

Statement of Common Ground Between

**London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and
The Mayor of London / Greater London Authority**

Planning

31 May 2024

Contents

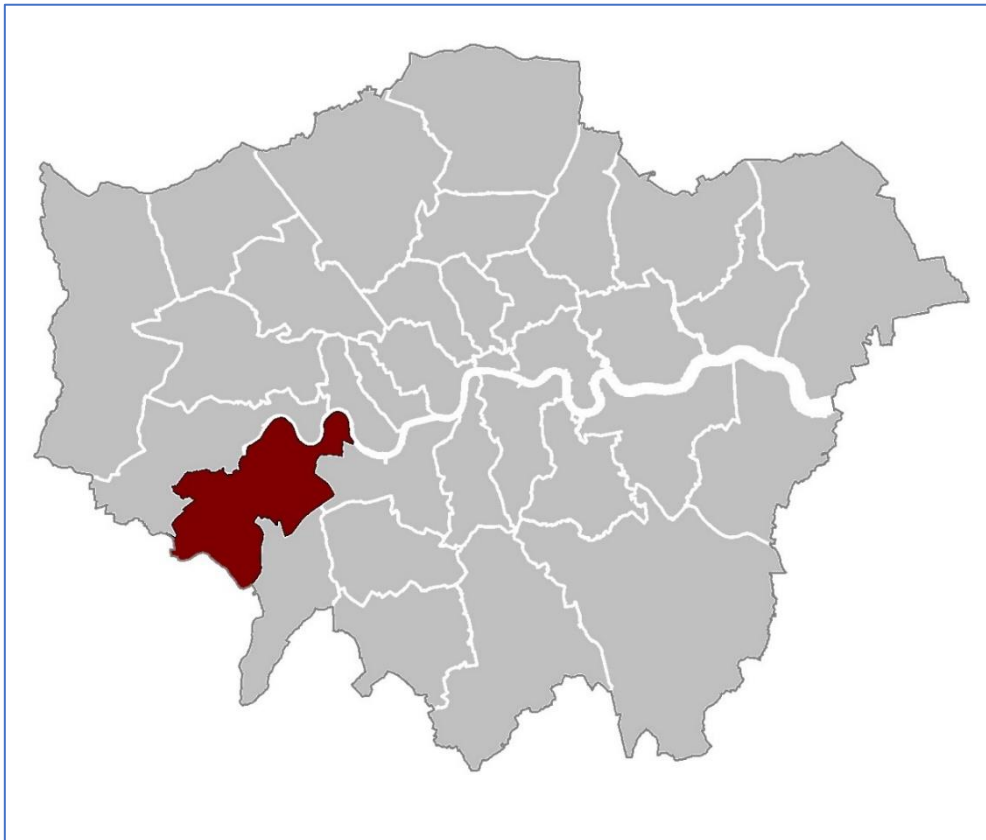
1. Introduction	2
2. Strategic Context	2
3. Parties Involved	3
4. Signatories.....	3
5. Strategic Matters.....	5
6. Table of representations, Councils response and progress towards addressing strategic cross-boundary issues	7

1. Introduction

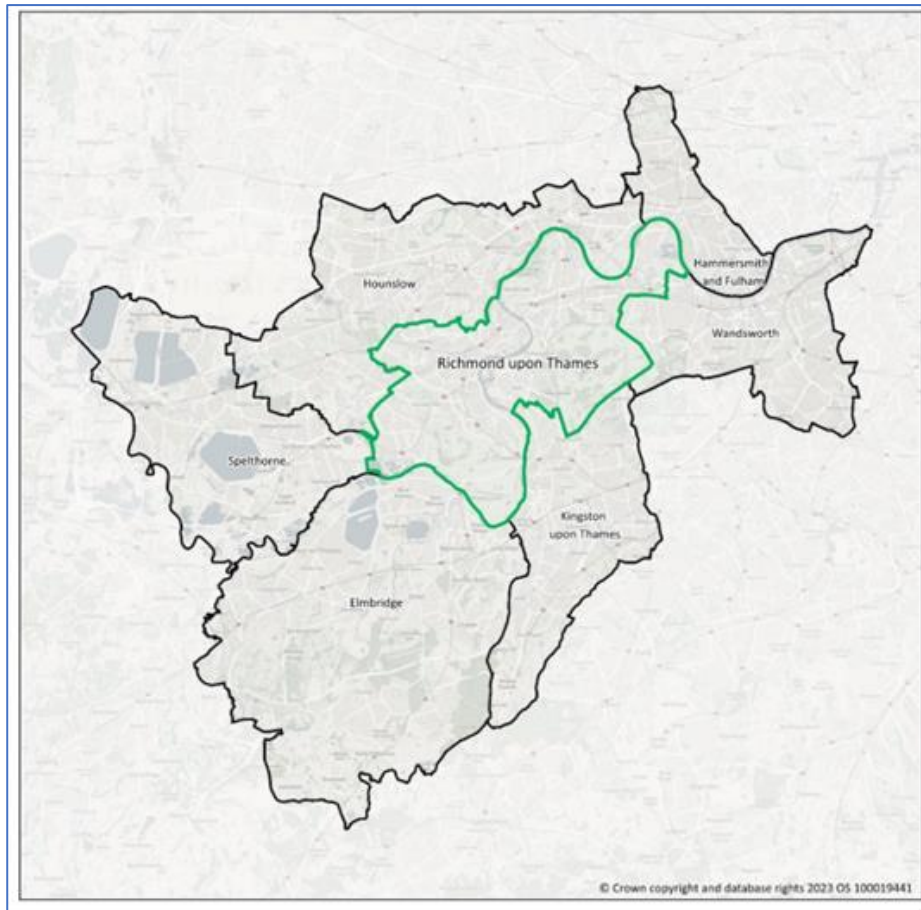
- 1.1 The Greater London Authority (GLA) on behalf of the Mayor of London, in their representation dated 24 July 2023 to the Publication Local Plan consultation, made a number of comments. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) sets out the areas of agreement between the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the GLA and the areas where agreement has not been reached on key strategic matters. Where appropriate it proposes resulting minor modifications to the Publication Local Plan as submitted for independent examination in public, put forward for consideration during the Examination. These minor modifications are acceptable to and have been agreed by both parties where indicated, and updates to this document will be agreed as matters progress and agreement is reached on any outstanding issues.

2. Strategic Context

- 2.1 Statements of Common Ground should be read in conjunction with the [Duty to Cooperate Statement \(January 2024\)](#) for the Richmond Local Plan which includes information on strategic matters and context, plan preparation to date and how the Council has cooperated with neighbouring boroughs and other bodies during the preparation of the Local Plan through engagement activities.
- 2.2 In terms of geographical context, Richmond upon Thames is an outer London borough sitting to the southwest of Greater London, one of 32 boroughs plus the Corporation of London (City).



- 2.3 Richmond upon Thames is the only London borough on both sides of the River Thames and is bordered by the **London Boroughs of Hounslow, Wandsworth, Hammersmith & Fulham** and the **Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames**. In addition, Richmond shares its boundaries with **Elmbridge** and **Spelthorne Borough Councils**, which are within **Surrey County Council**.



2.4 The London Plan is the spatial development strategy for London, produced by the GLA on behalf of the Mayor of London. It was formally published on the 2 March 2021, and now forms part of London Borough of Richmond upon Thames' Development Plan and contains the most up-to-date policies. Every London borough local plan must be in **general conformity** with the published London Plan, and the GLA determines whether this has been achieved, or not. Together, the policies in the London Plan and in each borough's Local Plan constitute the statutory local development plan for that borough, along with any other development plans and neighbourhood development plans.

3. Parties Involved

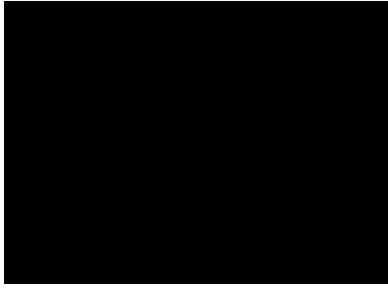
3.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in agreement with the Mayor of London, represented by the Greater London Authority (GLA). It addresses strategic spatial policies to be addressed directly by collaboration with the GLA. The Council is engaged with them on strategic matters on an on-going basis.

3.2 Both parties are committed to ongoing liaison to fulfil the duty to cooperate, utilising the appropriate governance arrangements.

4. Signatories

4.1 London Borough of Richmond upon Thames agrees to matters referred to in this document which directly impact them.

Signed:



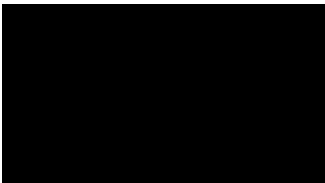
Name: Adam Hutchings

Position: Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager

Date: 31/05/2024

The Greater London Authority agree to matters referred to in this document which directly impact them.

Signed:



Name: Lucinda Turner

Position: Assistant Director, Planning & Regeneration, Greater London Authority

Date: 31/05/2024

5. Strategic Matters

- 5.1 Duty to Cooperate activities between the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and The Greater London Authority are recorded in the Council's Duty to Cooperate Statements – the [Duty to Cooperate Statement \(June 2023\)](#) was produced to accompany the Regulation 19 consultation and an [updated Duty to Cooperate Statement \(January 2024\)](#) records all the activities undertaken as part of the Publication (Regulation 19) stage and prior to submission of the Local Plan.
- 5.2 Matters not specifically addressed within this Statement of Common Ground are discussed within the above documents and both authorities agree that the above documents are an accurate record of their engagement activities and that there are no other unresolved issues.

Key Strategic Matters

- 5.4 Through correspondence and discussions between LBRuT and the GLA in the past housing and transport have been identified as strategic issues for continued liaison. Delivery of housing, including affordable housing, continues to be a challenge, as detailed below. Transport matters are covered in a separate Statement of Common Ground with Transport for London (TfL).

Housing

- 5.5 LBRuT's ten year housing target is 4,110 net housing completions (411 per annum) as set by the London Plan (2021). As stated in Policy 10 New Housing (Strategic Policy), LBRuT will exceed the minimum strategic dwelling requirement, where this can be achieved in accordance with other Local Plan policies. The GLA noted concern regarding how the Local Plan target has been included within the emerging Local Plan and the lack of clarity on the housing requirement over the whole plan period and the lack of detail regarding how this will be met.
- 5.8 LBRuT shared a draft of the Housing Delivery Background Topic Paper and Affordable Housing Background Topic Paper with the GLA in November 2023 which clearly set out the housing requirement over the plan period and includes details on how this will be met. This includes the stepped trajectory and updated details from the Housing Authority Monitoring Report 2022/23, to support the approach set out in the emerging Local Plan Policy 10. In addition to this the Housing Delivery and Affordable Housing Background Topic Papers include detail on previous levels of delivery, including build out and lapse rates, details of future delivery, and how the borough plans to meet the housing needs for affordable housing and specialist affordable housing including housing for elderly people.
- 5.9 The other key issue raised is the application of the threshold approach which is required by the London Plan 2021, and the Mayor's opinion that not including this within the Local Plan means the Local Plan is not in general conformity with the London Plan Policy H4. LBRuT provide detail within the Housing Delivery and Affordable Housing Background Topic Papers which provide evidence relating to the current policy approach within the Local Plan, including the reasoning why the Local Plan should continue to apply a 50% affordable housing target and remove the ability for applicants to use the Fast Track Route and apply 35% affordable housing without the need to provide viability information. The Mayor's opinion on the approach to affordable housing remains that it is not in conformity with the London Plan 2021.

5.10 Final versions of the Housing Delivery and Affordable Housing Background Topic Papers have been submitted with the Local Plan. It is expected that the issues raised at the Regulation 19 stage are likely to remain issues for consideration during the Local Plan Examination.

6. Table of representations, Councils response and progress towards addressing strategic cross-boundary issues

Text proposed to be **inserted** shown by underlining in blue highlight. Text proposed to be **removed** highlighted in ~~striketrough~~.

The following table details the matters raised by the GLA on behalf of the Mayor of London as representations to the Regulation 19 Richmond Local Plan (Publication Plan), and the status of those representations. As documented in the Duty to Cooperate Statement (January 2024) and noted below, the Council has drawn together information in a series of background topic papers. Draft papers on Transport, Housing Delivery, Affordable Housing and Biodiversity Net Gain were shared with Duty to Cooperate bodies including the GLA.

The table seeks to provide clarification and clarity to the extent to which matters raised by the Mayor are resolved or remain unresolved. The table therefore represents the current agreed position in respect of the agreements and differences between the Council and the Mayor. Issues marked with a * are issues of general conformity.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Mayor of London / GLA Representation	Council's Response	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
General	19	<p>The Mayor previously provided comments on the Richmond Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation in January 2022 (Ref: LDF27/LDD12/LP02/JC01). This response follows on from the comments made in the previous consultation and they should be read alongside each other. The response sets out where amendments should be made for the draft Plan to be consistent with the London Plan 2021 (LP2021). The LP2021 was formally published in March 2021 and now forms part of London Borough of Richmond upon Thames' (LBRuT) Development Plan and contains the most up-to-date policies.</p> <p>General conformity</p> <p>All Development Plan Documents in London must be in general conformity with the London Plan under section 24(1)(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Policy 11 on affordable housing threshold approach as set out in the draft Plan is not in general conformity with Policy H4 of the LP2021 and will potentially result in fewer affordable homes being delivered in LBRuT across the plan period. More details on this are set out in the following sections.</p>	<p>See response to comment 367 below in relation to Policy 11 (Affordable Housing) and the Affordable Housing Background Topic Paper and Housing Delivery Background Topic Paper which set out further details.</p> <p>Drafts of the Background Topic Papers were shared with the GLA on 28 November 2023.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Housing Delivery.</p>	<p>Outstanding concern.</p> <p>See response 367 below in relation to Policy 11.</p>
Spatial Strategy	55	<p>The "live locally" objective as set out in Policy 1 which will reduce the need to use private cars and strengthen the role of town centres fits in with the Good Growth objectives set out in the LP2021. The Mayor welcomes the overarching spatial strategy of the draft Plan to focus development around the existing town centres of East Sheen, Twickenham, Whitton, Teddington and Richmond.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>

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Housing [Policy 12 Housing Needs of Different Groups]	346	<p>Policy 10 of the draft Plan reflects Policy H1 LP2021 identifying a ten-year housing target of 4,110 over the period from 2019/20 to 2028/29.</p> <p>While the borough Policy 10A reflects the 10-year housing target, which we welcome, it is not clear if the borough is actually committing to meet this target by 2028/29 considering any shortfall in the preceding years within the plan period years before 2029. Para 17.7 mentions that 'meeting the higher housing target in the London Plan will be a challenge' which creates confusion if the borough is committed to meeting the 10-year London Plan housing target. Moreover, Table 17.1 doesn't specify the 10-year period of expected completions, so it is not clear if this is 10 years of the plan period or 10 years of the London Plan. I am pleased to note that the draft Plan confirms an indicative target of 3,639 homes from 2029 to 2039 based on identified capacity and the small sites figure in accordance with Policy H1 and paragraph 4.1.11 LP2021. However, with the Draft Plan period set to start from adoption further clarity on the total target for housing for the entire Plan period would be beneficial, this should consider any under or over supply in the time between 2018/19 and the Plan adoption date.</p> <p>The Mayor supports Policy 12 that seeks to assess applications for older person's housing in accordance with London Plan Policy H13. It is noted from para (17.36) that you have used local evidence that sets the need at 75 homes per year. This is less than half the benchmark of 155 per annum as set out in Table 4.3 of LP2021. The Plan should clearly set out how any need for older person's housing is to be met over the Plan period through both specialist housing as well as the general housing stock.</p>	<p>Note support for the calculation of the indicative target beyond 2029 as in accordance with the London Plan.</p> <p>The Housing Delivery Background Topic Paper provides detail on the Housing Target for the whole plan period and sets out how this will be met within the borough.</p> <p>The Affordable Housing Background Topic Paper sets out in more detail how the borough plans to meet the housing needs of the community, including housing for older people with the constrained nature of the borough in mind.</p> <p>Drafts of the Background Topic Papers were shared with the GLA on 28 November 2023. <i>The Housing Delivery Paper sets out the 10 year target should be applied over the 10 year period from 2021/22. There are details of the stepped trajectory, updated using the 2022/23 Housing AMR. The Affordable Housing Paper sets out details on delivering specialist affordable housing including for specialist older person housing.</i></p> <p><i>Note in response to comments from other respondents, the Council will be suggesting a modification to update the housing trajectory (after paragraph 17.4) with the latest version taken from the AMR – Housing 2022/23.</i></p>	<p>Housing Delivery – in particular sections 3 and 7.</p> <p>Affordable Housing in particular section 4, and paragraph 5.32.</p>	<p>Outstanding concern as there is a difference in views on the period in which the target should be met which is expected to be discussed during the Examination.</p>
Affordable Housing*	367	<p>The Mayor welcomes LBRuTs policy to seek 50% affordable housing from residential development which aligns with Mayor's strategic target of 50% of all new homes to be genuinely affordable as set out in London Plan Policy H4A. However, as mentioned in the response to LBRuT's Regulation 18 consultation in January 2022, the policy fails to reflect the Mayor's Threshold Approach to affordable housing as set out in Policy H5 LP2021. This means the</p>	<p>As a result of Regulation 18 comments regarding the threshold approach, additional evidence relating to the Council's position is within the Affordable Housing and Housing Delivery Background Topic Papers. The background papers provide justification into the reasoning behind not seeking to apply the threshold approach within the borough.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing, in particular section 5 addresses the Fast Track Route.</p>	<p>Outstanding concern as there is a difference in views on the approach to maximise affordable housing delivery which is expected to be discussed during the</p>

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		<p>Publication Draft Local Plan as consulted on is not in General Conformity with the London Plan.</p> <p>The Threshold Approach seeks to limit those circumstances where viability evidence is required as part of residential planning proposals by providing the incentive for developers to achieve at least the minimum level of affordable housing to qualify for the Fast Track Route thereby avoiding scrutiny of viability at various stages of development. The threshold set in Policy H5 has been informed by viability testing and embeds affordable housing requirements into land values which creates consistency across London.</p> <p>The policy has been proven effective at securing affordable housing with the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report showing that 84% of all strategic applications provided at least 35% affordable housing, this represents an increase from 53% of schemes in 2018. The average rate of affordable homes per scheme was 41% of all units and 45% of all habitable rooms. A 50 per cent site specific target is likely to result in most residential applications following the Viability Tested Route which on average provides less affordable housing and takes longer to determine compared with Fast Track Route schemes.</p> <p>On average schemes that were referable to the Mayor that followed the Fast Track Route provided 44 per cent affordable housing in 2022, whereas viability tested schemes provided only 28 per cent. Applicants also typically seek to demonstrate the existence of 'viability deficits' through the viability assessment process and use these as a credit in viability review mechanisms which can reduce the likelihood that additional affordable housing is secured over the lifetime of the development.</p> <p>As such, in practice, there is a significant risk that the borough would secure fewer affordable homes through a blanket 50 per cent requirement than could be achieved through 35 per cent threshold for sites that are not on public or industrial land. Based on figures from the London Development Database, only 19% of housing approvals in the borough were affordable over the three years from 2019/20 to 2021/22 and this trend is likely to continue</p>	<p>Drafts of the Background Topic Papers were shared with the GLA on 28 November 2023. <i>The Affordable Housing Paper sets out details to justify the Council's approach in Policy 11.</i></p>	<p>Housing Delivery, in particular section on Affordable Housing Delivery.</p>	<p>Examination, also with other respondents.</p>

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		<p>under the proposed approach. We are therefore concerned that, in reality, a headline target would achieve less than a more feasible, lower target – in effect 50% of a small number will not deliver our shared ambitions.</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence that the approach as set out in the draft Plan will deliver more affordable homes in practice than the threshold approach as set out in the London Plan has achieved. Therefore, changes to Policy 11 of Richmond's Local Plan should be made to bring it in line with Policy H5 LP2021.</p>			
<p>Industrial and Employment Land</p> <p>[Policy 23 Offices, Policy 24 Industrial Land]</p>	402	<p>LBRuT's Employment Land and Needs Assessment 2021 has identified that there is a need for an additional 60,000sq.m of industrial space for the period from 2019 to 2039. This figure includes the need for both B2 and B8 space aggregated together. I would welcome the breakdown of industrial space need and where/how it is being met as different industrial functions may require different building typologies.</p> <p>Policy 24 of the draft Plan sets out to protect existing floorspace and deliver additional floorspace through redevelopment and intensification and is aligned with Policy E7 of the LP2021.</p> <p>Policy 23's aim to retain existing office space and focus new development into town centres and identified Key Business Areas is aligned with Policy E1 LP2021. Paragraph 6.1.4 of the LP2021 sets out that office growth locations in outer London should be supported by improvements to public transport as well as walking and cycling connectivity and capacity.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Council's Employment Land and Premises Needs Assessment considers industrial and warehouse uses as one property market sector because in Richmond this total market is relatively small with occupiers using these types of units in flexible ways. Therefore, it is not possible to disaggregate the data to form a meaningful analysis.</p> <p>Noting the publication of the London Plan Guidance on Industrial Land and Uses, an additional modification could be considered to add reference to this in the supporting text to Policy 24.</p> <p>Suggested modification: Add a new paragraph following 19.31 to reference the new London Plan Guidance: The Industrial Land and Uses London Plan Guidance (consultation draft December 2023) provides guidance on assessment of development proposals, including expectations for intensification and co-location considerations.</p>	n/a	Agreed in relation to adding reference to the London Plan Guidance. On-going in relation to the breakdown of industrial need space.
Heritage	445	<p>Policy 32 recognises the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew as a World Heritage Site (WHS), in line with HC2 LP2021. As set out in the Mayor's response to the Regulation 18 consultation, the wording of Policy 32 should state that all developments with the potential to impact on the WHS or its setting should be required to be supported by Heritage Impact Assessment. This should be moved from para 20.52 into the main body of the Policy.</p>	<p>An additional modification could be considered as part of further work during the Examination process.</p> <p>The Council's response to the respondent's comment on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 899) was as follows:</p> <p>This is considered adequately covered in paragraph 20.49 of the supporting text. The requirement for a Heritage Impact Assessment is considered on a case-by-case basis, proportionate</p>	n/a	On-going in relation to the detailed approach to the RBG Kew WHS as there is a difference in views on the detailed policy text to conserve its heritage significance and this is expected to

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			<p>to the type of development being proposed and the location, taking into account the ICOMOS guidelines and London Plan and Mayor of London's SPG on London's World Heritage Sites.</p> <p>At this stage it is noted that the respondent may be seeking more stringent requirements for submission of Heritage Impact Assessments with planning applications as part of the policy on Kew WHS. Considering this further during the Examination process will provide the opportunity to balance requests of statutory bodies with aspirations of RBG Kew for greater flexibility in policy 30.</p> <p>Suggested modification: There is no proposed modification from the Council at this stage. Comments on this issue were also raised by the GLA on behalf of the Mayor of London and the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and therefore the Council considers discussion of an appropriately worded modification should occur during the Examination process.</p>		be discussed with other respondents.
Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land	465	<p>The Mayor is pleased to note the strong protection of the Green Belt in accordance with policies G2 and G3 LP2021 and that you are not proposing any Green Belt for release as set out in the recommendations of the Borough's Open Land Review 2021.</p> <p>The study also identified that while the majority of MOL within Richmond is performing strongly, there were specific sites that scored weakly against MOL criteria. These included the Sainsburys car park, Hampton site that the borough are proposing in Policy 35 for release and allocate for 100% affordable housing along with restoration and enhancement of the wildlife corridor. In addition, Policy 35 sets out two areas consisting of front gardens for release from MOL designation.</p> <p>Part C of Policy G3 LP2021 sets out that any alterations to the boundary of MOL should only be changed in exceptional circumstances when this is fully evidenced and justified and through the Local Plan process as Richmond is doing.</p>	Support noted	n/a	Agreed.

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		As none of the three sites appear to meet the criteria for inclusion as MOL, the Mayor therefore raises no objection to the proposed release of these sites.			
Tall Buildings	514	<p>Policy 45 sets out a definition of Tall Buildings that is in line with the minimum height stated in Policy D9 of the LP2021 and as such is welcomed, as is the policy stating that such buildings are only appropriate in the identified Tall Building Zones. The policy also takes account of the protected strategic views and the Kew World Heritage Site which is consistent with Policies HC3 and HC2 in the LP2021 respectively.</p> <p>The Tall Building Zones are identified on map 22.1 within the Plan and Appendix 3. These maps highlight both the areas appropriate for Tall Buildings and Mid-Rise Buildings and use a gradient to show the suitability for respective heights. However, this means the maps are unclear as to which areas are appropriate for tall buildings and which are appropriate for Mid-Rise buildings. A clearer spatial definition of Tall Building appropriate zones is recommended.</p>	<p>General support for the approach noted.</p> <p>In respect of mapping, there is an explanation at the start of Appendix 3. An interactive online policies map was available alongside the Regulation 19 Plan, which allows users to toggle layers on and off and see what applies in a particular location. An Additional Modification could be considered which clarifies in the Appendix 3 text that red areas denote tall building zones and orange areas denote mid-rise building zones; it may be appropriate to consider during the course of the Examination any further mapping improvements.</p> <p>Link to the interactive map</p> <p>Suggested modifications:</p> <p>Amend the text in the first paragraph at Appendix 3 Tall and Mid-Rise Building Zones: Darker Red colours on the Tall and Mid-Rise Building Zone maps show areas appropriate for tall buildings and orange colours show areas appropriate for mid-rise buildings. Darker colours indicate more potential for height and the light colours indicate less potential for height.</p> <p>There is no further proposed modification from the Council at this stage in regard of further mapping improvements, but this may be discussed during the Examination process.</p>	n/a	On-going in relation to mapping as there is a difference in views on the degree of precision versus flexibility.
Transport	521	<p>The Mayor has recently adopted the Sustainable Transport, Walking and Cycling London Plan Guidance. This guidance is in relation to Policies T1, T2 and T3 of the LP2021.</p> <p>Richmond should apply the guidance to ensure that walking and cycling are supported and the Mayor's Healthy Streets approach is implemented and to support the Mayor's strategic target for 80% of all trips in London to be made by foot, cycle or public transport by 2041.</p>	Noted the LPG was adopted in November 2022. The Local Plan already supports walking and cycling, the Healthy Streets approach and the modal shift target.	n/a	Agreed.