

# Kingston Riverside

Public Realm Supplementary  
Planning Document

Adopted September 2018



## Executive Summary

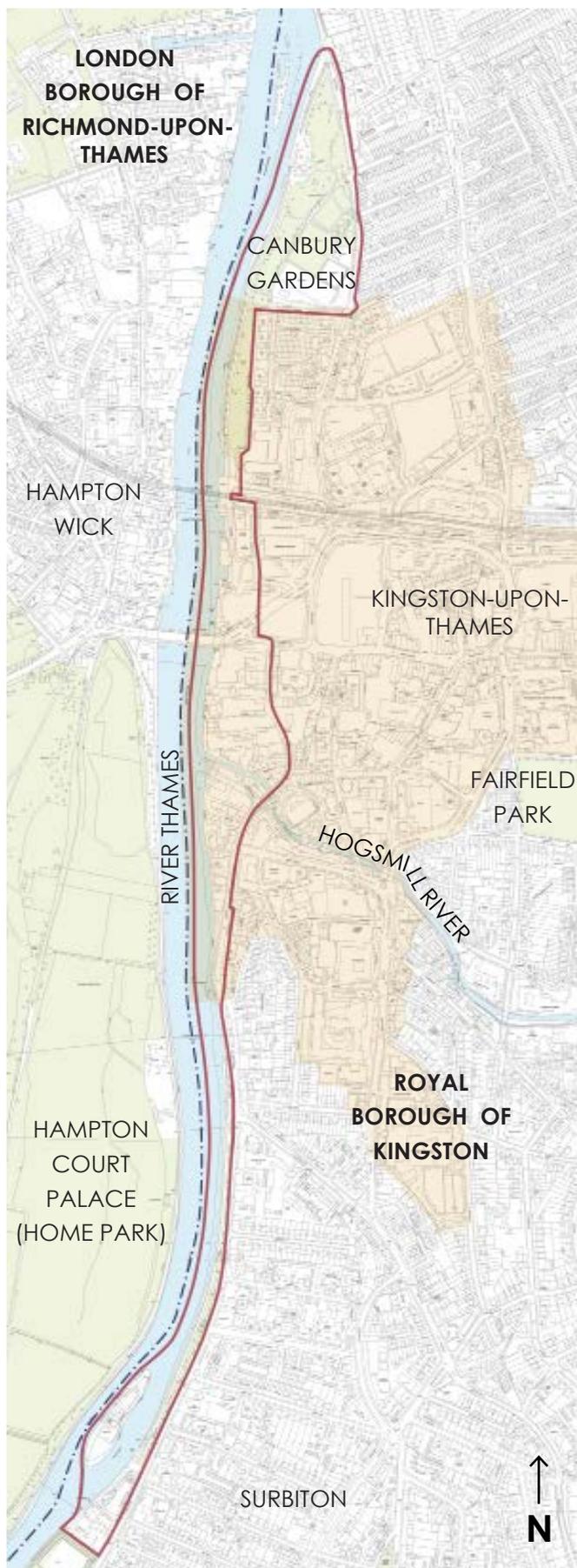
This is the Public Realm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Kingston Riverside. It provides further explanation and detailed guidance in support of the policies of the London Plan, Kingston's Core Strategy and K+20 Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP).

It sets out the overall vision for how Kingston's Riverside should change over the next 10-15 years to become a high quality public space befitting the town and its Thames setting and supporting future growth.

It was subject to formal public consultation and has been adopted by the Royal Borough of Kingston as part of the Borough's Development Plan. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications which affect the Riverside and its setting. It is also be used to inform the development of future policy documents.

The Riverside SPD includes:

- an overview of the planning policy context for the SPD and the key issues facing the Riverside today;
- an overall vision and spatial principles for the Riverside, under five themes; and
- design principles for each of three proposed character areas, based on a detailed review of existing issues and opportunities.



**Fig 1**  
Kingston Riverside SPD boundary map

### Key

- Public Green Space
- River
- Town Centre AAP Boundary
- SPD Red Line Boundary
- Borough Boundary

## Vision

As the first crossing point after London Bridge, Kingston developed as a strategic urban centre on the southern bank of the Thames in an otherwise rural landscape. The River continues to play an important role in defining the distinctive character of the Royal Borough and Kingston town itself with the Riverside providing a space for wildlife and quiet reflection and acting as a stage for sports and movement, culture and town events.

As the population of Kingston and the borough increases over the coming years, the Riverside will become increasingly important and well used as the town centre's primary, open space and frontage to the river.

However, despite the Riverside's unique setting and importance to the town, it is under performing. The Victorian formal gardens of Canbury and Queens Promenade are now faded, the central section of the path connects poorly to the historic market town, and the legibility of the route is hindered by rail, road and other infrastructure, car parking and level changes.

## Kingston's Arcadian Riverside

The vision for the future is to continue the Riverside's evolution, raising its quality to become a remarkable public space at the heart of Kingston. Movement to, from and along the Riverside will become an uplifting experience; easier and safer. An expanded range of cultural and sporting events will be accommodated and the qualitative uplift in open space provision will support the growth of the town centre's population. Balanced with this, is a recognition of the importance of providing connected habitats where wildlife can thrive, in line with the objectives of London's Biodiversity Opportunity Area.

Kingston's Riverside landscape will become an equally important component of the Arcadian Thames character areas as its neighbours, supporting the ambition to create an Arcadian World Heritage Site.

Appendix B describes and explains Kingston's position and role in the Arcadian landscape in greater detail.

## Vision themes

The vision for Kingston's Arcadian Riverside is described under five themes:

### *1. Rediscovering Kingston's market town*

The vision is to connect the Riverside fully with the historic core and increase active use of the Riverside for eating and drinking, cultural and leisure uses, with these uses expanding to occupy the zone between Thames Side and Town End.

### *2. Open space and active Riverside*

The vision for the riverside walk is to create a connected, high quality, linear park which varies in character from the picturesque to the urban, yet has a coherent identity and is legible and accessible to all. Points of interest along the riverside walk will act as local destinations and encourage activity along its full length.

### *3. The River providing a unique culture for Kingston*

The vision is to celebrate the river's unique contribution to Kingston by increasing opportunities for people to enjoy and directly interact with the river. An increased programme of unique sporting, arts and cultural events is proposed building on the existing annual programme including the Regatta and events managed by Creative Kingston.

### *4. Making space for water and biodiversity*

The vision is to 'green' and naturalise the riverbank to support increased biodiversity with the green spaces of Queens Promenade and Canbury Gardens in particular taking on a more riverine character. This is particularly important to support the role of the Thames as a linking blue/green corridor connecting habitats across London.

### *5. Improving connectivity and creating a coherent movement network*

This theme focuses on creating a coherent network of links that prioritises pedestrian movement along the river, introduces space for cycling, and connects the river, town centre and wider walking and cycling routes. To achieve this, activities such as servicing, car and coach parking will be actively managed in the Riverside, to rebalance spaces in favour of pedestrians, to ensure safety is maintained and to create a high quality public realm. The creation of a high quality public realm at the Riverside will be key to encouraging its use by pedestrians and cyclists.

## Character Areas

There is an opportunity to encourage greater coherence in the character of Kingston's Riverside and support the objectives of the vision

by considering the Riverside as three character areas. The SPD describes how the principles of the vision are to be applied to each character area reflecting local issues and context. It sets out a list of proposals for each character area and a proposals plan.

### 1. Canbury Gardens

The Victorian pleasure gardens at Canbury are to be reinvigorated, creating a formal park for relaxation and recreation with a naturalised riverbank. The green character of the gardens will be extended south towards Water Lane / Thames side where the character transitions into the second character area 'Kingston's Historic Wharves and Market Town'.

### 2. Kingston's historic wharves and market town

The central section of the Riverside from Water Lane / Thames Side to Town End will be an intensively used, urban promenade with strong connectivity to the town's Ancient Market and medieval street network. Expansion of the existing food and drink, cultural and heritage uses will provide an active frontage to the riverside walk and support the wider town centre offer. Additional space will be created by the removal of non essential activities, relocation of activities which do not support or in other way have a direct connection with the riverside, and redesign of the riverside walk.

### 3. Town End Park to Ravens Ait

The existing promenade will be redesigned to become a green public park with a natural riverine character, extending from Town End along Queens Promenade to Raven's Ait. A series of new activities will provide interest along the route and long circular walks will be encouraged by the introduction of new foot ferry crossings.

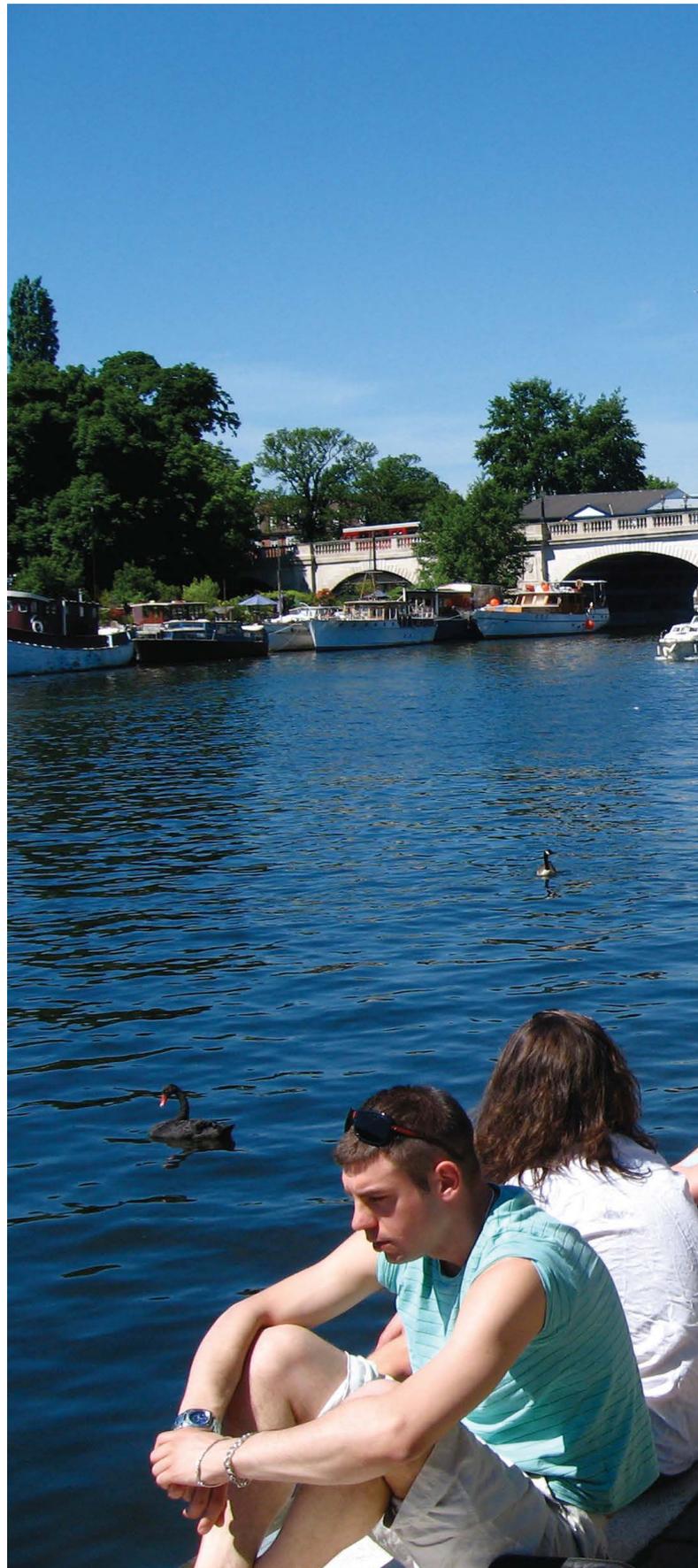


Fig. 2





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# 1.0 Why a Riverside Supplementary Planning Document?

## 1.1 Introduction

**1.1.1** This is the Public Realm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Kingston Riverside. It is known as the Riverside Public Realm SPD (or Riverside SPD for short). It provides planning guidance which will be used in the consideration of development and public realm projects that affect the Riverside and its relationship with the wider town centre.

## 1.2 The importance of Kingston Riverside

**1.2.1** As the first crossing point after London Bridge, Kingston developed as a strategic urban centre on the southern bank of the Thames in an otherwise rural landscape. The River continues to play an important role in defining the distinctive character of the Royal Borough and Kingston town itself with the Riverside providing a space for wildlife and quiet reflection and acting as a stage for sports and movement, culture and town events. Recent developments at Bishop's Palace House and Charter.

**1.2.2** Quay have enabled a continuous riverside walk and have brought café culture, nightlife and apartment living to the water's edge, with significant future development planned north of Kingston Bridge. Elsewhere in the town centre, the Council has invested significantly in upgrading the Ancient Market, which is now a key attractor for shopping and leisure use and sits one block back from the water's edge.

**1.2.3** Kingston's 'Direction of Travel', 2016 recognises the forthcoming significant growth within the Borough over the coming years forming the basis for Kingston to be identified as an Opportunity Area within the forthcoming London Plan. The Kingston Open Space Assessment, 2006 identifies qualitative and quantitative shortfalls in open space provision with Kingston Town.

**1.2.4** As the population of the Kingston and the borough increases over the coming years, the Riverside will become increasingly important and well used as one of the Town Centre's primary, open space and frontage to the river.

**1.2.5** However, despite the Riverside's unique setting and importance to the town, it is under performing. The Victorian formal gardens of Canbury and Queens Promenade are now faded, the central section of the path connects poorly to the historic market town, and the legibility of the route is hindered by rail, road and other infrastructure, car parking and level changes.

**1.2.6** The need for improvements to the Riverside are highlighted in Policy CS4 of Kingston's Core Strategy, 2012 which identifies opportunities for an enhanced riverside walk, improved infrastructure for river users and protection for biodiversity. This is in line with London-wide objectives set out for the Thames Policy Area and Blue Ribbon Network. The London Plan, 2016 requires boroughs to take action in protecting the River Thames as part of London's open space network by improving Riverside access, enhancing the River's potential for sport, recreation, leisure, educational activities and tourism.

**1.2.7** A substantial part of the Riverside falls within the area covered by the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (K+20), 2008, which sets out the Council's approach to supporting and enhancing river-related activity and seeking high quality development and public spaces appropriate to its Riverside location.

## 1.3 The role of the Riverside SPD

**1.3.1** The Supplementary Planning Document provides further explanation and detailed guidance in support of the policies of the London Plan, Kingston's Core Strategy and K+20 Kingston Town Centre AAP.

**1.3.2** It sets out the overall vision for how Kingston's Riverside should change over the next 10-15 years to become a high quality public space befitting the town and its Thames setting and supporting future growth.

**1.3.3** It considers the role of the Riverside in a holistic manner, setting principles for change and improvement covering the area from Canbury Gardens to Raven's Ait (see study boundary, figure 1). Of particular importance is the need to balance the intensity of human use against the protection of the River's biodiverse habitats and its sub-regional role as part of the Arcadian Thames landscape character area.

**1.3.4** The SPD document is subject to formal public consultation and has subsequently been adopted by the Royal Borough of Kingston as part of the Borough's Development Plan. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications which affect the Riverside and its setting. It will also be used to inform the development of future policy documents. While ensuring any new development and landscape works support the Riverside and town centre in a co-ordinated way, the SPD will also allow the Council and partners to bid for funds to help move projects forward.

## 1.4 Approach

**1.4.1** The SPD has been developed in collaboration with Royal Borough of Kingston officers, Members and local stakeholders. Key stages of the project are summarised below:

- The study commenced in July 2016 with a detailed review of existing studies and background material, site visits, spatial analysis and dialogue with Council Officers including the Go Cycle team;
- An initial character area analysis of the issues and opportunities of the Riverside was established;
- Stakeholder walkabouts and a drop-in discussion workshop were held in October 2016. These sessions were used to discuss issues, opportunities and potential themes of the SPD vision; and
- The SPD vision which emerged is described under five themes and three character areas within this draft SPD document.

**1.4.2** The Draft SPD was subject to public consultation between 19 January and 19 March 2018. Comments on the document have been used to develop this final SPD.

## 1.5 Structure of the SPD

**1.5.1** Chapters 2.0 and 3.0 provide an overview of the planning policy context for the SPD and the key issues facing the Riverside today. Chapter 4.0 builds upon the evidence base and establishes an overall vision and spatial principles for the Riverside, under five themes.

**1.5.2** The character of the Riverside is explored in more detail in Chapter 5.0 which identifies a vision for each character area, based on a detailed review of existing issues and opportunities. Delivery mechanisms and sources might include using Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

## 1.6 Supporting documents

**1.6.1** The Riverside SPD, Statement of Consultation, Early Stage Consultation Report, together provide details of the stakeholder consultation undertaken from October 2016 to March 2018 to inform the SPD.



Fig. 3 Canbury Gardens



Fig. 4 The view north from Queens Promenade



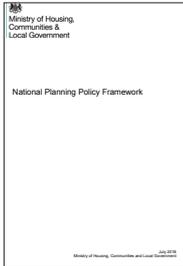
Fig. 5 The Riverside in the town centre



Fig. 6 The view south from Kingston Bridge

## 2.0 Planning Policy Framework

### 2.1 National Policy Context



**2.1.1** The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how it expects these to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development

which give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of objectives:

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
  - a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
  - an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- create places that are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting;
  - support the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place;
  - provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs;
  - facilitate access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities;
  - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience, and
  - promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages.

**2.1.2** The NPPF (2018), particularly sections 8 and 12 seek to support the creative of healthy and attractive The following are of particular relevance to the Riverside SPD. These state that planning should:

- Achieve the creation of high quality buildings and places. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities;

## 2.2 Regional Policy Context



**2.2.1** The London Plan (March 2016) is consolidated with all the alterations to the London Plan since 2011. The policies in this document (and any subsequent Alterations to it) form part of the development plan for Greater London.

**2.2.2** A full review of the London Plan is currently

being undertaken, with a draft currently out for consultation between December 2017 and March 2018. An Examination in Public is expected in Summer 2018 and anticipated publication in Autumn 2019. All Local Plans are required to be in general conformity with the London Plan and when adopted, the new London Plan will provide the strategic context for planning decisions and future reviews of the Kingston Local Plan, including the Kingston Riverside SPD.

### 2.2.3 London Plan, March 2016

London Plan policies on the Thames Policy Area and Blue Ribbon Network require boroughs to take action in protecting the River Thames as part of London's open space network by improving Riverside access, enhancing the River's potential for sport, recreation, leisure, educational activities and tourism.

**2.2.4** Policy 7.24 Blue Ribbon Network states that it should contribute to the overall quality and sustainability of London by prioritising uses of the waterspace and land alongside it safely for water related purposes, in particular for passenger and freight transport. The policy highlights that the Blue Ribbon Network is multi-functional. It provides a transport corridor, drainage and flood management, a source of water, discharge of treated effluent, a series of diverse and important habitats, green infrastructure, heritage value, recreational opportunities and important landscapes and views. The water is the unique aspect and consideration must initially be given as to how it can be used, maintained and improved.

**2.2.5** Policy 7.25 Increasing the Use of the Blue Ribbon Network for passengers and Tourism states that the Mayor will seek to increase the use of the Blue Ribbon Network for passenger and tourist river services and that boroughs should identify locations that are suitable for such facilities.

**2.2.6** Policy 7.27 Blue Ribbon Network: Supporting infrastructure and recreational use states that development proposals should enhance the use of the Blue Ribbon Network, in particular proposals:

- should protect existing facilities for waterborne sport and leisure;
- should protect and improve existing access points to or alongside the Blue Ribbon Network; and
- should protect and enhance waterway support infrastructure such as boatyards, moorings, jetties and safety equipment etc.

**2.2.7** Policy 7.28 Restoration of the Blue Ribbon Network states that Development proposals should restore and enhance the Blue Ribbon Network by:

- taking opportunities to open culverts and naturalise river channels;
- increasing habitat value. Development which reduces biodiversity should be refused;
- preventing development and structures into the water space unless it serves a water related purpose;
- protecting the value of the foreshore of the Thames and tidal rivers;
- resisting the impounding of rivers; and
- protecting the open character of the Blue Ribbon Network.

**2.2.8** This policy also states that areas should be identified where particular biodiversity improvements will be sought, having reference to the London River Restoration Action Plan.

**2.2.9** Policy 7.29 The River Thames encourages boroughs to identify Thames Policy Areas within their Local Plans and prepare detailed appraisals of their stretches of the river and its environs, and notes that the Thames Landscape Strategy Hampton to Kew fulfils this role.

**2.2.10** Paragraph 7.93 suggests that strategies should be reviewed regularly and lists the matters which should be included which is of particular relevance to the SPD:

- the local character of the river;
- water-based passenger and freight transport nodes (both existing and potential);

- development sites and regeneration opportunities;
- opportunities for environmental and urban design improvements;
- sites of ecological or archaeological importance;
- areas, sites, buildings, structures, landscapes and views of particular sensitivity and importance;
- focal points of public activity;
- public access;
- recreation and marine infrastructure; and
- indicative flood risk.

**2.2.11** In addition, paragraph 7.94 highlights that the strategies should also identify areas of deficiency, and the actions needed to address these, through facilities for:

- water-based passenger, tourism and freight transport;
- water-based sport and leisure;
- access and safety provision; and
- marine support facilities and infrastructure and moorings.

**2.2.12** Paragraph 7.95 sets out that the Thames strategies should be used as guidance for Local Plans and Development Management decisions. They should also include specific implementation projects for local authorities and other organisations in a position to implement river-related projects. They should also be used to identify important Riverside sites and determine the river-related expectations for them. As such the strategies should be expressed through SPDs as appropriate.

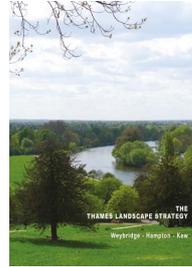
**2.2.13** Other relevant policies:

Policy 2.15 Town Centres. This policy focus on sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of centres ensuring retail capacity and managing their changing roles to strengthen them and promote a range of services and diversification.

**2.2.14 Emerging London Plan, 2017**

The new London Plan has been completely rewritten and is now much more design focused than the existing London Plan. Of note and relevance to this SPD is the draft policy on Public Realm (D7) which seeks to protect and enhance public realm. The Blue Ribbon Policy and Thames related policies remain relevant although the Blue Ribbon Network is now referred to as London's network of waterways.

## 2.3 Thames Landscape Strategy, updated 2012



**2.3.1** The Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) has not been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by RBK but has been used extensively to shape planning outcomes in Kingston. The TLS was updated in 2012 and contains a section on Reach 4 Kingston including guidance and proposals. The Action Plan

was updated in 2014 and includes the following project description:

- Kingston riverside walk - Identify improvements to Riverside pedestrian / cycle routes between Canbury Gardens and Queens Promenade. Design the Kingston Riverside walk as a continuous public space, co-ordinating materials, planting, seating and signing. Enhancements include:
  1. Legibility improvements to the connections to the Market;
  2. Barge Dock reinstatement and Gardens; southern entrance improvements (softening)
  3. Softening and reinstatement at the Thames Side Car Park;
  4. Improvements to the northern entrance to Canbury Gardens;
  5. Thames Side improvements to access; and
  6. Town End Gateway - softening.

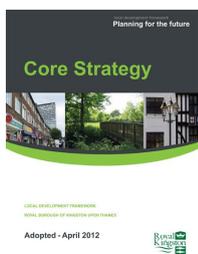
**2.3.2** Cost estimate in the order of £1m some \$106, but funding bids will be required. Potential to work with Go Cycle scheme:

- Kingston Integrated Moorings Business Plan Improvements to the provision of leisure, residential and commercial moorings in the town centre. Potential delivery options need to be explored – partnership, design and build or other;
- Canbury Gardens - Landscape the upstream and downstream entrances to Canbury Gardens; and
- Naturalisation of Canbury Riverside - To include management of scrub along riverbank through the Towpath Management Plan. For the riverbank between the Rowing Club and Lower Ham Road to put in place a series of enhancements to remove hard edges and recreate natural riverbanks.

## 2.4 Local Policy Context

**2.4.1** Kingston has strong policies with respect to development adjoining the Riverside and the protection of views, which post date, take account of and refer to the TLS. Much of the Riverside is within various conservation areas, which have their own studies/appraisals. This mechanism was reinforced during the preparation of the Review following advice from the GLA and GOL who both recommended that the TLS Review should provide the evidence base for the development of policies and plans (for the river corridor) by each of the constituent boroughs, rather than being taken forward as a supplementary or policy document in its own right.

## 2.5 Kingston Core Strategy, April 2012



**2.5.1** Kingston's Core Strategy shapes future development and improvement and sets the overall planning framework for the Borough. The Core Strategy includes both strategic and development management policy. The Council will be preparing a new Local Plan.

**2.5.2** Policy KT1 Kingston Town Neighbourhood recognises that Kingston Town's proximity to the River Thames is a great asset to the Neighbourhood and makes it a pleasant place to live and visit. It is important for many reasons, including its role as a biodiversity habitat, open space and resource for leisure, tourism and recreation. These and other factors will be recognised, valued and maximised. As far as possible the Council will mitigate flood risk in the Neighbourhood without limiting public access to the River. The Council will work with partners and landowners to protect and enhance the natural and green environment; it will promote and enhance sustainable travel options; and it will maintain and improve the character, design, and heritage of the area by protecting and enhancing the features that contribute positively to the character and identity of Kingston Town such as the quality of the Thames Riverside, particularly Canbury Gardens and the area north to the Richmond boundary.

**2.5.3** Policy CS 4 Thames Policy Area states that the Council through partnership working with the Thames Landscape Strategy and other agencies, will continue to protect and enhance the special character and environment of the River Thames and its tributaries, and will promote and enhance the use of the river and the Riverside by:

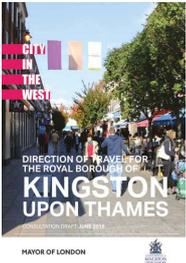
1. improving infrastructure and facilities for boat users that provide access to the river and the foreshore; such as, piers, jetties, wharfs, moorings, slipways, steps and stairs;
2. encouraging and supporting new facilities for river-buses and river-bus services at pier and wharf locations identified in the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (K+20);
3. supporting opportunities to improve the riverside walk to, and develop links from, the Hogsmill River and Thames River Corridor to other green networks in and out of the Borough;
4. improving river-based and Riverside recreation and leisure activities and attractions; and
5. protecting and enhancing the Thames River Corridor and its tributaries as a valuable resource for biodiversity and wildlife (wildlife corridor), and as a valuable part of the Blue Ribbon Network.

**2.5.4** Policy DM 7 Thames Policy Area states that: proposals for Riverside development and improved facilities will need to demonstrate that there will be no unacceptable impact upon navigation, biodiversity and flood risk.

**2.5.5** Development proposals on the Riverside should preserve or enhance the waterside character, heritage value and setting, and provide physical and visual links with the surrounding areas (including views along the river). Where appropriate, in new developments, the Council will seek financial contributions towards improving the quality of the Riverside environment including river infrastructure, open spaces, biodiversity, riverside walks, and links to the Riverside from other open space networks.

**2.5.6** Policy CS8 Character, Design and Heritage states that the Council will areas of high quality and historic interest from inappropriate development and will seek to ensure that new development recognises distinctive local features and character; has regard to the historic and natural environment; helps enhance locally distinctive places of high architectural and urban design quality and relates well and connects to its surroundings. Whilst tall buildings may be appropriate in the town centres some parts of these areas will be inappropriate or too sensitive for such buildings. The Council will also require higher standards of design generally to achieve a more attractive, sustainable and accessible environment.

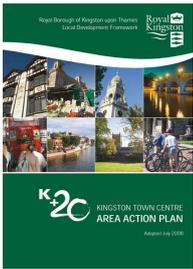
## 2.6 Kingston Direction of Travel, 2016



**2.6.1** Kingston Direction of Travel (DoT), 2016. This was adopted by RBK and the Mayor of London in October 2016. It sets out the 'direction of travel' in relation to growth in the borough and how (and where) it could be delivered. It focuses on strategic growth within the town centres and the need to ensure that the

future of the riverside is considered in this context. It also contains specific reference to improved access to the riverside. This is a precursor to a new Borough-wide Local Plan.

## 2.7 K+20 Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP), April 2008



**2.7.1** A substantial part of the Thames Policy Area falls within the area covered by the Kingston Town Centre AAP, which sets out the Council's approach to supporting and enhancing river-related activity and seeking high quality development appropriate to its Riverside location. The key objectives

of the AAP are:

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.

**2.7.2** Policy K13 Riverside Strategy states that the Council 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, support facilities, 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 town centre.
- The quality of Riverside development.

**2.7.3** Financial contributions may be sought towards Riverside improvements in connection with major development proposals through S106 planning obligations.

**2.7.4** 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.

**2.7.5** The AAP recognises that there are significant opportunities to capitalise on the river and its Riverside, which is a very special asset. Raising the profile of the river will encourage greater use and enjoyment of the river and Riverside for a wide range of activities, including special events such as festivals and regattas, whilst respecting the natural environment. The Council will implement this Riverside strategy policy through: partnership working with the TLS, the Environment Agency (EA), boat clubs and river user associations; the promotion of development on Proposal Sites P12, P13 and P14; and through the determination of planning applications.

**2.7.6** Improving facilities will encourage and attract more river users and visitors and cater for leisure demand and tourism. Moorings and support facilities are seen as vital components of an active and attractive Riverside. A number of the boat clubs operate from substandard premises and improvements are required to help retain and attract more users.

**2.7.7** Policy K17 Pedestrian Environment states that 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.

**2.7.8** Policy K18 Cycling states that the The Council will maintain and extend cycle routes; improve secure cycle parking and work with businesses and other organisations through travel planning initiatives, to secure improved cycle parking provision.

**2.7.9** Policy P12 Northern Riverfront (Bentalls Car Parks, Vicarage Road and Turks sites)- The Council will pursue comprehensive mixed- use redevelopment with private sector land and property owners and developers, excluding Bentalls A car park to provide a quality, full service hotel with conference and banqueting facilities; residential including affordable housing; ground floor A1, A3 and A4 uses with active frontages; a new public space on the riverside, a high quality pedestrian route from Wood Street to the riverside; and public car parking; high quality design; a high quality public realm and frontage to the riverside; environmental enhancements to the relief road; mooring facilities, including retention of the Turks landing stage for river boat passenger services and enhancements to those services; ecological enhancements along the riverside, especially at Horsefair Quay.

**2.7.10** Policy OTCA 2 Riverside South- The Council will seek to promote use of the riverside and waterspace by enhancing its attractions and facilities for leisure and recreation, whilst taking account of the impact on riverside residents; safeguard key views; improve the links between the riverside and the rest of the centre, with improved lighting, natural surveillance and active frontages; implement public realm and riverside open space improvements; seek to upgrade the river facing properties south of Eagle Wharf; seek to enhance the approach to the town centre from Kingston Bridge and the approaches from the river; seek to provide a new cycle route along Horsefair between Kingston Bridge and Skerne Road and promote a riverside cycle route.



Fig. 7



## 3.0 Understanding Kingston Riverside

**3.0.1** The vision and proposals outlined in Chapters 4.0 and 5.0 of the SPD are based on a detailed analysis of the character and issues facing the Riverside today. This Chapter provides an overview of the key conclusions which have emerged from the analysis. A summary of the full evidence base is provided in Appendix A.

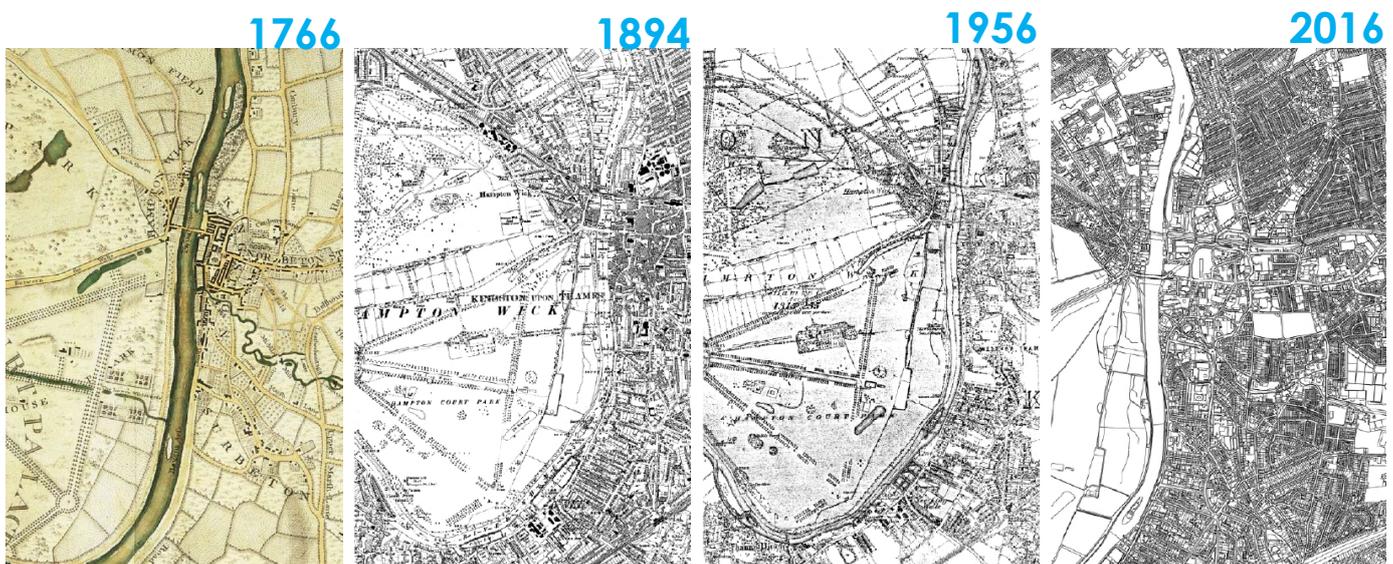
### 3.1 The evolution of the riverside

#### 3.1.1 The Arcadian historic context

Kingston is an ancient settlement which developed as a self-contained town at an important crossing point of the River Thames. Until the early nineteenth century it was surrounded by great estates and a rural working landscape. The historic role of the landscape in providing identity and separation between individual urban towns and villages along the course of the River can be described as the Arcadian Thames landscape character.

#### 3.1.2 A shift from working landscape to suburban development

Over the past 250 years, industrial activity and later residential development has led to the conflation of previously distinct urban settlements, separated by working landscapes, with continuous suburban streets between Kingston, Surbiton and Thames Ditton to the south. The verdant Riverside landscape that typifies the Arcadian Thames, has in part been lost.



**Fig 8 - 11**  
Historic maps of Kingston Riverside

## 3.2 Heritage & townscape designations

### 3.2.1 A gap in Conservation Areas on the Riverfront

Much of the Riverside in Kingston is designated as Conservation Areas (CAs) with special guidance that safeguards the town's historic environment. A notable gap of CA designation along the Riverside, is the area between the bridges, reflecting the erosion of historic character in this area. This area was identified by stakeholders as a key opportunity for enhancing the built environment and improving the quality of the Riverside public realm.

### 3.2.2 A popular evening destination

There are a number of important views and panorama along the river and toward the parkland landscape of the west bank, which are identified in the K+20 Kingston Town Centre AAP, for enhancement and protection. Facing west, the Riverside enjoys views towards the sunset adding to its attractiveness as a popular evening destination.

### 3.2.3 A heritage-rich landscape

The history of Kingston's Royal patronage is an important aspect of the town's cultural heritage and tourism offer. RBK is the oldest Royal borough in London and the heritage of the Coronation stone in the town centre, as well as the adjacency to Hampton Court Palace, will be further enhanced with the arrival of the Gloriana on the Riverside. More can be done in the Riverside public realm to celebrate this aspect of the town's history and the wider role of the Riverside as part of the story of Kingston.

#### Key

-  SPD Boundary
-  Strategic Area of Special Character
-  Local area of Special Character
-  Key Views
-  Listed Buildings
-  Buildings of townscape merit
-  Conservation Area

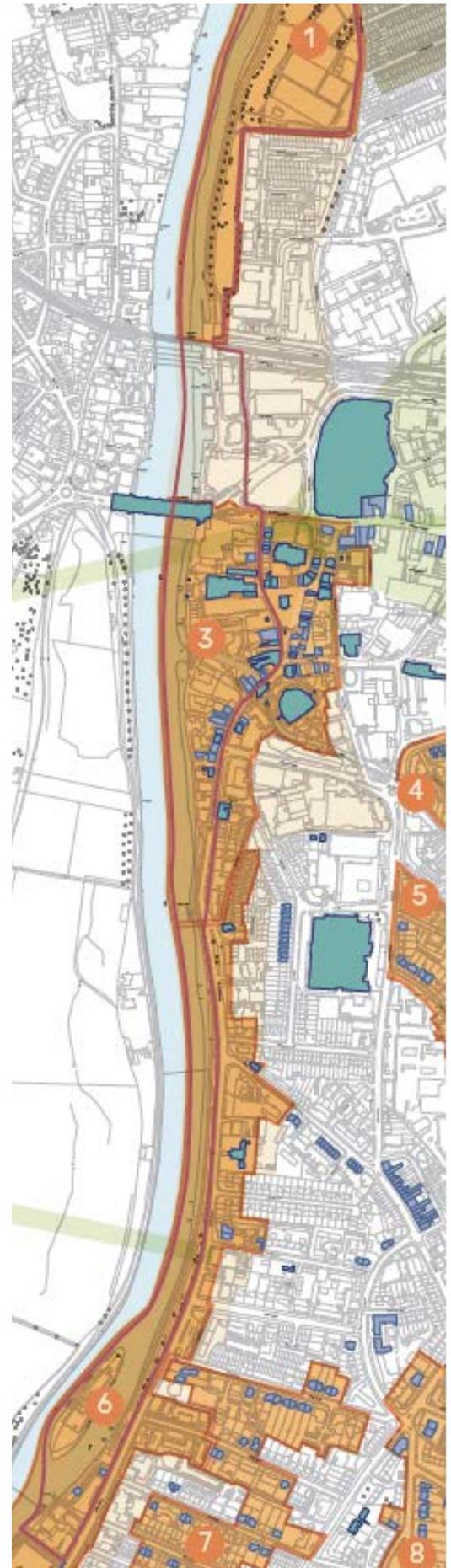


Fig 12

Heritage and Townscape Designations

### 3.3 Existing land use designations

#### 3.3.1 A fine grained, diverse town centre

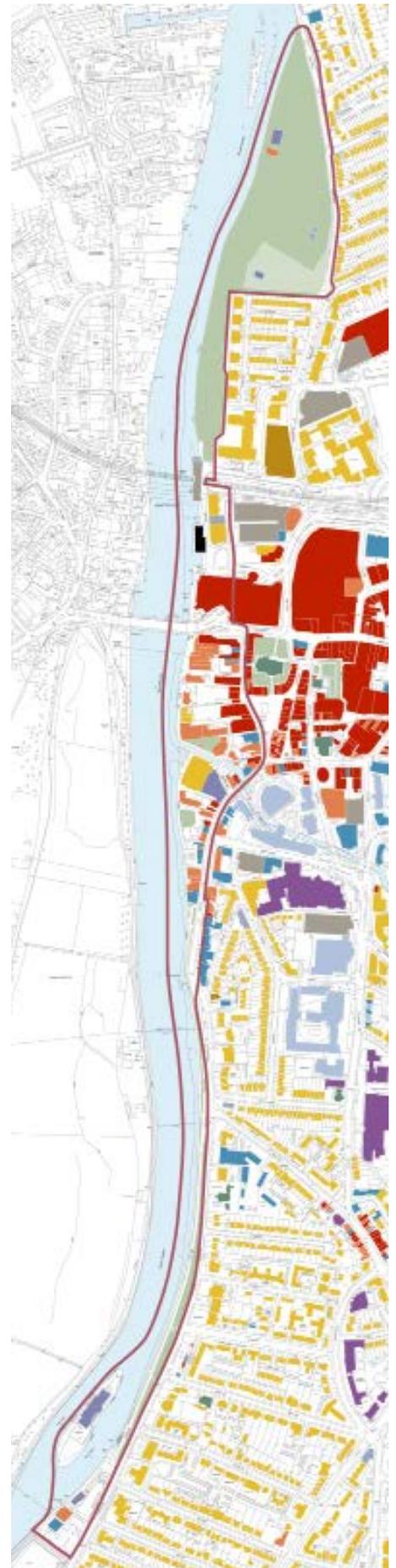
Retail and commercial activity is concentrated in the town centre between Kingston Bridge and Town End where the Riverside is animated with places to eat and drink. To the north of Kingston Bridge, K+20 policies identify new mixed use development sites which will extend the focus of activity further north into what is currently an area of limited use. Policy K9 promotes active frontages, including re-using the ground floor, river frontage of John Lewis.

#### 3.3.2 Green 'bookends' to the north and south of the town centre

Residential suburbs lie to the north and south of the town centre, set back from the river, behind the green 'bookends' of Canbury Gardens to the north and Queens Promenade to the south. Tree cover in Canbury gardens limits the visual impact of residential development from the river, but more can be done along Queens Promenade to enhance the experience of this 'green bookend'.

#### Key

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Residential        | <span style="color: green;">■</span> Religious              |
| <span style="color: gold;">■</span> Hotel                | <span style="color: black;">■</span> Transport              |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Retail                | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Car park                |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Food and Drink     | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Public Open Space |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Commercial           | <span style="color: red;">—</span> SPD Boundary             |
| <span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Community/Civic |   |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Sports and Leisure |   |
| <span style="color: darkpurple;">■</span> Education      |   |



**Fig 13**  
Indicative land use map

### 3.4 Future Developments

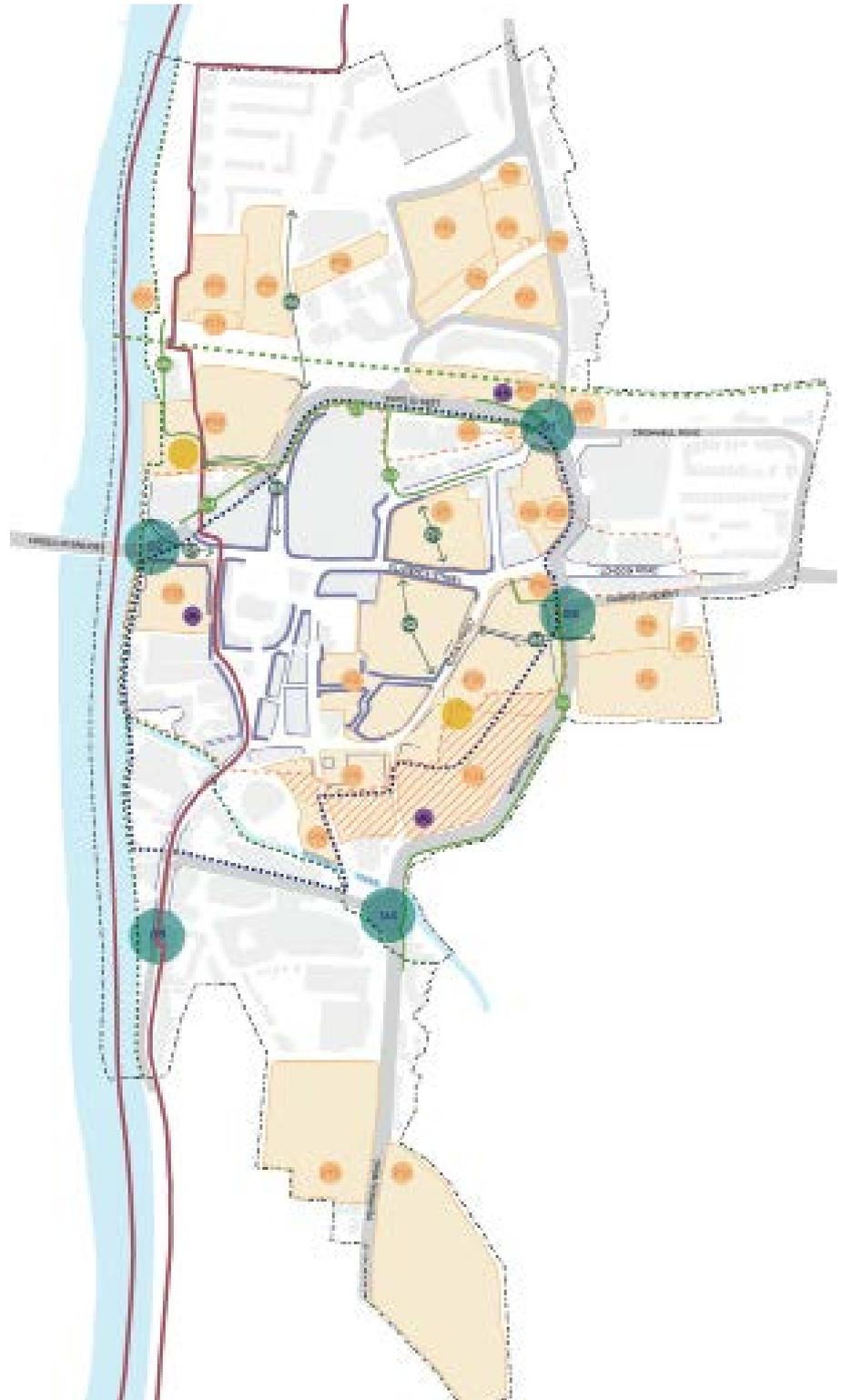
#### 3.4.1 A changing town centre

The town centre is, and will continue to be, a focus of redevelopment and new growth. There are currently pressures on the town centre, with a growing population this is set to intensify. In light of this the public realm will have to work harder as a space for people to use and enjoy and to move around.

#### 3.4.2 Forthcoming development

Much of the proposed development that affects the Kingston riverside will be in the area between the bridges as set out in K+20. This is an opportunity to reinstate a more historic scale of development and urban grain. This will enhance the quality and visitor experience of this part of the town centre.

3.4.3 Recent development to the south of Canbury Gardens is of a significant height and scale, which relates poorly to the historic context of the town centre. Policy K9 of the K+20 requires development to respond to local context, scale and character, in terms of historic street patterns, siting, density, massing, height, appearance, plot widths, building lines and materials. It also safeguards key views which affect the riverside.



#### Key

- SPD boundary
- Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan boundary
- Proposals sites: key areas of change
- Primary shopping area
- Extension of primary shopping area
- Primary frontage
- Secondary frontage
- - - Green corridor
- x Gateway improvement
- New public space
- Town centre road improvement
- . . . . . Motor vehicle restricted area
- . . . . . Major footpaths
- ← → Key improved pedestrian link
- Proposed cycle routes
- Proposed secure cycle parking centres

**Fig 14**

#### Local Development Framework proposals map

Information taken from the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan, July 2008

### 3.5 Movement, connectivity & legibility

#### 3.5.1 Conflict between users on key routes to the Riverside

The riverside walk is popular with pedestrians and an important leisure route, becoming congested during the weekends and in summer. A significant point of congestion occurs at Kingston Bridge, where the path is narrow and there north-south and east-west movements meet. Cycling is also banned in the central area of the riverside. However it is lightly used by cyclists which can lead to conflict with pedestrian movement.

#### 3.5.2 Poor legibility between the town centre and the Riverside

Connectivity and legibility between the town centre and the riverside are poor despite there being a number of existing, historic alleys. These routes are hidden, cluttered by parking and retail servicing infrastructure.

#### 3.5.3 Missing links

The quality of the riverside walk varies. Between Canbury Gardens and Kingston Bridge is it poor and lacks coherence with the rest of the route. Missing links in the cycling network include between Canbury Gardens and Portsmouth Road, around the town centre on Wheatfield Way and the gyratory as well as east to west around Fairfield Recreational Ground to Wood Street to the north and Kingston Hall Road to the South. The Council's Go Cycle programme will be working to bridge these gaps, including consideration of a connection along sections of the riverside walk.

#### Key

-  Kingston station
-  Key traffic route
-  Key cycle route
-  Key pedestrian route
-  Poor quality cycle and pedestrian link
-  Servicing and car parking dominates
-  Points of conflict

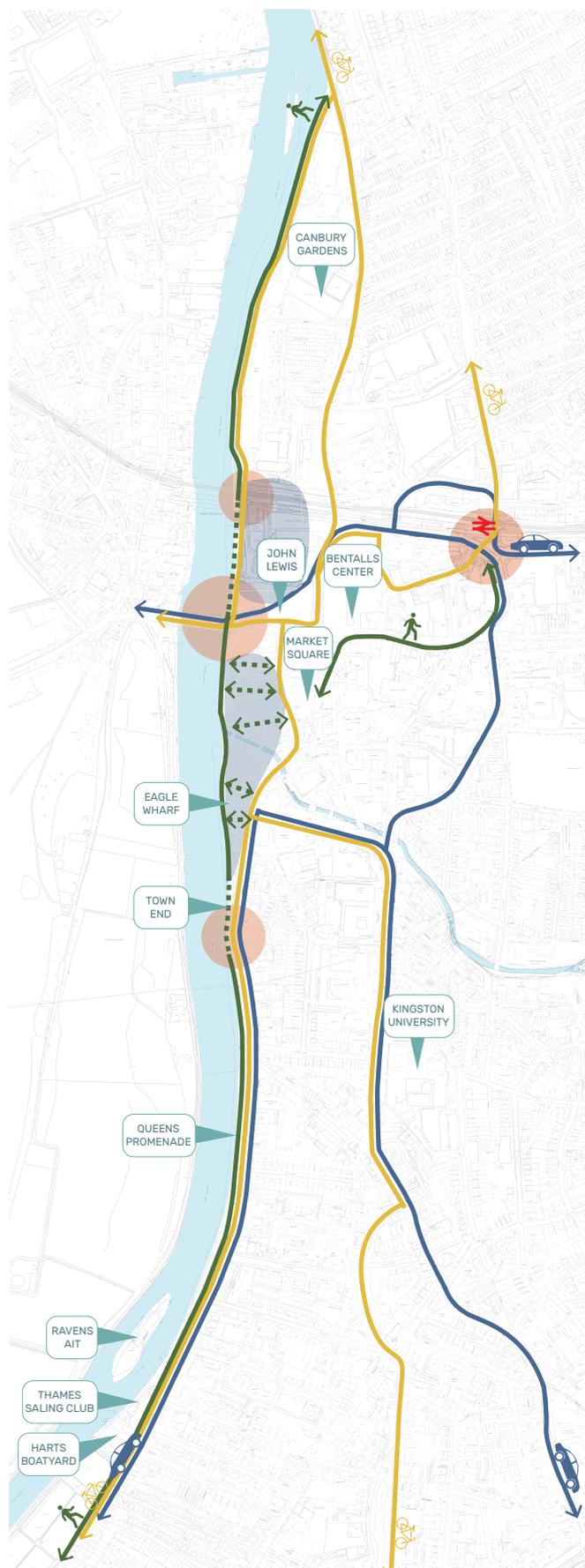


Fig 15

Movement and connectivity diagram

Produced from on site analysis during September 2016

## 3.6 River users

### 3.6.1 The busiest stretch of the River Thames for water based leisure activity

Leisure activity is a valuable element that adds to the character and the appeal of the riverside. Rowing and boating activity on the river is part of the town's heritage. The London Plan, Core Strategy and K+20 AAP support the increased use of the river for recreational uses alongside passenger and tourist river services.

### 3.6.2 Connections to wider destinations

Kingston Riverside is very well served by public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes to nearby destinations such as Richmond, Hampton Court Palace and Ham House.

### 3.6.3 Riverside food and drink destination

The diverse offer of cafés, restaurants, pubs and bars along Kingston's Riverside create a thriving leisure destination within the town centre.

#### Key

##### Green Spaces

- Public open space
- Golf course

##### Riverside Public Land Use

- Food and drink
- Retail
- Religious
- Community/sport/recreation
- Hotel
- Transport

##### Moorings

- Mooring
- River transport

##### Attractions

- - - Punting Shelf
- ★ Playground
- ★ Theatre
- ★ Sports facility
- 🚣 Boat clubs

##### Heritage

- 📍 1 Hampton Court
- 📍 2 Coronation Stone
- 📍 3 Historic market square
- 📍 4 Gloriana (forthcoming)

##### Transport & Movement

- ⋯ Thames Towpath
- - London Loop
- 🚲 Greenway (shared route)
- 🚲 🚗 Cycle route (along road)
- 🚉 Rail station
- 🚌 Bus Station

##### Bus Routes

- 66 - Ealing to Kingston
- 281 - Hounslow to Tolworth
- 371 - Kingston to North Sheen
- 406/418 - Kingston to Epsom



Fig 16

River users diagram

Produced from on site analysis during September 2016

### 3.7 The river, landscape & ecology

#### 3.7.1 Flood risk

Maps showing modelled fluvial flood extents by the Environment Agency indicate that the majority of the riverside walk immediately adjacent to the River Thames, the Hogsmill River banks, the northern section of Canbury Gardens and Thames Side are classified as flood zone 3 (more than 1:100 annual probability of fluvial flooding). Most of the remainder of the SPD area is located within flood zone 2 (between 1:100 and 1:1000 annual probability of fluvial flooding).

**3.7.2** The council are working with the Environment Agency and neighbouring boroughs in Surrey and Richmond on the River Thames Scheme. This will reduce flood risk between Datchet and Teddington Lock, an area of about 15,000 homes and businesses, the largest area of undefended floodplain in the England. All of the large-scale engineering work for the scheme lies outside the Kingston boundary, as there are limited opportunities within the borough to alleviate flooding because of the built up nature of the area. However, the scheme also includes local resilience measures at individual property level, and this will be most appropriate in Kingston. The scheme is estimated to cost £476m, but will protect against an estimated £2.3bn in damages.

#### 3.7.3 The Hogsmill River

The upstream capacity and water quality of the Hogsmill River can support improved Thames water quality and ecology as set out in the Thames Landscape Strategy and the All London Green Grid recommendations.

#### 3.7.4 The importance of the riverside walk as open space

The Kingston Open Space Assessment, 2006 identifies qualitative and quantitative shortfalls in open space provision within Kingston Town and highlighted the importance of the riverside walk to residents.

#### 3.7.5 A lack of ecological diversity along Kingston's Riverside

The lack of significant green spaces within the town centre, and a lack of diverse riverine habitats limits the potential for biodiversity corridors. These gaps in the network can be addressed through enhancements to streets, parks and the river edge.

#### Key

- WT Model node data selection
- Main river
- 0.1% AEP flood extent (1 in 1000 year event)
- 1% AEP flood extent (1 in 100 year event)
- 2% AEP flood extent (1 in 50 year event)
- 5% AEP flood extent (1 in 20 year event)
- 20% AEP flood extent (1 in 5 year event)
- SPD boundary

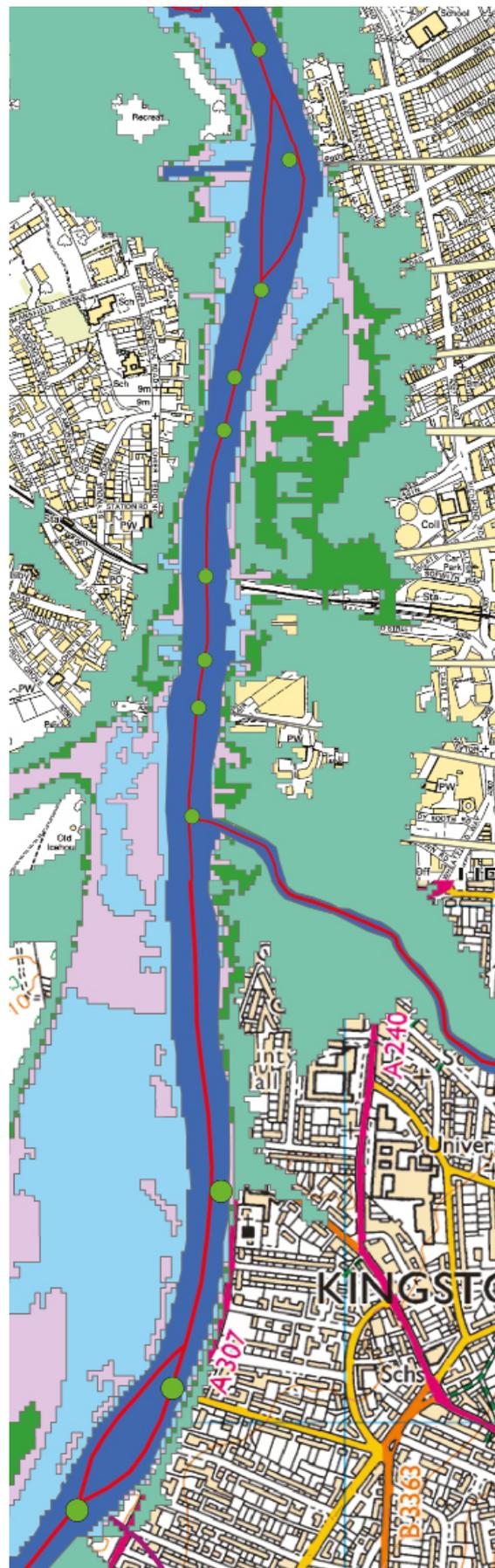
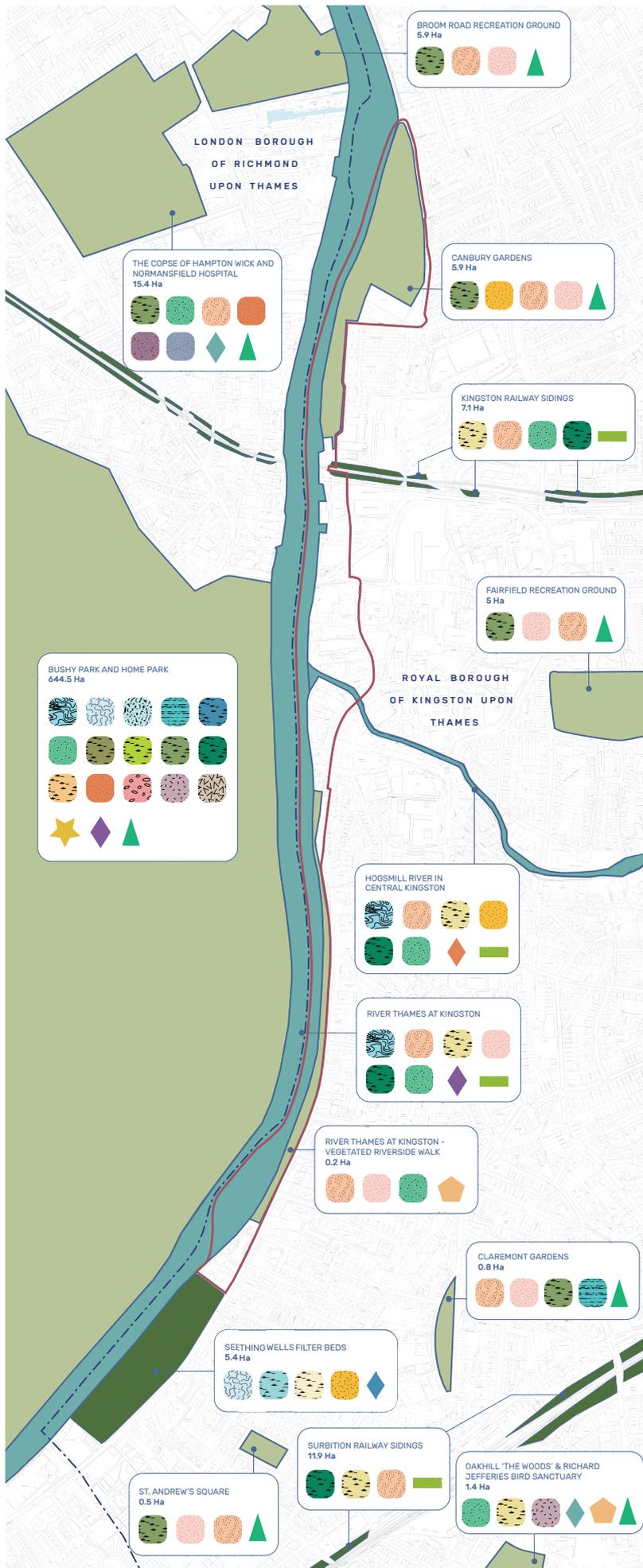


Fig 17

Flood risk map

Source: Kingston Riverside detailed flood risk assessments published Nov 2016 by the Environment Agency



**Key**

**Green Spaces**

- Public amenity
- Visual amenity
- River

**Riverside Public Land Use**

- Reed swamp
- Running water
- Pond or lake
- Marsh/swamp
- Standing water
- Wet ditches
- Scrub
- Improved or reseeded agricultural ground
- Neutral grassland
- Wet grassland
- Chalk grassland
- Bracken
- Acid grassland
- Amenity grassland
- Tall herbs
- Ruderal
- Planted shrubbery
- Scattered trees
- Veteran trees
- Broadleaved woodland
- Secondary woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Non native woodland

**Designations**

- Green corridor
  - Metropolitan Open Land
  - Local Nature Reserve
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
- Metropolitan
  - Borough grade I
  - Borough grade II
  - Local
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest

**Boundaries**

- Borough boundary
- SPD boundary

**Fig 18**  
**Ecology map**

Source: Information taken from GiGL data, provided Aug 2016

