Looking forward, the draft new London Plan proposes doubling the target again to 1,364 homes per year: this matter was considered at a public examination in early 2019 with a confirmed new target expected later in 2019. Over the period of Kingston’s new Local Plan (2019 to 2041), this could equate to about 30,000 new homes. Kingston therefore needs to more than triple its actual housing delivery rate to meet the draft new London Plan target, with a requirement to find approximately 15,000 more homes to add to those already in the pipeline and on the large sites we have already identified.

Annual housing target



2.11 Nationally, there has been a failure to deliver enough homes to keep up with population growth. This is particularly pressing in London and the South East. The government believes Greater London needs to provide 100,000 homes per year. The Mayor of London believes that about 66,000 homes are needed every year. The current London Plan targets would deliver 42,000 homes per year and the new London Plan increases this to 65,000 homes per year, almost achieving the estimated need, but well below the government estimate of London’s need.

- 2.12 In the past, about half of London's housing target has been met by the 12 Inner London boroughs. The new London Plan seeks to significantly increase housing delivery in Outer London, particularly around stations and by bringing forward a lot more housing on smaller sites. The new plan increases the contribution from the 21 Outer London boroughs to two-thirds of the total; almost all of the additional housing is to be provided in Outer London. This is the primary cause of the doubling of Kingston's housing target.
- 2.13 We do not know what the housing target will be for the borough following the public examination of the Mayor's London Plan. However, the reality is that Kingston needs to achieve a significant increase in the amount of housing being built. Indeed, over the last few years there has been a rapidly increasing need for housing in the borough. The council is therefore positively planning for this increase over the next 20 years to make sure it creates the homes that are needed. Even if population projections drop, there is now such a backlog of need (such as young adults unable to move into their own home) we still need to significantly increase housing numbers.

Matters Affecting Housing Delivery

Procedural Matters

- 2.14 It is acknowledged that growth is a key goal, however, planning decisions have to account for many factors and growth may not always be a top priority. Such issues can lead to slower progress than would otherwise have been hoped for, leading to a failure to meet specified targets and other negative effects.
- 2.15 Appropriate engagement is a statutory requirement embedded in planning policies and legislation which can help aid discussion and interest. However, it can also raise expectations to high levels, and as a consequence can cause disruption and unfortunately lead to further delays. Strong objections can dominate proceedings and associated attention. There is a feeling amongst some people that many planning applications could be determined more quickly with better advice and feedback to applicants and quicker processing of legal agreements, financial contributions and other supplementary matters.

Supply and Demand

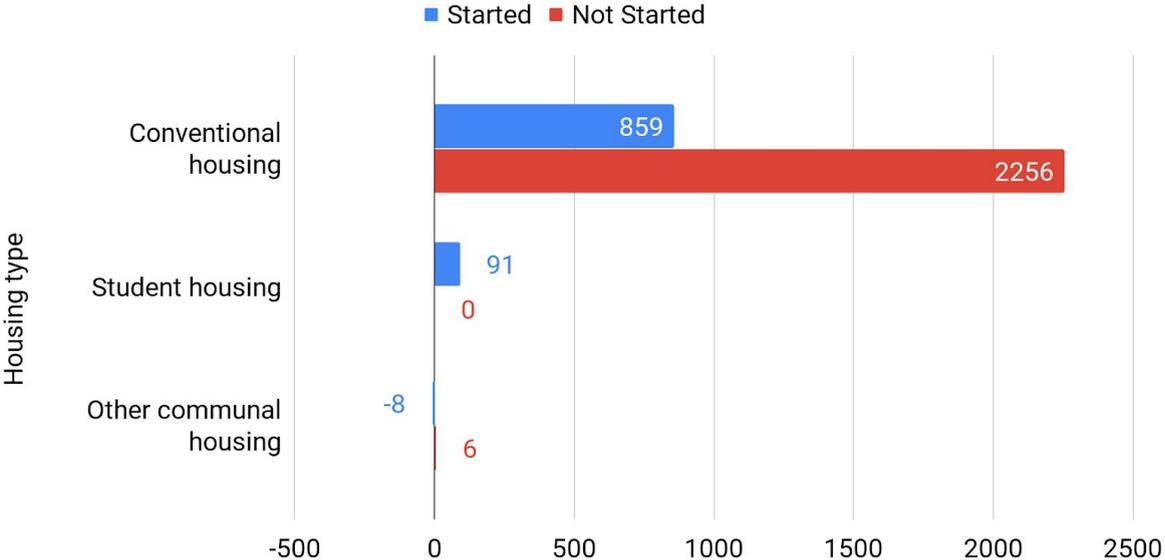
- 2.16 A number of strategic matters affecting housing delivery are shared across borough boundaries. A key influence in the area is the characteristics and availability of land supply: there is generally a strong demand for new homes across south west London, Surrey and the wider region, however the area has a constrained land supply and for a number of reasons available sites generally tend to come forward slowly for development. These factors have been seen as contributing towards the slower delivery of new homes in the area.

- 2.17 Land supply in Kingston is generally limited due to a number of factors including the significant amount of Metropolitan Open Land, Green Belt and other green land in the borough and exceptional heritage in those locations most suited to greater growth, such as Kingston town centre. Additionally many locations are already intensely developed or local characteristics are such that they make it very difficult to facilitate further significant development, for example there is a predominance of suburban housing, not dissimilar to other areas of outer London, with relatively few areas where larger scale growth and change can be easily accommodated.

- 2.18 There is also a significant reliance on a relatively small number of larger sites in and around key town centres such as Kingston, New Malden and Tolworth to bring forward major development. An associated problem is that the housing market in the area is dominated by a relatively small number of key landowners and major developers, reducing possibilities for the smaller developers or other arrangements. Additionally some sites are subject to complex planning histories or other planning complexities such as multiple ownership. As a consequence, many opportunities for development tend to come forward at a slow pace.

- 2.19 There are many unbuilt housing permissions in the borough, with wider economic uncertainty affecting housing supply. This situation is further hindered by short supply of both labour and materials, a common London factor. In terms of housing types, there are generally limited choices on offer with many builders producing standard products. There is also a long standing underprovision of affordable and social housing.

Five-Year Housing Land Supply - Summary of Expected Completions by Housing Type 2019-2023



Affordability

- 2.20 While demand for housing in the area remains high, affordability is increasingly a major hurdle. A number of matters have contributed to rising house prices in the borough - these include proximity to central London, a high quality environment, good range of local services, higher than average levels of income for residents, a slow build rate of new homes and an associated ongoing problem with an under supply of affordable homes. This means that house prices have continued to steadily rise compounding the long standing problem of house prices being relatively high (compared to other equivalent areas of London).

Housing owned by Registered Providers

- 2.21 There are a small number of local Registered Providers and a larger number of national providers with stock in the borough (of varying sizes). However the amount of stock held by Registered Providers is comparatively small. These vary considerably with a variety of accommodation types which are dispersed across the borough.
- 2.22 The Council would like to see Registered Providers make the most of development opportunities through the provision of appropriate levels of affordable housing units. However, Registered Providers advise that the intermediate housing market is in decline and sales are depressed, making it difficult for them to bring forward sites for redevelopment and to acquire sites for delivery of affordable housing.
- 2.23 A significant proportion of new affordable housing in the borough comes through Section 106 agreements where private developers make contributions towards the provision of local affordable housing, which is preferred on site within private development schemes. New affordable housing delivery is therefore generally through private schemes.

Housing owned by Kingston Council

- 2.24 Kingston Council has significant housing stock in the borough, including a total of around 4,600 units. The Council has not transferred its housing stock and there is no support from residents for it to be transferred. These units are distributed throughout the borough and range from individual properties through to sites containing several hundred units. The stock includes a variety of different types of property from 1 bedroom flats through to larger family homes, however, the majority are flatted units. All of these units are affordable.
- 2.25 The Council seeks to redevelop sites and provide additional homes (including affordable ones) as the opportunities arise. For example, as detailed in Section 3 of this Plan, the Council has successfully secured Housing Zone and Building Council Homes funding to help facilitate the development of Cambridge Road Estate (one of the largest Council housing sites in the borough). This will replace (subject to resident ballot) many existing homes with new ones and also provide about 1200 net

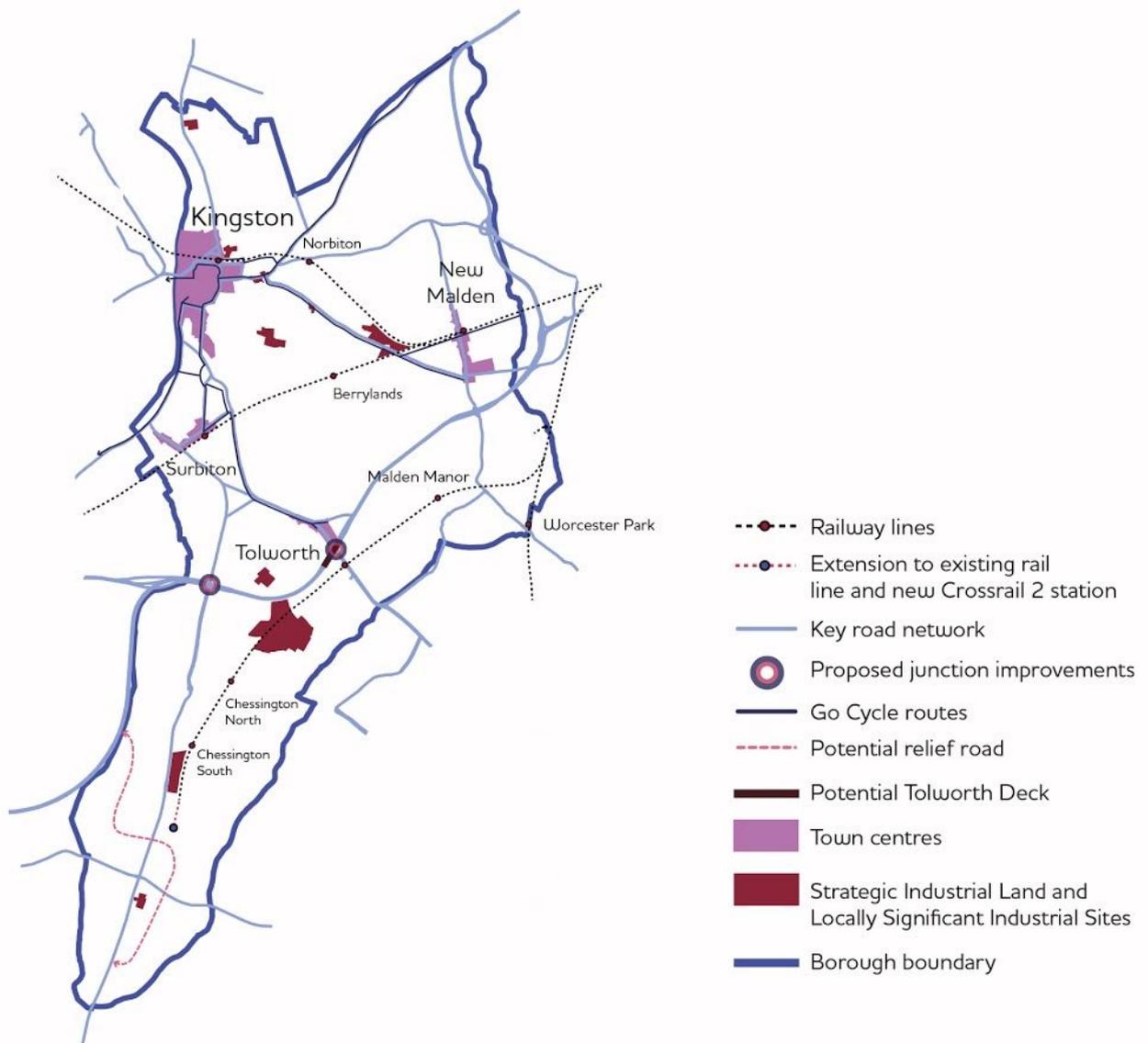
additional new homes. The proposals offer an increase in the number of social rented properties. The site is in a sustainable location (up to public transport accessibility level 4) close to Kingston town centre with its extensive range of facilities and attractions.

Small Sites

- 2.26 The draft new London Plan radically changes the situation regarding the development of borough wide small sites; the Mayor of London expects half of Kingston's proposed new annual housing target (1,364 units per annum) to come from 'small sites' (625). The London Plan suggests that small sites development can come from extending and redeveloping existing homes to make a larger number of new homes in areas within walking distance of stations or town centres.
- 2.27 The Mayor is promoting this concept to be achieved through infill (building between properties) and back garden development, extensions and conversions of larger houses into flats to bring forward new homes. To provide enough homes to meet our likely new target (from the emerging new London Plan), up to a quarter of the existing homes in these areas would need to be converted or intensified by the end of the period of the new London Plan, 2041.
- 2.28 The Council is also exploring development opportunities across a programme of small infill sites on council owned land. There is potential for the development of hundreds of additional homes and in the longer term progressing these schemes will improve Kingston's capabilities to directly deliver homes and contribute to future housing delivery in the borough.
- 2.29 However, the Council gave evidence at the Examination in Public to the London Plan and even those boroughs who have a very positive and proactive approach to small site delivery are not estimating a delivery rate that reflects the London Plan estimates: for example, Croydon anticipates a small sites delivery rate of one-third of that estimated in the London Plan. The Council therefore has concerns about the capacity of the market to deliver new homes from this source at the rate required.

Infrastructure

- 2.30 The provision of appropriate infrastructure is important to support new development and is a key aspect of Local Plan preparation and progression. The accelerated growth experienced in recent years has highlighted the pressing need to deliver new infrastructure. The Council continues to update its plans for infrastructure delivery working with key bodies as required. For example, in partnership with Transport for London, the Council has commissioned transport studies to investigate the impact of proposed new development on both the road and rail networks during the lifetime of the draft new London Plan and also the Council's emerging new Local Plan.



Map to show transport improvements

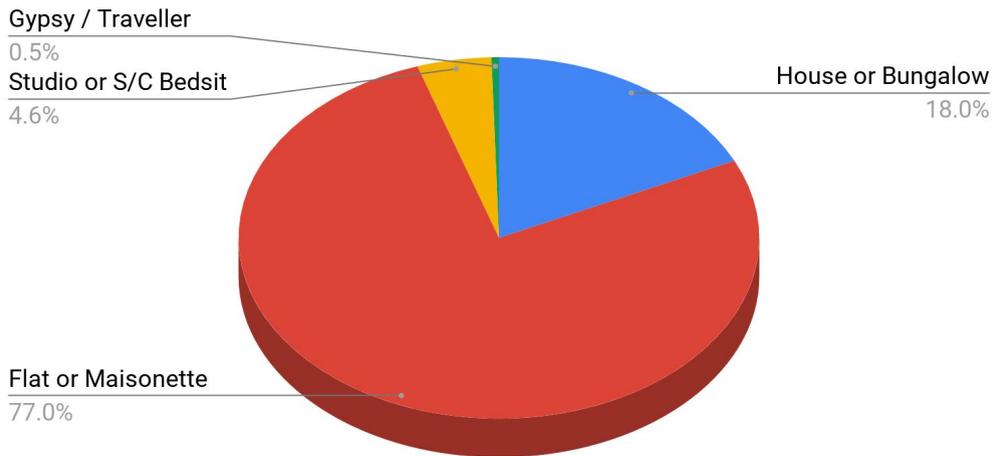
2.31 However, major infrastructure can be very difficult and costly to secure particularly as the area becomes more built up, and the opportunities to secure funding for new infrastructure are becoming few and far between. Large and small sites can have an impact on infrastructure and public services which in turn can slow delivery. A number of matters including market forces and difficulty in holding developers to account on issues such as infrastructure delivery can make it difficult to achieve consistent phases of housing delivery.

Housing Mix

2.32 The type of new homes being built in the borough has a direct impact on a number of matters including their suitability to address current housing needs, the number of units being delivered and their affordability. As identified below, statistics demonstrate

that the majority of housing currently being built in the borough, particularly in the key town centre locations, comprises primarily one and two bedroom flats. However, analysis demonstrates that a wider mix of buildings is required to meet a wider range of needs, including larger-sized homes suitable for families.

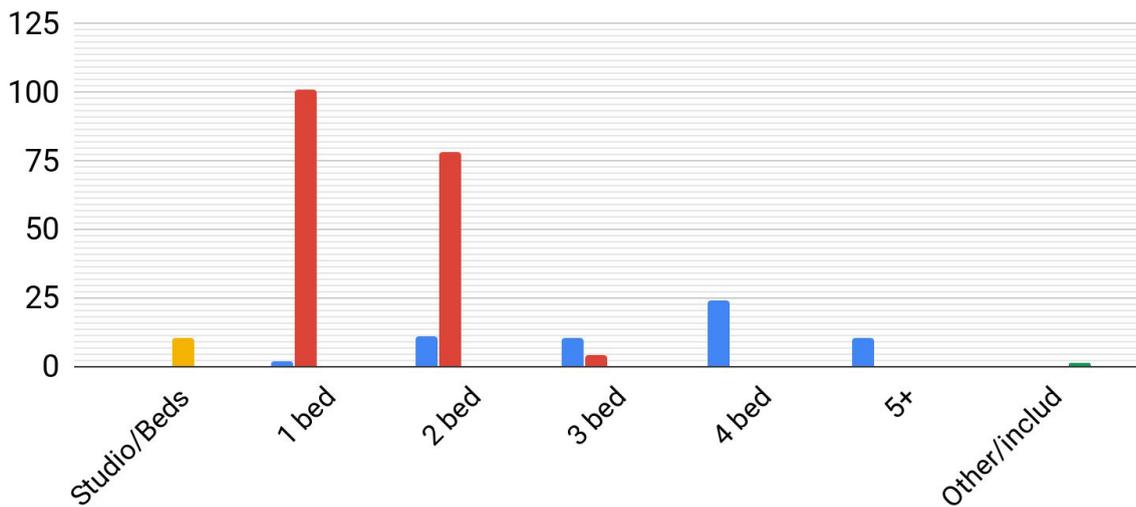
Completions by Unit Type 2017/18



Key: S/C - self contained

Completions by Unit Type & Number of Bedrooms 2017/18

■ House or Bungalow ■ Flat, Apartment of Maisonette ■ Studio or S/C Bedsit ■ Gypsy / Traveller pitches



Housing Densities

2.33 The draft new London Plan states that sites delivering new homes must show that they optimise housing density. Decisions about whether the density of development is suitable will need to be in line with adopted policies being design-led and will need to

take into account how the development responds to and integrates with the existing area, its connectivity and accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, and the ability of infrastructure around the site to meet increased demand (i.e. schools, GP surgeries, etc).

3. Key Actions and Responses

3.1 This Action Plan sets out a range of measures that the Council is progressing to address low rates of housing delivery, including a process to monitor implementation. A number of areas have been identified where specific action can be taken, and these are as follows:

- A) Ensure housing delivery remains a Council priority**
- B) Kingston's housing policy**
- C) Improve our planning application processes**
- D) Marketing, placemaking and partnership working**

A) Ensure housing delivery remains a Council priority

3.2 Housing delivery is already a high level corporate and political priority at Kingston, as detailed in the Council's new Corporate Plan and the administration's manifesto. Strong corporate leadership will be an ongoing requirement to ensure housing delivery remains a focus across the Council. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames therefore undertakes to:

- Continue to provide a Council wide strategic approach to housing delivery, instilling a culture at all levels to ensure delivery of new homes is a primary consideration in decision making.
- Ensure policies, strategies and other relevant documents and databases are in place to support housing delivery and ensure these are implemented to achieve specified goals.
- Ensure that Councillors are fully aware of and supported regarding the importance of delivery of new homes. Cross party agreement is an important concept.

B) Kingston's Housing Policy

Kingston's Local Plan

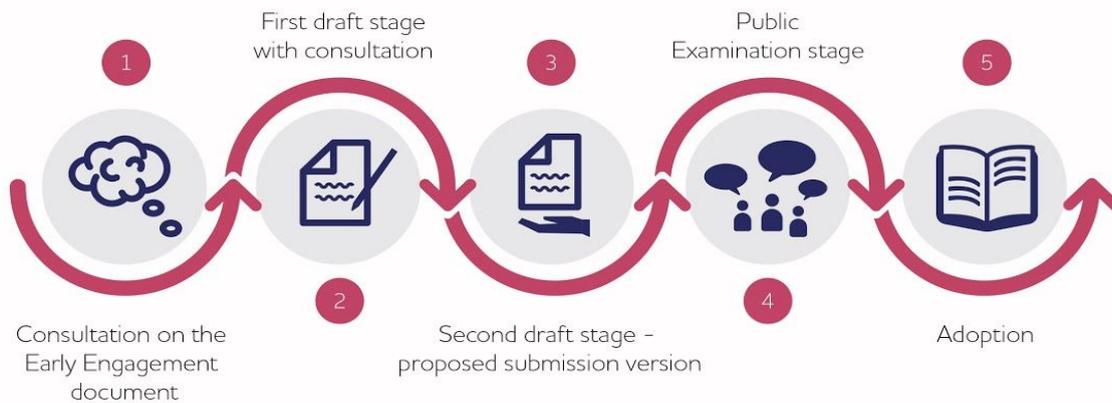
3.3 Kingston needs a new Local Plan to conform with the requirements set out in the updated National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and to identify how the Council intends to meet the new housing, employment and infrastructure needs to successfully deliver government requirements and those of the London Plan. The Council's current Development Plan documents do not adequately demonstrate how it intends to deliver the existing or anticipated new housing target set out in the London Plan.

3.4 This section outlines the programme to deliver Kingston's updated Local Plan as quickly as possible and its importance to achieving a step-change in the delivery of new homes:

- The Regulation 18 consultation is being undertaken over May - July 2019. This will gather together ideas and options for the future of the borough. This includes the publication of over 100 sites for consideration, following a Call for Sites exercise and building on the London SHLAA. It is also a concrete action towards developing a new policy framework to deliver new homes.
- The new Local Plan will set out the overall development strategy for the Borough for the period 2019-2041. It will include both strategic policies and non-strategic policies, and will provide the policy context for Neighbourhood Plans. It will provide an up to date framework for the determination of planning applications consistent with national policy, and in general conformity with the new London Plan, except where there is any justification for a different approach at a local level as considered at an Examination in Public.
- An up to date policy framework will create greater certainty for those wanting to bring forward sites for housing delivery, supporting investment decisions and minimising areas of disagreement as to how policies are applied and the weight that needs to be attributed to different policies (including areas of conflict between the local and London plans). Housing can also be facilitated through site allocations.
- The new Local Plan will gain weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in relation to the stage of plan development, alignment with national policy and outstanding objections on the basis of 'soundness'. Therefore, policies that are broadly supported and which align with national policy can start to carry fairly significant material weight following the formal Regulation 19 consultation.
- The timetable for the development of a new Local Plan for Kingston is set out in the recently agreed Local Development Scheme:

Key Milestones	Date
Approval of the revised LDS	March 2019
Early Engagement Consultation (Regulation 18)	May - July 2019
Local Plan First Draft	Winter 2019/20
Local Plan Publication Version (Regulation 19)	Spring 2020
Local Plan Submission Version (Regulation 22)	Summer 2020
Examination in Public (Regulation 24)	Winter-Spring 2020/21
Inspector's Report	Autumn 2021
Adoption	Winter 2021/22

Local Plan process



Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.5 There are a number of Supplementary Planning Documents relevant to the delivery of housing:
- Affordable Housing SPD (2013)
 - Financial Viability in Planning (2016)
 - Planning Obligations (2016)
 - Residential Design (2013)
 - Access for All (2005)
 - There are also a number of area-based SPD and a development brief which also have relevance for housing delivery in those areas.
- 3.6 There have been a number of changes to supplementary planning guidance produced by the Mayor which impact on how planning applications are determined, and provide a more up to date position. This particularly relates to the negotiation of affordable housing. This is in addition to Ministerial Written Statements from Government including matters such as the application of standards to assess housing developments (including removal of the Code for Sustainable Homes) and relating to the thresholds at which affordable housing can be required.

- 3.7 Kingston Council needs to keep its guidance under review to ensure there is adequate information for a developer to know what is expected from new development, including at the stage of the initial investment/land purchase, and to ensure the relationship between local and London-wide policy guidance is clear. There will also need to be a full review of all guidance to ensure it 'dove-tails' with the new Local Plan policies in due course.

Kingston Housing Strategy

- 3.8 There is a longer term need for Kingston to review its Housing Strategy. The last 5 years have seen a tightening economy and continued shortages of housing supply, economic uncertainty expressed by the construction industry. An updated Housing Strategy can help the borough plan and prioritise whilst addressing some of the big issues affecting local supply and services.
- 3.9 The current Housing Strategy runs through to 2020 and work has not yet commenced on an updated document. The process will involve careful consideration of the longer term strategic issues affecting Kingston and will link closely to work undertaken across the Council including that in the planning service; housing needs; homelessness and our considerable social housing stock.
- 3.10 The updated Strategy will support the principles of growth in this action plan. Areas of focus may include;
- Housing affordability and tenures - defining the current picture of need in the borough and shaping delivery by stating Kingston's priorities.
 - Intermediate housing options including discount market sale and shared ownership
 - A review of older persons housing stock and housing services delivery
 - Accelerating capacity for Kingston to build new homes - both directly and with partners
 - The regeneration and improvement of our housing estates
 - Our approach to homelessness and rough sleeping
 - Improving the quality of private rented housing
 - Climate change and sustainability - the role of housing in the environment
- The Strategy will be progressed following a series of engagement events with councillors, officers and the public.

C) Improve our planning application processes

- 3.11 The Council recognises the importance of its planning service in enabling and supporting growth and ensuring the delivery of an efficient and effective service. The Council will:

- Carry out a business review to reduce the processing time of planning applications.
- Work proactively with internal and external partners (other Council Departments and developers etc) to ensure efficient progression of planning applications, and also progression of those applications which already have planning permission but for which work has not yet commenced on site.
- Ensure that processes for strategic sites are efficient and progressive, for example through early engagement of key stakeholders to ensure all relevant issues are understood at an early stage with associated acceptance of planning processes.
- Offer a premium ‘fast track’ application service.
- Kingston’s Brownfield register could enable the use of the permission in principle mechanism. This route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.
- Ensure that the opportunity is taken for ongoing service improvements to support future housing delivery.
- Take advantage of any future technological advances to speed up processes and make the most efficient use of the limited staff resources which are available.
- Ensure that CIL and S106 procedures are streamlined and consistent to ensure efficient progression. A review of the CIL charging schedule could help increase overall CIL revenue. Ensuring adequate resourcing for the progression of Section 106 agreements will help reduce the delay which often occurs, in particular between the resolution to approve at planning committee and the eventual sign of a planning permission. Embed the new governance arrangements for spend, and ensure the Council clearly communicates the benefits accruing to local communities from planning obligations.
- As necessary, review the use of planning conditions to ensure these are applied in the most efficient and appropriate manner.
- Work with Members to ensure they have the right training and support to enable them to exercise their decision-making powers.

D) Marketing, placemaking and partnership working

- 3.12 The Council considers it can play an important role in supporting the market to deliver new homes through a number of mechanisms across the borough. The Council will:

In the short term

- Assess all Council owned sites to determine which can be brought forward for development, involving working with key partners to support delivery. The Council is a significant land owner in the borough. Development of our own land holdings provides the opportunity to bring forward more affordable homes without the need to rely on developers. As appropriate, conversations with residents, local stakeholders and other interested parties is undertaken regarding the Council's role in housing delivery as part of the borough's wider housing strategy.
- The Council has established a new Regeneration team, with dedicated staff resources, to bring forward a programme of development on Council owned strategic opportunity sites to contribute to meeting housing demand. These strategic sites include the Cattle Market Car Park, Ashdown Road Car Park, Canbury Road Car Park, and Cocks Crescent. Collectively these sites could deliver up to 1500 units over the next 5-10 years. The initial work programme set out in the Regeneration Service Plan seeks to undertake the tasks needed to agree the appropriate land use mix on these sites, undertake the necessary pre-development work and the most effective delivery route. Continue to promote key locations and sites to attract new development and investment.
- The Council, with partners, will take full advantage of opportunities to deliver new housing and, in particular, maximise the delivery of affordable housing. New housing will be delivered in the most sustainable locations, and with the associated infrastructure necessary to support it, for example in areas with high levels of public transport connectivity. The Council will seek to ensure that a broad mix of accommodation options are available to residents and that a range of local housing needs are met. For example, key town centres such as Kingston, Tolworth and New Malden offer greatest levels of development potential for which the Council is concentrating efforts, and this is being achieved through the production of development briefs and other plans/strategies to underpin development potential. The emerging new Local Plan will identify appropriate areas for intensification and define the extent of the proposed Kingston Opportunity Area which is suggested in the draft new London Plan.
- To support housing growth in Kingston Town Centre the Council is commissioning with partners a clear vision and action plan. The Vision will set the strategic framework and support a specific programme of qualitative improvements to support place making and housing growth.
- Continue to work with town centre stakeholders to set out a vision and strategy to support and deliver positive change. The key aim is to bring forward opportunities for sustainable growth across all of the borough's town centres.
- Ensure the delivery of affordable housing is a key priority and will seek to maximise its provision. To achieve this the Council will work with partners to explore all opportunities to deliver affordable units as part of new residential

developments and encourage applications for schemes with a large percentage of affordable schemes

- Take the opportunity to bid for available and appropriate funding to support new housing development through regeneration and other bids.

For example:

- The Council has allocated resources in recent times to the submission of Housing Infrastructure bids and High Street Improvement bids in key centres/locations which could support significant housing growth; in particular this has focussed on Tolworth and Kingston town centres. Further similar opportunities will be taken in the future as they arise using lessons learnt from previous bids.
- The Council has successfully secured Housing Zone and Building Council Homes funding to help facilitate the development of Cambridge Road Estate. The CRE redevelopment proposal provides a once in a generation opportunity to deliver new modern homes for our current residents as well as deliver much needed additional homes. The development will also deliver new community facilities, improved public spaces, parks and accessibility, and be built in such a way that the existing community networks can develop and grow. The redevelopment will also improve the living environment for residents to support their health and well-being. The redevelopment also seeks to design out crime and use an environmentally sustainable approach to development.
- Continue to actively attend and contribute to appropriate conferences and other events. As an example the annual London Real Estate Forum which the Council attends offers the opportunity to meet with high-level real estate professionals from all sectors to build partnerships, gain industry insight and discover successful projects through insight to property investment and development opportunities.
- Give appropriate support to development partners in the progression of small sites within the borough in line with latest London Plan aspirations and associated accelerated housing targets. Money has been secured (via the home building capacity fund) through bids to bring forward small sites opportunities.
- Research and bid for appropriate infrastructure funding as the opportunity arises. New homes will place a burden on existing infrastructure of various types and it is therefore important that we continue to pursue opportunities to provide new/enhanced infrastructure.
- Work with key infrastructure partners such as Transport for London, Crossrail 2, Network Rail and the train operating companies to bring forward key strategic and local infrastructure improvement schemes across the borough to increase connectivity levels and help facilitate higher development densities.

For example:

- The long term goal will be to secure Crossrail 2 and associated development potential it will bring but shorter term rail and bus improvements will also play a significant role.
- In partnership with Transport for London, the Council commissioned and completed a Transport Forecasting Study to investigate the impact of proposed new development on both the road and rail networks during the lifetime of the draft new London Plan and also the Council's emerging new Local Plan. This work has highlighted the importance of the Crossrail 2 scheme in relieving the overcrowded rail network; additionally the study has identified the need for some significant improvements to the operation of the primary road network (which is under the control of TfL).

In the longer term

- Work in partnership with neighbouring authorities and other partners across borough boundaries to ensure appropriate working relationships with a range of agencies and the government.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers locally where appropriate and necessary to achieve timely and realistic comprehensive development, working with key stakeholders. This will only be considered when extensive discussions/negotiations have reached an unsuccessful conclusion. This would be part of a proactive approach to land assembly to address local difficulties in the land market and best use of public sector owned land.
- Consider the establishment of a developers forum. This will enable developers to raise issues and concerns and facilitate round table discussion with the aim of identifying solutions to problems.

4) Project Management, Monitoring, Engagement and Next Steps

- 4.1 This section identifies how the actions set out in Section 3 of this plan will be taken forward, monitored and reviewed, including reporting arrangements.

Project Management

- 4.2 As identified in Section 3 of this Plan, strong leadership across the Council is the key to success in taking forward this plan. A Council wide strategic approach to housing delivery is to be utilised, instilling a culture at all levels to ensure delivery of new homes is a primary consideration in decision making.
- 4.3 The Director of Growth will be responsible for ensuring that the actions set out in this plan are delivered and progress towards meeting the associated targets monitored on an ongoing basis, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) for Planning and Housing.

Monitoring

- 4.4 The Actions set out in this Action Plan range from short to long term and they will be reviewed on an annual basis. Monitoring information will be collected from a range of sources such as the Authority Monitoring Report, the Council's Corporate Plans, the Planning Service Delivery Report, Quarterly Returns, appeals monitoring and housing trajectory along with any other relevant documents.
- 4.5 An annual progress report will be presented to the Portfolio holder(s) and the Action Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in parallel with the Council's reviews of its housing services and strategies.
- 4.6 The Actions will be implemented by the relevant services from across the Council. Where necessary actions will be updated or new actions will be added in response to any changes in legislation, Government policy and practice guidance. For significant changes consideration will be given to bringing forward the annual review to allow the plan to be reviewed comprehensively.

Engagement and Next Steps

- 4.7 The Council welcomes suggestions on any future actions to help increase housing delivery in the Borough.
- 4.8 Following the production of this first Action Plan, and anticipating annual reviews, we will welcome engagement with interested stakeholders through the implementation of the Action Plan by seeking suggestions on any future actions to help increase housing delivery in the borough. It is noted that a similar approach to engagement has been adopted by some local authorities that already have an Action Plan in place. For example neighbouring borough Elmbridge produced their Action Plan in February

2019 with the published document inviting suggestions on any future actions to help increase delivery, to be submitted to their Planning Policy Team.