

**Statement of Common Ground** Between

**London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and**

**National Highways**

*Planning*

7 March 2024

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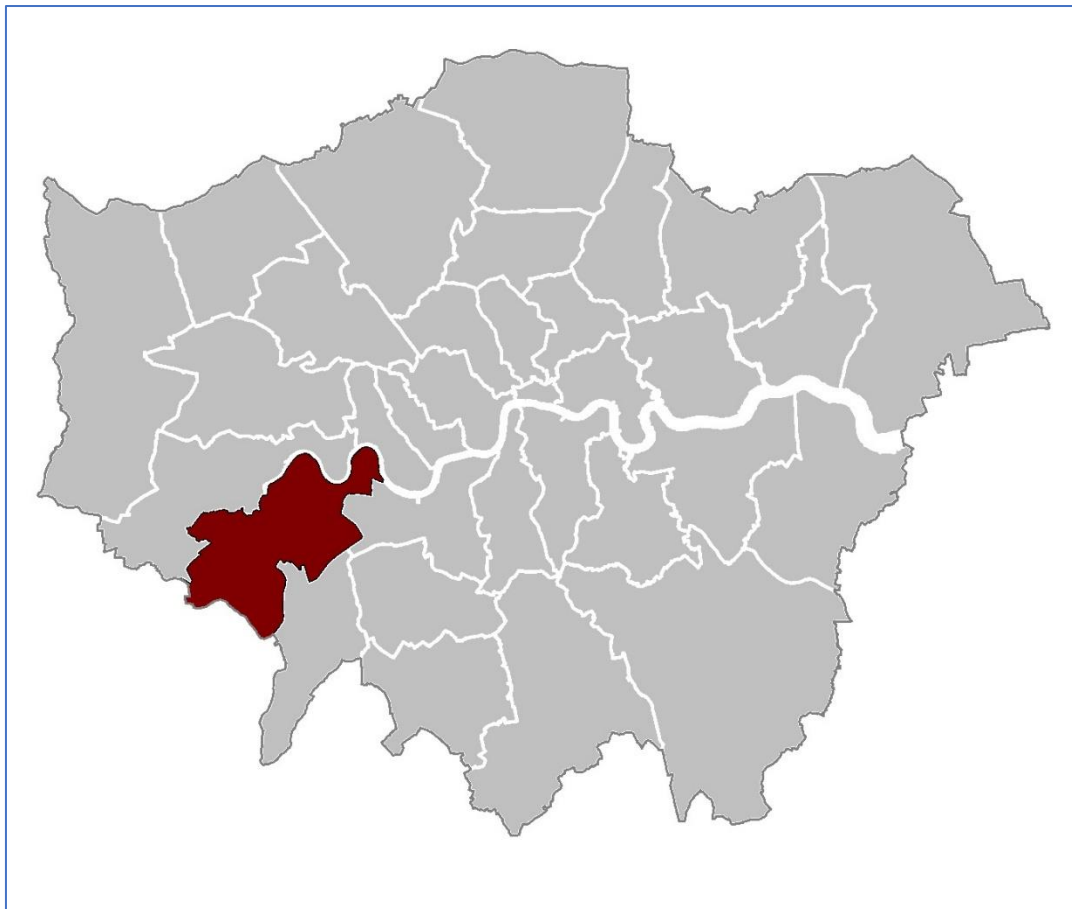
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 National Highways, in their representation dated 21 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 National Highways 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.

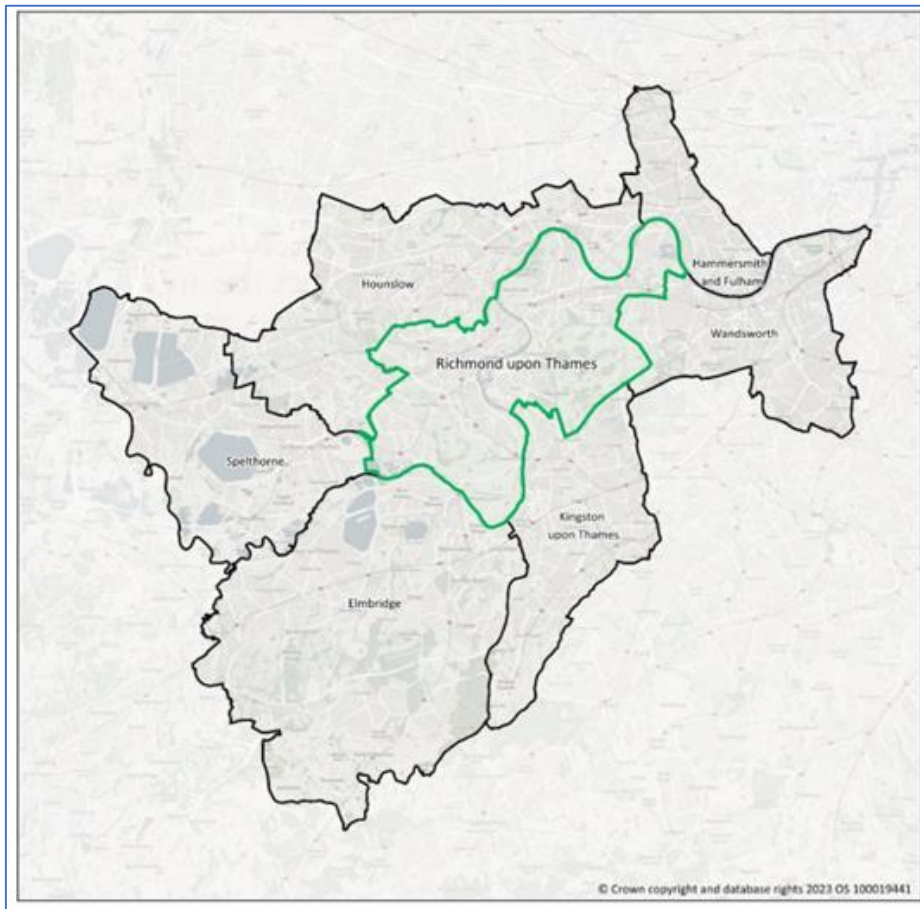
## 2. Strategic Context

- 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 National Highways (formally Highways England) has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) (a [map](#) of the simplified SRN). The only strategic road directly affecting Richmond is the A316 which, within London, is the responsibility of Transport for London (TfL); National Highways are responsible for the section of the A316 to the north of M3 J1 which is outside of the borough.

2.5 It is the role of National Highways to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner for national economic growth. For the purposes of the Richmond Local Plan, National Highways are primarily concerned with development patterns that have the potential to impact on the operation of the SRN, namely the M3 Junction 1 and M4 Junctions 1 to 3, and the section of the A316 that they manage, as well the broader context for sustainable travel (in accordance with [DfT Circular C1/22](#)).

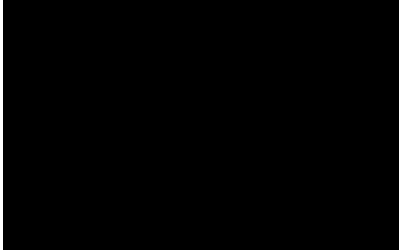
### 3. Parties Involved

3.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in agreement with National Highways. It addresses strategic spatial policies in the Local Plan to be addressed directly by collaboration with National Highways. The Council is engaged with them on strategic matters on an on-going basis as relevant through the Local Plan preparation. Both parties are committed to ongoing liaison utilising the appropriate governance arrangements as and when required.

#### 4. Signatories

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

Signed:



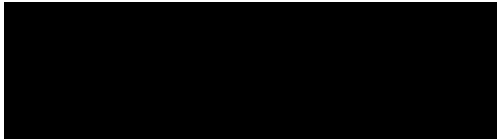
Name: Adam Hutchings

Position: Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager

Date: 07/03/2024

National Highways agree to matters referred to in this document which directly impact them.

Signed:



Name: Sammantha Rose

Position: Assistant Spatial Planner

Date: 08/03/2024

## 5. Strategic Matters

- 5.1 Duty to Cooperate activities between the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and National Highways 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

- 5.3 Transport infrastructure has previously been identified as a strategic and cross-boundary issue with TfL, the GLA and a number of neighbouring boroughs including Kingston and the Surrey districts, agreeing the need for continued liaison. National Highways comments on this Plan highlighted the need to consider the impact of development traffic on the SRN at the plan-making stage.
- 5.4 Following on from the Regulation 19 comments raised, including through Duty to Cooperate, there was progress on the Council's preparation of a series of draft background topic papers to draw together information particularly in areas where comments have been raised. The papers were shared with the relevant Duty to Cooperate bodies, to request any feedback particularly if there was missing or insufficient detail. The Council shared a draft of the Transport and Housing Delivery Background Topic Papers with National Highways on 28 November 2023. The Transport Paper sets out the Council's assessment that, as per previous Local Plans, development will have no strategic impact on transport or highways outside the borough and there is nothing unconventional about the policies and site allocations within the emerging Local Plan. The paper brings together some additional information, drawing on the baseline conditions and broader context, including other measures, and using modelling of trip generation forecasts.
- 5.5 National Highways responded on 7 December with comments on the Transport Background Topic Paper. The comments received have informed this Statement of Common Ground, see further details in the table below. An updated Transport Background Topic Paper has been submitted with the Local Plan.
- 5.6 It is expected that some issues raised at the Regulation 19 stage are likely to remain issues for consideration during the Local Plan Examination.

## 6. Table of representations, Council’s 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 ~~strikethrough~~.

The following table details the matters raised by National Highways 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 and Housing Delivery were shared with Duty to Cooperate bodies including National Highways and the further comments received are detailed below.

The table seeks to provide clarification and clarity to the extent to which matters raised by National Highways are resolved or remain unresolved. The table therefore represents the current agreed position in respect of the agreements and differences between the Council and National Highways.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	National Highways Representation	Council’s Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
General	10	<p><b>Publication of the proposed submission London Borough of Richmond upon Thames – Local Plan Publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations (Local Planning) (England) 2012.</b></p> <p>National Highways welcomes the opportunity to provide our comments on the Local Plan Publication (Regulation 19) version.</p> <p>National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth. For the purposes of the Richmond Local Plan, we would be concerned with development patterns that have the potential to impact on the operation of M3 Junction 1 and M4 Junctions 1 to 3.</p> <p>As a statutory consultee to the Local Plan consultation, we are interested in the potential traffic impacts of any development site proposals and/or policies coming forward which may impact on the operation of our network and the need to ensure that any impacts are fully understood at the plan-making stage.</p> <p>We have undertaken a review of the ‘Richmond Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation Version’ and we agree with the themes and objectives set out in the Plan. These include the themes of ‘reducing the need to travel’ and ‘improving the choices for more sustainable travel’. We also see the advantages of creating development that has a ‘mixed pattern of land uses’ and which limits car parking provision. These measures will help to reduce</p>	<p>Comments noted. The Transport Background Topic Paper sets out the traffic modelling for the Borough for the lifetime of the Plan, and considers the impact on the SRN.</p> <p>A draft of the Transport and Housing Delivery Background Topic Papers were shared with National Highways on 28 November 2023.</p>	<p>Transport Paper - Strategic traffic/highway impact on other authorities' networks, Table 4 - Estimated impact of development related motor traffic on neighbouring authority highway networks</p>	<p>National Highways responded with comments on the draft Background Topic Papers on 7 December 2023.</p> <p><i>Richmond, aligning with The London Plan 2021, is dedicated to increasing the delivery of small development sites. Section 7.7 of the Housing Delivery paper applies the London Plan targets to the borough, aiming for small sites to contribute 57% of the overall 10-year housing target. Committing to these smaller sites confirms the overarching spatial strategy of encouraging “living locally at higher densities within town centres”, ultimately reducing the need to travel outside of the borough and reducing vehicle trips overall.</i></p> <p><i>National Highways note the comment provided in Table 4 of the Transport Statement, which concludes that there would be no traffic impacts on the National Highways Network. This being a result of the Local Plan intending to bring forward smaller sites and sites in sustainable</i></p>

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		<p>the need for travel and help to encourage sustainable transport journeys for those that do travel.</p> <p>For National Highways, the safety and operation of the SRN is our primary consideration. In terms of traffic impacts on the SRN, we take the view that development proposals would be unacceptable, by virtue of an unacceptable road safety impact or severe congestion impacts, in accordance with DfT Circular 01/2022 and NPPF.</p> <p>DfT Circular 01/2022 confirms in paragraph 28 that <i>'the policies and allocations that result from plan-making must not compromise the SRN's prime function to enable the long-distance movement of people and goods. When the company assists local authorities in the development of their plans and strategies, the local authority should ensure that the SRN is not being relied upon for the transport accessibility of site allocations except where this relates to roadside facilities or SRN-dependent sectors (such as logistics and manufacturing). The company will also work with local authorities to explore opportunities to promote walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared travel in plan-making, in line with the expectations set out in the NPPF and the Transport Decarbonisation Plan'</i>.</p> <p>The Circular also states in paragraph 29 that <i>'capacity enhancements to the SRN which are necessary to deliver strategic growth should be identified as part of the plan making process, as this provides the best opportunity to consider the cumulative impacts of development (including planned growth in adjoining authorities) and to identify appropriate mechanisms for the delivery of strategic highway infrastructure. However, there cannot be any presumption that such infrastructure will be funded through a future RIS'</i>.</p> <p>Whilst sustainable transport measures are welcomed and encourage, there may still be a requirement for physical highway network improvements, if the assessment of the transport implications of the Plan show that unacceptable road safety or severe congestion impacts are likely on the SRN.</p> <p>We look forward to continuing to participate in future consultations and discussions. Please do continue to consult us as the Plan progresses so that we can remain aware of, and comment as required on, its contents. Should a virtual meeting be beneficial to take this forward, please let us know at your earliest opportunity.</p>			<p><i>locations. National Highways do welcome this approach. However, it does not rule out the prospect that a major development site could be allocated in the Local Plan prior to its adoption. We ask that we continually consulted on the emerging Local Plan and provided with any trip generation and traffic impacts that are identified, likely to be included in a future Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). We would appreciate the opportunity to stay informed and to review the IDP, just to make sure that any SRN traffic impacts are identified, and if necessary, mitigated.</i></p> <p><i>In summary, National Highways welcome the approach to allocating small sites within the Local Plan and the intention to locate these in highly sustainable locations. Whilst we agree in principle with the comments provided in Table 4 of the Transport Statement that there is unlikely to be any traffic impacts on the SRN as a result of the Local Plan, we expect to be consulted as the Local Plan evolves, in particularly with the creation of an IDP, which will provide greater clarity of any cumulative vehicle traffic impacts generated by sites, and the potential for these to travel on the SRN. National Highways would appreciate the opportunities to consider these trips, and if deemed to be of a severe / significant nature, to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are identified.</i></p>
Policy 47 Sustainable Travel Choices	523	<p><b>Policy Comments</b></p> <p>We have also provided additional comments on those key policies relevant to National Highways below:  <u>Policy 47 Sustainable Travel Choices (Strategic Policy)</u></p>	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (2023) set out the updated evidence base,	As above.	Note the Council would not consider it appropriate to allocate any further major sites at this stage in the plan-making



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(Strategic Policy) (traffic modelling)		<p>This policy sets out the need to assess the impact of developments and that all major planning applications will need to include a full transport assessment and travel plan, which must be completed in accordance with Transport for London (TfL) guidance. If the proposals share a boundary with the SRN or are likely to generate a significant/ severe traffic demand on the SRN, National Highways will also need to be consulted. However, for Local Plan allocations, it is expected that traffic impacts, and any sustainable transport mitigation or capacity enhancements to the SRN, which are necessary to deliver (the proposals) strategic growth, should be identified as part of the plan-making process. This would be set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which sets out the infrastructure that is required to deliver the objectives, policies and development proposals set out within the Local Plan.</p> <p>National Highways has yet had sight of any traffic modelling affecting the SRN, should it affect the SRN, or had any input to the IDP. We are not aware of any SRN impacts that have been identified. We would appreciate clarification and confirmation.</p>	<p>including details on transport infrastructure drawing on the Local Implementation Plan, borough context and short to medium term transport priorities.</p> <p>The Transport Background Topic Paper sets out the traffic modelling for the Borough for the lifetime of the Plan.</p>		<p>process, although will continue to keep the evidence base under review.</p> <p>An updated Transport Background Topic Paper, informed by comments from Duty to Cooperate bodies, is submitted with the Local Plan.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> that there is unlikely to be any traffic impacts on the SRN. No development is expected in Richmond affecting the operation of the section of A316 that National Highways manage. Any development adjacent the A316 would be subject to consultation with TfL and potentially National Highways.</p> <p><b>On-going</b> in relation to continued assessment of transport impacts, as it is expected to be a matter discussed at Examination including with other respondents.</p>
Delivery of transport infrastructure - Paragraph 23.24	537	<p><u>Other general points</u></p> <p>On Page 343 of the Draft Local Plan, Paragraph 23.24 states that <i>'delivery of transport infrastructure, including the relevant proposed transport schemes as set out in the London Plan, is critical to the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Local Plan. Planning, through the use of developers' contributions such as through the use of planning obligations (including Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy) is a key way that the Council can gain the necessary resources to assist in the delivery of this vital infrastructure'</i>.</p> <p>It should be noted that National Highways cannot be a party to Section 106 contributions. Likewise, it should not be presumed that any necessary SRN infrastructure will be funded through a future Road Investment Strategy (RIS), nor can mitigation requirements affecting the SRN be included within the Community Infrastructure Levy at a planning application stage.</p>	<p>Paragraph 23.24 is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan and refers generally to transport schemes. Table 10.1 in the London Plan includes an indicative list of transport schemes. It is recognised the tools to secure contributions would vary depending on the site context and nature of contributions; Policy 55 provides a broad framework for securing infrastructure.</p>	n/a	<p><b>On-going.</b></p> <p>A modification is not proposed at this stage, but could be considered during the Examination process.</p>

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26.16 onwards concerning Infrastructure Delivery	561	<p>We would expect that any mitigation necessary to deliver strategic growth of the Local Plan for the SRN will be identified and included in the IDP. The DfT Circular states in Paragraph 34 that <i>'our engagement with plan-making will help inform the preparation of the local authority infrastructure delivery evidence base. From a transport perspective, this evidence should provide a means of demonstrating to the examining inspector, development industry and local communities that planned growth is deliverable, and that the funding, partners and relevant processes are in place to enable the delivery of infrastructure; or that there is a realistic prospect that longer term investment can be secured within the timescales envisaged'</i>.</p> <p>National Highways would like to better understand the current position of the Local Plan in terms of anticipated future traffic growth (associated with applications) impacting on the SRN, and any mitigation measures (with the IDP) identified to off-set these impacts.</p> <p>Paragraph 26.16 onwards concerning Infrastructure Delivery, refers to the provision of an IDP, but refers to more 'essential community infrastructure'. There is no mention of the SRN. If necessary, mitigation measures will be required if unacceptable road safety or severe congestion impacts are identified. These could, and preference should be given to, include relevant sustainable transport measures, or physical highway improvements as a last resort.</p> <p>It does not appear that National Highways have been listed as one of the key stakeholders on the development of the IDP. However, we would appreciate the opportunity to stay informed and review the progress of the IDP so as to ensure that any SRN impacts would be considered, and if necessary, mitigated.</p>	<p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (2023) was published alongside the Regulation 19 Plan as part of the evidence base to inform the Plan. The Council's Transport Background Topic Paper concludes that development proposed arising from the policies within the Plan is unlikely to have a material, strategic impact on the public transport system or highway network, see also response to comment 523.</p>	<p>Transport Paper - Strategic traffic/highway impact on other authorities' networks, Table 4 - Estimated impact of development related motor traffic on neighbouring authority highway networks</p>	<p>See comments against 10/523 above.</p>