

Statement of Common Ground Between

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Environment Agency

Planning

18 April 2024

Updated on 28 June 2024 – Updates shown in **yellow highlight.**

Contents

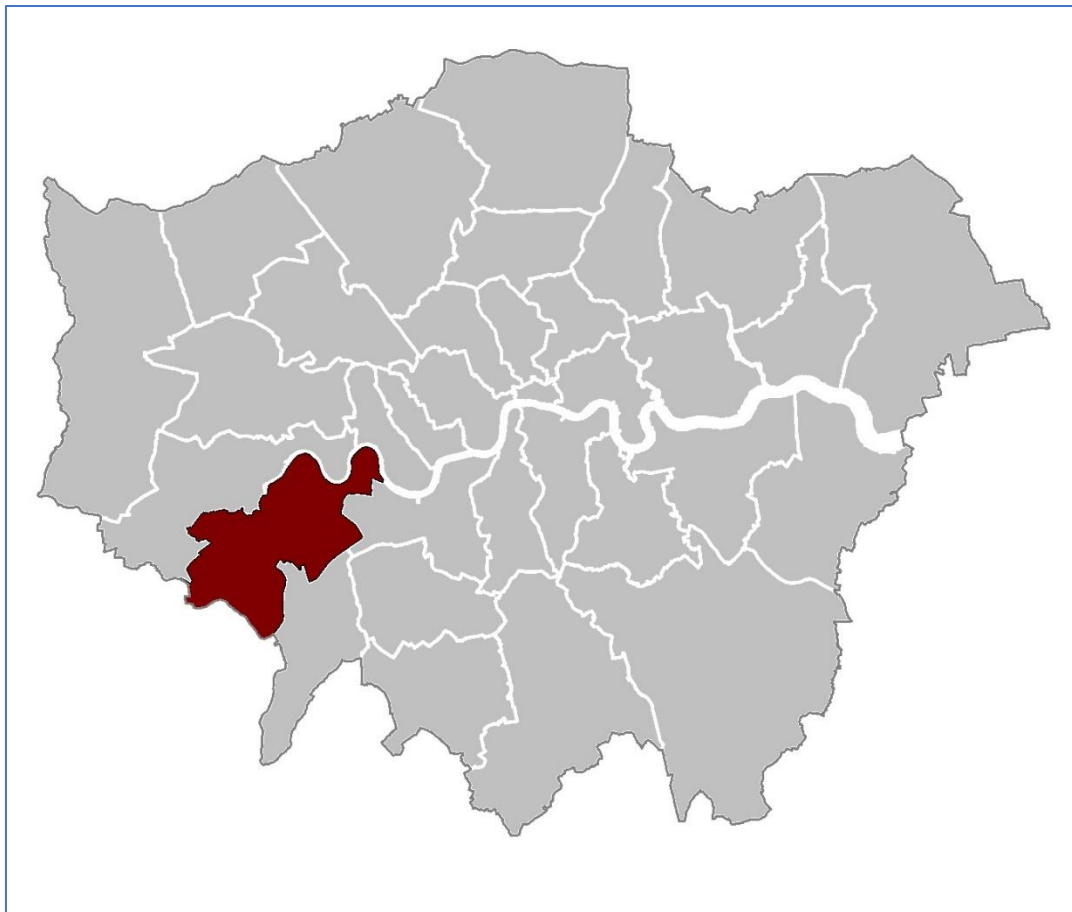
1. Introduction	1
2. Strategic Context	1
3. Parties Involved	3
4. Signatories.....	4
5. Strategic Matters.....	5
6. Table of representations, Council’s response and progress towards addressing strategic cross-boundary issues	7

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Environment Agency (EA), 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 EA 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.

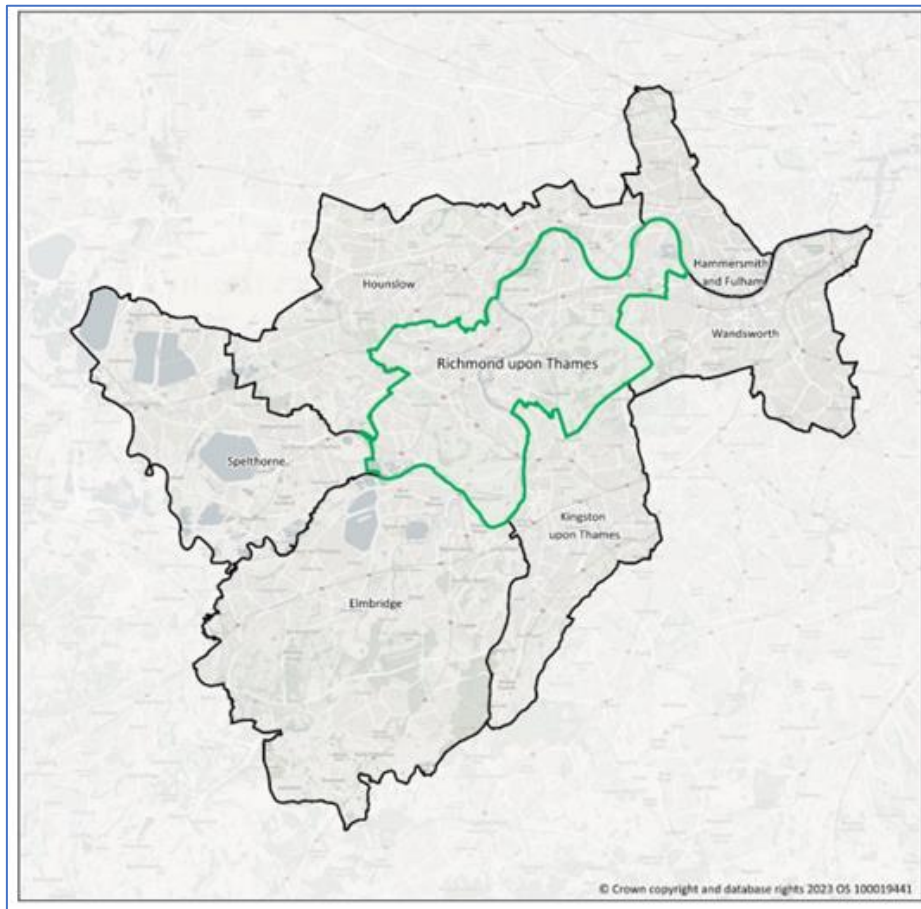
2. Strategic Context

- 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 EA has a duty to cooperate and is a prescribed body in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended). The EA is a non-departmental public body with responsibilities relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England. Within England the EA are responsible for:

- Regulating major industry and waste
- Treatment of contaminated land
- Water quality and resources
- Fisheries
- Inland river, estuary and harbour navigations
- Conservation and ecology

The EA are also responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea.

2.5 The EA has a strategic overview of all sources of flooding but works with the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) – designated as the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The LLFA develop local flood risk management strategies, to ensure that flood risks from surface water runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses are identified and managed appropriately.

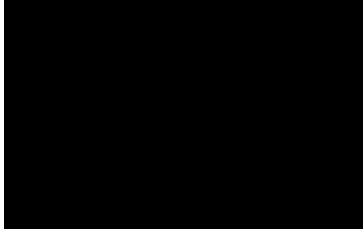
3. Parties Involved

- 3.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in agreement with the Environment Agency. It addresses strategic spatial policies to be addressed directly by collaboration with the Environment Agency. The Council is engaged with them on strategic matters on an on-going basis. Both parties are committed to ongoing liaison 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:



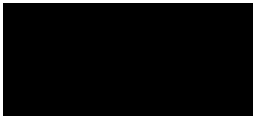
Name: Adam Hutchings

Position: Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager

Date: 18/04/2024 and 28/6/24

Environment Agency agree to matters referred to in this document which directly impact them.

Signed:



Name: James Togher

Position: Sustainable Places Team Leader

Date: 18/04/2024 and 28/6/24

5. Strategic Matters

Duty to Cooperate

- 5.1 Duty to Cooperate activities between London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Environment Agency 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 The rivers in the borough are important components of the blue and green infrastructure network -the Thames and its islands, the River Crane, Beverley Brook, Duke of Northumberland River, Longford River and Whitton Brook. The borough is subject to fluvial and tidal flooding from the River Thames. As the only borough to span both sides of the Thames, a large number of properties are potentially at risk of flooding from the River Thames and its tributaries. The borough is also at risk of flooding from other flood risk sources, including surface water and groundwater influenced flooding.
- 5.4 It is agreed through previous discussions by both London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Environment Agency that climate change adaption, in terms of flood risk and sustainable drainage, and the natural environment, particularly in respect of biodiversity and river corridors, are strategic issues, along with continuing liaison on waste supply and wastewater management and climate change mitigation.
- 5.5 The Council's [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment \(updated 2020/21\)](#) assesses the risk of flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking account of the impacts of climate change. The Environment Agency has developed strategic studies relating more widely to the River Thames, including the Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Strategy. There is also a Surface Water Management Plan and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy produced by the LLFA.
- 5.6 There continues to be ongoing joint working including cross-boundary to ensure flooding issues are considered, such as the [Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee](#) and the [London Drainage Engineers Group \(LoDEG\)](#).
- 5.7 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 Biodiversity Net Gain Background Topic Paper with the Environment Agency on 28 November 2023, given links with the biodiversity of river corridors and aquatic habitats.

5.8 In the preparation of this Statement of Common Ground, there have been further discussions between Council, the Environment Agency and LLFA officers in particular to discuss issues that cut across fluvial, tidal, surface water, groundwater and flooding from sewers. A joint meeting on 19 March 2024 progressed discussion on a number of suggested modifications, as detailed in section 6.

Update on Functional Floodplain Definition – June 2024

5.9 The EA highlighted an inconsistency, that the functional floodplain definition and mapping should be updated to incorporate land riverward of the tidal flood defences as functional floodplain. The Council, following discussions with the EA, proposed a modification to set out that land riverward of the tidal flood defences can flood frequently, they are undefended and any proposals to increase the vulnerability of an already existing use need to be considered in the context of this land being treated as functional floodplain. This is reflected in the final entry of Section 6's Table of Representations.

5.10 It has been brought to the attention of the Council that this proposed modification had caused some confusion with regard to the sets of islands on the Thames. The Council and EA have had a further meeting and confirm that the supporting text to the Publication Local Plan at paragraph 16.66 already referenced islands in the River Thames and this position has not altered (the same as the adopted Local Plan – reference at paragraph 6.2.7).

5.11 There is therefore no change in policy or to the designation, the islands are already considered to be within flood zone 3b as set out in the Council's SFRA at 6.2.4 and Local Plan Policy LP 21, paragraph 6.2.7. The Council's SFRA is clear that where the access and egress to and from the island is within the functional floodplain, for the purposes of new development, such islands will be considered and treated as functional floodplain (Zone 3b), even if parts of the islands may be within an area of lower probability of flooding.

5.12 Due to both local and national policy, an increase in more vulnerable developments is not permitted on any of the islands. New developments are restricted to 'Water Compatible' and 'Essential Infrastructure' (subject to an Exception Test) as per the guidance in the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG. Redevelopment of a building on a like for like basis is permitted.

5.13 Building redevelopment must ensure that there is no increase in the number of people at risk, therefore the number of dwellings cannot be increased if redevelopment required a building to be knocked down and another one built in its place. Redevelopment requires betterment to mitigate against flood risk, protecting the building and its users from potential flooding. Table 6-1 in the SFRA details development requirements further. In summary, the designation ensures that intensification does not lead to increased vulnerability to flooding. Each application is assessed on its own merits, with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and any necessary mitigation can be considered.

5.14 The proposed modification seeks to formally capture and include other parts of the borough where land riverward of the River Thames Tidal Flood Defences has historically also been treated as functional floodplain. This applies to land that is in essence part of the river channel. For example, it includes around parts of Ham Lands and Old Deer Park. This is a common approach amongst other parts of the tidal Thames, including Wandsworth.

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 the Environment Agency 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. A draft paper on Biodiversity Net Gain was shared with Duty to Cooperate bodies including the Environment Agency.

The table seeks to provide clarification and clarity to the extent to which matters raised by the Environment Agency 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 Environment Agency.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
Local Plan Publication (Regulation 19) (general)	25	<p>Thank you for consulting us on your draft local plan (Regulation 19) and the associated evidence base. We received consultation from you on 9 June 2023 and would like to provide comments with respect to our remit. We hope that you find our comments useful and we would be pleased to meet with you to discuss in more detail any issues or queries you may have.</p> <p>Environment Agency Position</p> <p>Our aim is to assist you prepare and implement a sound, robust, and effective plan that is reflective of national policy and your local evidence base. We hope that this collaborative process leads to a plan that delivers sustainable development, contributes to a stronger economy, and safeguards the environment for future generations.</p> <p>Our detailed comments are provided below [see comments in this schedule], following the general order of the topics presented in the draft local plan document. There are several policies with the plan that we consider unsound and have provided comments to support our position. In addition, we have provided recommendations to several policies that although do not affect the soundness of the plan, they could strengthen and maximise its effectiveness.</p> <p>Our detailed comments are attached below for your consideration. Please refer to the following sections (attached) for further information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 – Environmental issues & opportunities • Section 2 – Site allocations • Section 3 – Sustainability Appraisal & Sequential Test Report <p>Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any queries.</p>	Comments noted.	N/A	N/A
Sustainability Appraisal & Sequential Test Report	37	<p>Section 3 – Sustainability Appraisal & Sequential Test Report</p> <p>We welcome to amendments to the summary section to reference the natural environmental features raised as requested in our response.</p> <p>We commented on a number of objectives and for SA Objective: Adapt to the effect of climate change disagreed with the conclusion that it has both a neutral or uncertain effect. In response, it was stated that the nature of the Sustainability Appraisal means that the assessment of specific SA objectives and policies is broad, and it is considered difficult to separate where specific effects have not been accurately predicted as the assessment takes a much broader consideration, to form an overall score. We do agree that with regards to flood risk it is difficult to identify specific effects without detailed information on the specific proposal. We consider, for example the SFRA contains appropriate recommendations to ensure development is designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk where appropriate to ensure it complies with the Local Plan and NPPF.</p>	Comments noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Introduction Chapter 'Responding to a changing environment' (Paragraph 2.33 to 2.40)	43	<p>Section 1 – Environmental Issues & Opportunities</p> <p>This section will cover the following environmental issues and opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Risk • Biodiversity • Water Resources and Quality • Land Contamination • Waste Management <p>1. Flood Risk</p> <p>Introduction Chapter 'Responding to a changing environment' (Paragraph 2.33 to 2.40)</p> <p>In our Regulation 18 response, we recommended that the Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan was referenced earlier on in the Local Plan, potentially within the 'Responding to a changing environment' introduction chapter, however this recommendation has not been taken forward as part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan. Row 233 of your 'Statement of Consultation – Local Plan' (dated June 2023) provides justification for not progressing with this recommendation. We are satisfied with this reasoning and content that the TE2100 Plan is referenced elsewhere within the Local Plan.</p>	Comments noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Vision and Strategic Objectives	51	<p>Vision and Strategic Objectives Chapter - Local Plan Strategic Vision 'The best for our borough'</p> <p>We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, reducing flood risk has been incorporated into the 'Local Plan Strategic Vision – The best for our borough' as part of Section 3 Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>In relation to Nature Flood Management (NFM) techniques, the Council's response to the Environment Agency comment on the</p>	N/A	Agreed in relation to amendment to reference nature flood management techniques in the strategic objective, as set out in

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>Vision and Strategic Objectives Chapter – ‘Increasing biodiversity and the quality of our green and blue spaces, and greening the borough’ We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, a referenced to flood storage has been made within ‘Increasing biodiversity and the quality of our green and blue spaces, and greening the borough’ as part of Section 3.3 Strategic Objectives of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.</p> <p>Vision and Strategic Objectives Chapter - Improving design, delivering beautiful buildings and high-quality places We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, a reference to buildings being resilient to climate change has been made within the ‘Improving design, delivering beautiful buildings and high-quality places’ as part of Section 3.3 Strategic Objectives of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.</p> <p>Strategic Objectives Responding to the climate emergency and taking action In our comments on this policy in our Regulation 18 response we noted that the second bullet point under this strategic objective should consider using Nature Flood Management (NFM) techniques where possible, with a focus given to the protection and enhancement of rivers and river corridors, the re-naturalisation of rivers, encouraging soft-engineering approaches to riverbank protection, and the incorporation of an undeveloped buffer zone. We recommend that this bullet point is aligned with the requirements under the Water Framework Directive (WFD), and reiterate that it is the statutory duty of Local Authorities to deliver WFD objectives under the Water Environment Regulations (2017).</p>	<p>Regulation 18 Plan (comment 248) was that the strategic objectives refer to protecting and improving the environment of the borough's rivers, and it is considered that re-naturalising and improving water quality would form part of this.</p> <p>Suggested modification: To reflect requirements under the Water Framework Directive, amend the last bullet point under ‘Increasing biodiversity and the quality of our green and blue spaces, and greening the borough’: Protect and improve the unique environment of the borough's rivers, especially the River Thames and its tributaries, as wildlife corridors, as flood storage, as opportunities for recreation and river transport; where appropriate increasing access to and alongside the rivers, taking opportunities to use nature flood management techniques where appropriate, and gain wider local community benefits and habitat improvements when sites are redeveloped.</p>		the Environment Agency's Regulation 19 consultation response.
Site Allocation 2 Platts Eyot, Hampton	124	<p>Site allocation 2 – Platts Eyot We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 Consultation response, the Sequential Test Report (dated April 2023) now describes the proposed use of the site as ‘more vulnerable’ due to the potential residential use. The site allocation also notes that ‘Any scheme would need to ensure safe access to and egress from the island, to the Environment Agency's satisfaction, noting the existing restricted access and flood constraints’. We would like to highlight that the Environment Agency is not responsible for assessing safe access and egress. However, we would welcome being referenced in association with the works to determine whether the site should be designated as Flood Zone 3b, in line with Paragraph 16.66. We understand the Local Planning Authority's reasoning for not including additional references to flood risk requirements due to these aspects already being included within other policies.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Reference to the Environment Agency's satisfaction, regarding access to the site, is intended to refer to having an acceptable impact on flood defences (noting the Environment Agency's concerns raised at Regulation 18 comment 291).</p>	N/A	Agreed.
Site Allocation 17 Twickenham Riverside and Water Lane/King Street	213	We welcome that the site allocation has removed the term ‘where viable’ in relation to the flood defence improvement works.	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Place-based Strategy for Ham, Petersham & Richmond Park	235	<p>Section 2 – Site allocations Place-based strategy for Ham, Petersham & Richmond Park We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 Consultation response, the ‘Policy’ section of the Place-based strategy for Ham, Petersham & Richmond Park emphasises the need to improve the riverside environment.</p>	Support for amendments made in response to Regulation 18 consultation comments noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Place-based Strategy for Richmond & Richmond Hill	243	<p>Place-based strategy for Richmond & Richmond Hill We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 Consultation response, the ‘Policy’ section of the Place-based strategy for Richmond & Richmond Hill emphasises the need to improve the riverside environment.</p>	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Site Allocation 31 Kew Retail Park, Bessant Drive, Kew	279	<p>Site allocation 31 – Mellis Avenue, Kew [note this Site Allocation is called Kew Retail Park, Bessant Drive, Kew] We understand that the site allocations must be in line with other policies in the Local Plan and therefore that it is not necessary to reiterate these requirements within the site allocation.</p>	Noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Site Allocation 32 Kew Biothane Plant, Mellis Avenue, Kew	280	<p>Site Allocation 32 – Kew Biothane Plant, Mellis Avenue, Kew This site has been identified as a key opportunity for Water Framework Directive (WFD) improvement by way of managed realignment of the flood defence. Actions required to deliver such an improvement involve Intertidal terracing between Kew Bridge and Chiswick Bridge (left bank). Terracing achieved by setting back within the footprint of the defence and using structurally engineered design. This will provide improvement to WFD status by enhancing condition of channel/bed and/or banks/shoreline, providing benefits to biodiversity and the geomorphology of the river. We would recommend that any development at this site comes with the expectation of carrying out such an intertidal enhancement.</p>	Comments noted. The Council's response to the EA's comment on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 631) set out that any development would need to take into account the site's proximity to the River Thames and high risk of flooding, as the site constraints for flood risk are identified in the Site Allocation.	N/A	Agreed.
Place-based Strategy for Mortlake & East Sheen	291	<p>Place-based strategy for Mortlake & East Sheen We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 Consultation response, the ‘Policy’ section of the Place-based strategy for Mortlake & East Sheen emphasises the need to improve the riverside environment.</p>	Support noted.		Agreed.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
Site Allocation 35 Stag Brewery, Lower Richmond Road, Mortlake	298	Site Allocation 35 – Stag Brewery, Lower Richmond Road, Mortlake This site has been identified as a key opportunity for WFD improvement by way of managed realignment of the flood defence. Actions required to deliver such an improvement involve set back of the flood defence and replace stone/concrete slope with bioengineered design at grid reference TQ2066776024. This will provide improvement to WFD status by re-naturalising the modified bank, providing benefits to biodiversity and the geomorphology of the river. We would recommend that any development at this site comes with the expectation of carrying out such an intertidal enhancement. We understand the Local Planning Authority's reasoning for not including additional references to flood risk requirements due to these aspects already being included within other policies.	Comments noted. The Council's response to the EA's comment on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 657) set out that the site constraints for flood risk are identified in the Site Allocation and flood risk matters are covered in Policy 8, therefore an application would be expected to address requirements.	N/A	Agreed.
Site Allocation 38 Barnes Hospital, East Sheen	303	Site allocation 37 – Barnes Hospital, Mortlake and East Sheen: [now Site Allocation 38] We welcome that reference to our intention to update the flood risk modelling has been noted as part of this site allocation.	Comment noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Place-based Strategy for Barnes	305	Place-based strategy for Barnes We welcome that this place-based strategy has been updated in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response to ensure that any works to the terrace are in accordance with other flood risk and biodiversity policies.	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 3 Tackling the Climate Emergency (Strategic Policy)	314	We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, a reference to flood storage as well as flood risk has been incorporated into Part B of Policy 3 'Tackling the climate emergency' (Strategic Policy).	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 3 Tackling the Climate Emergency (Strategic Policy)	315	As mentioned in our Regulation 18 response [See the Council's Statement of Consultation (June 2023) Appendix 3G for the schedule of Regulation 18 responses and officer comments – comment 686 in relation to Policy 3], we feel that the intrinsic link between the climate emergency and biodiversity crises should be further emphasised within this policy. Climate change is one of the main drivers for biodiversity loss, and the destruction of ecosystems undermines nature's ability to regulate greenhouse gases, however, biodiversity is only mentioned once within this policy. Again, we recommend that the link between biodiversity and the climate crisis is expanded within the policy and is linked to the net gain policy set out in Policy 39: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.	Comment noted. The Council's response to the EA's comments on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 686) was this is covered in the Plan as a whole. The existing reference in Policy 3 along with Section 21, particularly paragraphs 21.6 and 21.7, and Policy 39 Biodiversity and Geodiversity is considered sufficient in conveying the link between climate change and biodiversity. Richmond Council have declared a climate emergency and intend to address the effects of climate change through a variety of methods.	N/A	On-going in relation to links between climate change and biodiversity. The Environment Agency acknowledge the wider coverage in the plan but would be open to discussing the scope to add further emphasis within the policy wording of the climate emergency and biodiversity crises.
Policy 7 Waste and the Circular Economy (Strategic Policy)	331	In our Regulation 18 response, we requested that the policy included the requirement for a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) for all development using the river to transport construction materials and waste to demonstrate how the river will be protected. We recommend that this requirement is stated within the policy, as the protection of the river ecosystem is of paramount importance.	A Construction Environment Management Plan is listed as a requirement in Policy 7 A.4.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 8 Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage (Strategic Policy)	337	Policy 8 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage (Strategic Policy) Part A We welcome that Part A of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) has been updated to clarify the role of policy and guidance and that it now incorporates a reference to the sequential approach. However, in our Regulation 18 consultation response, we recommended that the term 'minimise' be removed from Part A of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy). Row 715 of your 'Statement of Consultation – Local Plan' (dated June 2023) does not provide clear reasoning for not following our recommendation. We advise that the term 'minimise' is removed in the final draft of the Local Plan. Part B We welcome that you have taken some steps to update Part B of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response, such as by referencing the Environment Agency as well as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). However, we believe that it is still unclear that fluvial and tidal flood risk as well as surface water flood risk must be mitigated for. At present it states that applicants must address the 'predicted 1 in 100 year Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapped depths as a minimum'. These mapped depths are not relevant for assessing and addressing fluvial and tidal flood risk. Therefore, it appears to show that only surface water flooding must be considered and addressed. Whilst the supporting paragraphs (paragraphs 16.69 and 16.70) and the SFRA highlight the specific requirements for addressing fluvial and tidal flood risk, in terms of finished floor levels and compensation, we need the policy itself to make it clear that these are required by developments too. Otherwise, developers may believe this is simply guidance and not a mandatory policy requirement. Therefore, should the tidal and fluvial mapped depths be mentioned here as well as the surface water one? Or, should the surface water depths not be mentioned here, and only be mentioned in the supporting text like the tidal and fluvial ones at present? Additionally, should the surface water aspects be moved to Part H	Support noted. An Additional Modification could be considered to remove the term 'minimise'. Additional Modifications relating to Part B, D and E of Policy 8 could be considered, in discussion with the LLFA. The Council note the updated Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. An Additional Modification could be considered to update Part J accordingly, to future-proof the Plan such as with reference to the latest version. The Council continues to commit to Joint Working but do not consider a reference to this is needed within the Local Plan. An Additional Modification could be considered to add to paragraph 16.80 reference to the Riverside Strategy Approach set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. An Additional Modification could be considered to amend Part L to remove 'central' and add 'appropriate'. Suggested modifications: Part A - Remove the term minimise:	N/A	Agreed in relation to removal of reference to minimise in Part A, as set out in the Environment Agency's Regulation 19 consultation response. Agreed the following modification in relation to Part B. The Environment Agency, The Council and LLFA suggest the following modification: B. To enable development, proposals must provide mitigation and resilience against flood risk as set out in the Council's SFRA, including but not limited to adequately raising finished floor levels, providing flood storage compensation and alleviation, and provide appropriate compensation to existing flood risk levels and volumes, addressing the predicted 1 in 100 year Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapped depths as a minimum. Advice should be sought from the Lead Local Flood

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>'Sustainable Drainage' to be collated all together, or is it purposefully separated into different parts of the policy?</p> <p>Is the 'mitigation and resilience against flood risk' mentioned in this section only in relation to 'compensation' that is mentioned, or are you wishing to address raising finished floor levels within this part of the policy too?</p> <p>We strongly recommend that the policy is updated to clearly demonstrate that fluvial, tidal and surface water mitigation is required, and what mitigation you are recommending. We would welcome discussing the revised wording with you, and Part B could be updated as follows:</p> <p>"B. To enable development, proposals must provide mitigation and resilience against flood risk as set out in the Council's SFRA, including adequately raising finished floor levels, providing flood storage compensation and alleviation. Advice should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and/or the Environment Agency as appropriate".</p> <p>Without clarification made to the wording of Part B of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) we would find it unsound due to it being unclear at what it is seeking to achieve and therefore it would not be effective.</p> <p>Part C</p> <p>Part C deals with safe access/egress and Emergency Planning which is not within the Environment Agency's remit and therefore we have no comments.</p> <p>Part D</p> <p>In accordance with our Regulation 18 consultation response, we welcome that Part D has been updated to incorporate fluvial and undefended tidal flood risk as well as just surface water flood risk. We also welcome that it has been updated to reflect that the compensation requirements are not our requirements, but the requirements of policy.</p> <p>However, the first section of Part D references 'fluvial and surface water flooding' and the second part references 'fluvial and undefended tidal flood storage compensation'. The policy should be requesting additional storage for all three sources of flooding, so it is unclear why only certain types are referenced in different parts of the policy. Additionally, whilst the policy mentions fluvial, undefended tidal and surface water flooding, it only references 'on-site attenuation measures' which are a way of alleviating surface water flooding, not fluvial or undefended tidal flooding. Paragraph 049 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG makes it clear that level-for-level compensatory storage is required for fluvial and tidal flooding. Therefore, we recommend that the wording is updated to reflect all three sources of flooding and to clarify all appropriate methods of compensation.</p> <p>Furthermore, in our Regulation 18 response we discussed the wording 'where feasible'. Whilst we recognised that this is not very strong wording, we noted that it is challenging for developers to provide the minimum required flood storage compensation, let alone go above and beyond this, and therefore the use of 'where feasible' whilst not strong was useful to support discussions with developers to increase flood storage on site. It could be useful to add the requirement for developers to submit evidence to support the assessment of feasibility of providing additional storage on site.</p> <p>We would welcome discussing the revised wording with you, and Part D could be updated as follows:</p> <p>"D. Where a Flood Risk Assessment is required, appropriate measures to alleviate fluvial, undefended tidal and surface water flooding should be provided over and above the minimum flood storage compensation and on-site attenuation requirements, where feasible and justified by evidence".</p> <p>Without clarification made to the wording of Part D of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) we would find it unsound due to a lack of clarity of what additional flood storage/attenuation and for what sources of flood risk is being sought and so is likely to not be effective. Also, it is in conflict with Paragraph 049 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG.</p> <p>Part E</p> <p>Once the wording for Part D is updated to provide clarity on what it is trying to achieve, it is unclear what Part E would deliver above this. This is because it appears that both Parts D and E are trying to secure additional flood storage and attenuation on-site. It is unclear what additional aspects Part E is aiming to secure above Part D.</p> <p>Please clarify the intent of Part E of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy)</p> <p>Part I & J – Flood defences</p> <p>We welcome that Part I 3 of Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) and the supporting text has been strengthened as recommended in our Regulation 18 consultation response. This includes clarifying the specific set back distances required, that the set back distance required on site may be greater than these distances, and removing 'where possible' in favour of requesting evidence to justify the set back proposed. Additionally, we welcome that our Flood Risk Activity Permits and the Metropolis Management Act have been referenced in the supporting text, paragraph 16.83 and 16.81 respectively.</p>	<p>All developments will need to be made safe for their lifetime and clearly demonstrate that they avoid, minimise or reduce contributing to all sources of flooding, including fluvial, tidal, surface water, groundwater and flooding from sewers; taking account of climate change and that they do not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p><i>There are no further proposed modifications from the Council at this stage relating to Part B, D and E of Policy 8 could be considered, as the Council is keen to seek suggestions to add to this SoCG from the EA and agree in discussion with the LLFA where relevant to surface water flooding.</i></p> <p>Part J – amend as follows to reference the latest TE2100 Plan and future-proof against future updates:</p> <p>In addition, in line with the requirements of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, developments adjoining the River Thames must maintain and where necessary enhance or raise or demonstrate how they could be raised in the future flood defences to the 2065 statutory level as set out in the TE2100 Plan or latest version (or show how they could be raised in the future), demonstrating that they will continue to provide adequate flood protection for the lifetime of the development.</p> <p>Paragraph 16.80 – amend as follows to reference the Riverside Strategy Approach set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan:</p> <p>Natural flood management methods, such as those included in the Thames Landscape Strategy's 'Rewilding Arcadia' project, should be employed in development proposals due to their multiple benefits including increasing flood storage and creating leisure areas and habitat. There is the potential to achieve significant improvements when undertaking flood defence work, including improved public spaces, access to the river and the Thames Path, and the creation of new habitats. Development should where possible seek to implement those measures set out in Policy 40 Rivers and Corridors when mitigating flood risk, in line with the Riverside Strategy Approach set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan.</p> <p>Part L – amend as follows to remove 'central' and add 'appropriate' in reference to the climate change scenarios:</p> <p>Submitted FRAs should utilise the central appropriate climate change scenarios when implementing the climate change allowances for surface water and fluvial flood risk. Assessments of tidal flood risk should use the current TE2100 crest levels guidance and breach modelling to account for worst-case scenarios.</p>		<p>Authority (LLFA) and/or the Environment Agency as appropriate.</p> <p>As a consequence of the above changes to part B, agree to add the following details to supporting text after paragraph 16.69:</p> <p>in relation to surface water flooding in line with the current SFRA, proposals must provide mitigation and resilience against flood risk (taking advice from the LLFA as appropriate) and provide appropriate compensation to existing flood risk levels and volumes (addressing the predicted 1 in 100 year RoFSW mapped depths as a minimum), supported by detailed flood risk modelling if appropriate.</p> <p>Agree the following modifications to Part D. The Environment Agency, The Council and LLFA suggest the following modification:</p> <p>Where a Flood Risk Assessment is required, appropriate on-site attenuation measures to alleviate both fluvial, undefended tidal and surface water flooding should be provided over and above the minimum fluvial and undefended tidal flood storage compensation and on-site attenuation requirements, where feasible and justified by evidence.</p> <p>As a consequence of the above changes to part D, agree to add the following to supporting text after paragraph 16.70:</p> <p>A FRA should contain the evidence for the preferred method of mitigation, including any alternatives it was not possible to provide and detail how any associated risks from the chosen form of mitigation can be minimised.</p> <p>Agree that Part E has a role in safeguarding land for future flood risk.</p> <p>Agreed in relation to reference to the latest Thames Estuary 2100</p>

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>We also welcome that Part I 4 of Policy 8 – ‘Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage’ (Strategic Policy) has been strengthened as recommended in our Regulation 18 consultation response, by including reference to not permitting new, and replacing existing, active flood defences with passive flood defences.</p> <p>Updated Thames Estuary 2100 Plan (Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) - GOV.UK) – since the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation, an updated version of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan has been published. Some of the major changes since the last plan have been summarised in our ‘Major updates to the Thames Estuary 2100 from 2012 to 2023’ guidance ((Major updates to Thames Estuary 2100 from 2012 to 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)). This includes bringing the first milestone for raising defences forward, from 2065 now to 2050.</p> <p>Part J of Policy 8 – ‘Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage’ (Strategic Policy) states that ‘In addition, in line with the requirements of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, developments adjoining the River Thames must maintain and where necessary enhance or raise flood defences to the 2065 statutory level as set out in the TE2100 Plan (or show how they could be raised in the future), demonstrating that they will continue to provide adequate flood protection for the lifetime of the development’. Therefore, the date referenced is no longer correct. Additionally, for most developments they must consider the 2050 (previously 2065) and 2100 epochs. The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan will be updated regularly throughout the Local Plan’s lifetime, so for longevity of the policy, we recommend the policy is returned back to not referencing specific epochs, but recommends that development is in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan recommendations.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that Part J is updated as follows: ‘In addition, in line with the requirements of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, developments adjoining the River Thames must maintain and where necessary enhance or raise (or demonstrate how they could be raised in the future) flood defences to the statutory level as set out in the TE2100 Plan, demonstrating that they will continue to provide adequate flood protection for the lifetime of the development’.</p> <p>This could potentially make the Local Plan unsound as it is not in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. Thames Barrier & fluvial flood risk – The Environment Agency closes the barrier to prevent storm tides travelling up the river, and to help manage extreme fluvial flooding. We need to reduce the use of the Thames Barrier to manage fluvial flooding in this area to ensure it can safely manage tidal risk. Further information can be found in the updated plan: Richmond Policy Unit: Thames Estuary 2100 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Within the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan (Outcome 4: What needs to be done across the estuary (outcomes): Thames Estuary 2100 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)), the Environment Agency has made the following commitment: ‘Between now and 2035, the Environment Agency will work with west London communities who are protected by Thames Barrier closures during fluvial floods. Together we will put alternative flood risk management arrangements in place by 2035. From this date we will not use the Thames Barrier to manage smaller fluvial floods. This will reduce the number of closures and prolong its lifespan until an end-of-century option is in place.’</p> <p>We would welcome a reciprocal commitment from the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames to work with the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Riverside Strategy Approach In our Regulation 18 consultation response, we recommended that the Local Plan referenced a Riverside Strategy approach to the redevelopment of riverside areas, to recognise the multiple benefits that can be achieved through flood defence works. Row 724 of your ‘Statement of Consultation – Local Plan’ (dated June 2023) states ‘comments noted’. We cannot find any reference to a Riverside Strategy in the updated plan. Whilst this does not affect the soundness of the plan, it would have been useful to have greater understanding of your reasons for not including this within the plan.</p> <p>Row 752 of your ‘Statement of Consultation – Local Plan’ (dated June 2023) states that paragraph 16.75 of the Local Plan has been updated to reference the multiple benefits flood defence works can bring. However, we cannot locate this wording within the Regulation 19 Local Plan. We recommend this is rectified in line with the Statement of Consultation.</p> <p>Whilst these recommendations have not yet been actioned, this would not affect the soundness of the plan, but they would strengthen the policies.</p> <p>Part K As noted in our Regulation 18 consultation response, we welcome that the policy is stronger than our own stance, that we hold consistently across the tidal Thames, on basements in tidal flood zones. We welcome that the table formatting errors have been corrected. We also welcome the addition of information regarding basements and flood defences within the table.</p> <p>Part L – Climate change allowances Our Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation response noted that whilst it was commendable to require developments to consider a higher climate change allowance than required through the gov.uk guidance ((Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)), it may be difficult to achieve</p>			<p>Plan in Part J and paragraph 16.80.</p> <p>Agreed in relation to reference the appropriate climate change scenarios in Part L.</p> <p>On-going in relation to any further joint working references.</p>

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>in practice. We therefore welcome that you have removed the requirement for all developments to utilise the upper end allowance.</p> <p>However, Part L of Policy 8 – ‘Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage’ (Strategic Policy) now states that ‘Submitted FRAs should utilise the ‘central’ climate change scenarios when implementing the climate change allowances for surface water and fluvial flood risk’. This is contrary to the gov.uk climate change guidance, as depending on the flood zone and the vulnerability classification, developments should utilise different climate change allowances. For example, a more vulnerable/less vulnerable/water compatible development in flood zone 3a should utilise the central allowance, but essential infrastructure development in flood zone 3a (or flood zone 3b) should utilise the higher central allowance. There is also additional information within the guidance on the climate change allowances that should be utilised for different scenarios. At present, Part L of the policy suggests that an essential infrastructure development in Flood Zone 3 only needs to consider the central allowance, which is contrary and more lenient than the national guidance.</p> <p>Therefore, Part L of Policy 8 – ‘Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage’ (Strategic Policy) should be updated to reflect the gov.uk climate change allowances guidance. If this is not updated, we would consider the policy unsound as it is contrary to national guidance.</p>			
Policy 8 Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage (Strategic Policy)	338	<p>As recommended in our Regulation 18 response [See the Council's Statement of Consultation (June 2023) Appendix 3G for the schedule of Regulation 18 responses and officer comments – comment 730 in relation to Policy 8], where feasible, SuDS should incorporate above ground features that are designed to maximise their ecological and aesthetic value and improve water quality. Any outfalls should be via open flow routes that have minimal impact on the receiving watercourse. We recommend that the policy is updated to reflect these additional requirements.</p> <p>Riverbanks</p> <p>The requirement for a 16-metre buffer zone from a tidal flood defence and 8 metres for other main rivers should acknowledge the multiple benefits of undeveloped river buffer zones, including the benefits for biodiversity and efforts to achieve objectives under the WFD.</p> <p>As suggested in our Regulation 18 response, there should be an emphasis on working with natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. Examples include using soft engineering approaches to bank protection works on the River Thames wherever possible, which would provide multiple benefits for flood alleviation, biodiversity and helping watercourses achieve good ecological potential under the requirements of the WFD.</p> <p>We acknowledge that this ethos is referenced within the supporting text in paragraph 16.81 stating ‘The Council encourages the return of currently engineered riverbanks to a more natural state where this is possible’, however, we strongly recommend this is moved into the main policy box of Policy 8 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage (Strategic Policy) or Policy 40 – Rivers and River Corridors. Not only should the local plan encourage the return of engineered riverbanks to a more natural state, but it should also be opposed to new proposals to engineered riverbanks in order to make the policy more effective.</p> <p>We have previously suggested wording to make this policy more effective: “Engineered river channels are one of the most severe examples of the destruction of ecologically valuable habitat. Proposals for hard engineering approaches to riverbank protection, such as sheet piling, will be discouraged. Soft engineering approaches should be used wherever possible.”</p> <p>In paragraph 16.74, more emphasis is needed on green alternatives for porous surfaces, including but not limited to grass, (native) trees, living walls, living/biodiverse green roofs etc. These not only provide excellent interception and reduced discharge rates but help to filter pollutants from entering the watercourse. This subsequently has an advantageous impact on Policy 9 – Water Resources and Infrastructure (Strategic Policy).</p> <p>We are pleased to see references to natural flood management within the evidence base within paragraph 16.80 and the requirement for development to be set back within paragraph 16.83.</p>	<p>Comments relating to outfalls are being considered by the LLFA. An additional modification could be considered to reference outfalls.</p> <p>The Council do not consider specific reference to working with natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding is necessary as it is covered elsewhere in the Plan, including at paragraph 21.4.</p> <p>An Additional Modification could be considered relating to the need for green alternatives for porous surfaces, in discussion with the LLFA.</p> <p>Support noted.</p> <p>Suggested modifications: <i>There are no further proposed modifications from the Council at this stage relating to reference outfalls and green alternatives for porous surfaces, as the Council is keen to seek suggestions to add to this SoCG from the EA and agree in discussion with the LLFA where relevant to surface water flooding.</i></p>	N/A	<p>On-going in relation to further references to working with natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding.</p> <p>The Environment Agency’s position is that they acknowledge this is covered elsewhere in the Plan but are open to discussing opportunities to add further emphasis within the policy working or supporting notes.</p> <p>The LLFA has put forward the following amends, which are agreed by the Environment Agency and the Council: For clarity, amend the drainage hierarchy in paragraph 16.74 to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Store rainwater for later use as a resource (for example rainwater harvesting, blue roofs for irrigation) 2. Use infiltration techniques, such as porous surfaces in non-clay areas rainwater infiltration to ground at or close to source <p>In addition, the LLFA/Council have suggested the following amendment to 16.72: In line with Policy SI13 Part E: Drainage should be designed and implemented in ways that promote multiple benefits including increased water use efficiency, improved water quality, and enhanced biodiversity, urban greening, amenity and recreation.</p>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	In addition, the LLFA/Council have suggested clarification is necessary to Part H. The run off

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
					<p>rate is one of the most important factors in terms of flood risk.</p> <p>H. The Council requires the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all development proposals to manage surface water runoff as close to its source as possible, using the most sustainable solutions to reduce runoff volumes and rates. Ideally, all surface water should be managed on site. The development must not increase flood risk elsewhere and where possible reduce flood risk overall. Applicants will have to demonstrate that their proposal complies with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A reduction in surface water discharge to greenfield run-off rates wherever feasible. 2. where greenfield run-off rates are not feasible, this will need to be demonstrated by the applicant, and in such instances, the minimum requirement is to achieve at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- a runoff rate of 2 l/s or below, or b- a <u>Where this is not possible and justification is provided, applicants should detail how at least 50% attenuation of the site's surface water runoff at peak times based on the levels existing prior to the development, will be achieved.</u> <p>The following change is also proposed to 16.76 for clarity: The Council's SFRA identified reducing the rate of discharge from development sites to greenfield runoff rates as one of the most effective ways of reducing and managing flood risk within the borough. Greenfield run-off is the surface water drainage regime from a site prior to development. To maintain the natural equilibrium of a site, the surface water discharge from a developed site should not exceed the natural greenfield run-off rate. Where greenfield run-off rates are not technically feasible, applicants will be expected to clearly demonstrate how all opportunities to minimise final</p>

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
					site runoff, as close to greenfield rate as practical, have been taken. In such instances, the minimum requirement is to achieve at least a runoff rate of 2 l/s or below. Where this is not possible and justification is provided, applicants should detail how at least, or a 50% attenuation of the site's surface water runoff at peak times, based on the site's performance prior to development, will be achieved.
Table 16.4	339	Table 16.3 [now 16.4] Flood Zones, Restrictions and Requirements We welcome that our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation of clarifying the term 'no intensification of land use' has been incorporated into the Flood Zone 3b section of Table 16.4 Flood Zones, Restrictions and Requirements and the supporting text in Paragraph 16.65.	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Paragraph 16.80	340	Additional comments – multiple benefits and interconnected issues We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, that paragraph 16.80 supporting text to Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy) includes a reference to Policy 40 – 'Rivers and Corridors'	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Paragraph 16.83	341	Additional comments – Flood Risk Activity Permit requirement We welcome that, in line with our Regulation 18 consultation response recommendation, a reference to our Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) requirements has been included within section 16.83 of the supportive text to Policy 8 – 'Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage' (Strategic Policy).	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 9 Water Resources and Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)	344	Policy 9 – Water Resources and Infrastructure (Strategic Policy) We recommend that advice on how the WFD Waterbodies within the borough can achieve good ecological status/potential, via methods such as river restoration projects and soft engineering approaches to bank protection. In order to make this policy more effective, we recommend that the protection of the boroughs rivers and watercourses is expanded to include further details on bank protection. The use of hard engineering techniques is a specific local issue that we commonly see when responding to planning applications in the borough. We are pleased that there is now a requirement for a construction management plan under point C (4) to reduce contamination of surface or ground water, however, this policy would be more effective if this was expanded to include main rivers and watercourses. 3. Water resources and quality Water resources are critical to sustainable economic growth and housing development as well as supporting the natural environment. Increasing population and a changing climate will have an impact on water resources in the future. The local plan can help to ensure that water resources are protected and, where evidence justifies, that water efficiency measures are adopted as part of regeneration and development. We highlighted in our Regulation 19 response that the Local Plan should recognise that The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has been classified as an area of serious water stress and that there is limited water resource availability, along with demand and supply issues as set out in Water Companies Water Resource Management Plans (WRMP's). We highlighted in our response that we do not see any mention of this classification within the Local Plan. However, we acknowledge that within the supporting text to Policy 6 in paragraph 16.39, states that the Thames Water region has been designated to be 'seriously' water stressed which we welcome. We note and welcome our comments regarding water infrastructure to support growth has been address as part of the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	An Additional Modification could be considered with regards to WFD waterbodies achieving good/potential. Support noted. The Council want to keep the requirement proportionate. The Council considers the policy enables an assessment of the impacts of contamination of surface or ground water and will be an effective tool in the Development Management process. Support noted. Suggested modifications: <i>There is no further proposed modification from the Council at this stage relating to reference WFD waterbodies achieving good/potential, as the Council is keen to seek suggestions to add to this SoCG from the EA.</i>	N/A	On-going discussion to agree modifications relating to WFD waterbodies achieving good/potential. On-going in relation to references to the impact of contamination of surface or ground water. Agreed that further signposting could be included to state that Richmond is a water stressed area. The Environment Agency and the Council suggest the following modification to 16.92: Population increase, coupled with the designation of the Thames Water region as an area of 'seriously water stressed' , means extra demand for water...
Increasing biodiversity and the quality of our green and blue spaces, and greening the borough	453	2. Biodiversity The importance of ecological networks, of linked habitat corridors (both within the Borough and linking to adjacent Boroughs) to allow the movement of species between suitable habitats, and to promote the expansion of biodiversity is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy commitment of the government's 25-year Environment Plan and enacted by the Environment Act 2021. The connectivity of Local Wildlife Sites and other designated sites should not be disrupted through the allocation of sites for development and should aim to promote further connectivity of the ecological blue	Comments noted. These are the EA's general biodiversity comments and noted that recommendations are not raising issues of soundness. The Plan as a whole is considered to take a comprehensive approach to the blue and green infrastructure network to enhance biodiversity, in Policy 34 and elsewhere, promoting connectivity. See response to comment 488 regarding the river metric.	Paper on Biodiversity Net Gain, especially the section 'Rationale for seeking a mandatory biodiversity net gain of 20%' for the Council's approach to biodiversity in the borough and the	See comment 488 regarding the river metric. On-going in relation to broader references to biodiversity.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>and green network through habitat creation and improvement. A numerical commitment to biodiversity net gain is required in order to be in line with the Environment Act 2021 and should be realised equally in both terrestrial and aquatic habitats using the Natural England Biodiversity and Rivers Metrics. Development sites should not encroach on any watercourse and we urge a minimum 16m buffer zone to development proposals that contain or are adjacent to the Thames and explore opportunities for river restoration enhancements and biodiversity net gain through planning. The reparation or replacement of existing flood defences and/or creation of setback flood defences, every opportunity for ecological betterment should be a requirement rather than an aspiration of new development. Ecological terracing to provide fish refuge and wading bird forage should be at the forefront of considerations. Improved fish/eel refuge should again be prioritised with new pontoons or structures within the watercourse. We would wish to see a policy commitment to actively pursue these aims.</p> <p>Where the watercourse is toe-boarded or engineered, policies should consider opportunities for removal and restoration to a more natural state.</p> <p>With reference to Paragraph 185 of the NPPF it which states that planning policies and decisions should 'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on ... dark landscapes and nature conservation.' We would urge appropriate lighting design in line with best practice guidance set out by the Bat Conservation Trust.</p> <p>As an informative point, policies should take into consideration the use of SuDS and Natural Flood Management measures for flow attenuation, filtration, and water conservation.</p> <p>We have provided comments on several policy units relating to biodiversity. Whilst the following recommendations for each policy do not affect the soundness of the plan, they could strengthen each respective policy and the overall the Local Plan.</p>	<p>The references to buffer zones in Policies 8 and 40 are considered sufficient. These along with Policy 39 are considered to provide an appropriate policy framework. Paragraph 21.90 in the Plan refers to fish movement and is considered sufficient detail for the Plan.</p> <p>Reference to dark environments is at paragraphs 21.68, 21.69 and 21.115 which along with Policy 43 provides a framework to assess the impact of lighting. See also response to comment 501.</p> <p>Requirements for SuDs are set out in Policy 8.</p> <p>A new Biodiversity SPD is anticipated once the Local Plan has been adopted, which can further explore details for aquatic habitats such as those raised in this comment.</p> <p>A draft of the Biodiversity Net Gain Background Topic Paper was shared with the EA on 28 November 2023.</p>	<p>section 'The existing approach to Biodiversity Net Gain' which states that the Council do already consider lighting impacts from development on the local environment and ecology. The section on Implementation sets out that the Biodiversity SPD can provide further guidance on delivery on a range of sites.</p>	
Policy 34 Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)	454	We are pleased to see that our comments from our Regulation 18 response have been incorporated into this policy.	Support noted.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 35 Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Local Green Space	467	We recommend that the use of greener approaches to communal spaces are employed. We have seen with previous applications in Richmond that development has favoured large areas of impermeable hardstanding with a lack of greening of the river edge. There needs to be a paradigm shift in approach here as the use of greener approaches to communal open space not only address policy 9 and 10 but ensures less carbon impact through construction.	Noted. The Plan as a whole supports green and blue infrastructure and urban greening.	N/A	Agreed.
Policy 39 Biodiversity and Geodiversity	488	<p>We are pleased to see that our previous comments on the Regulation 18 consultation have been taken onboard with the inclusion of mitigation hierarchy included within the wording of this policy. The requirement for adequate and sufficiently robust information to be submitted alongside planning applications is a welcome addition to this policy.</p> <p>We are also pleased that you have taken on our comments in our Regulation 18 response in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and have specified the use of the DEFRA metric. We note that you have not specified when the use of the river metric is required; while we understand that it may not be possible to outline the detailed BNG requirements, there seems to be a lot of confusion by developers and planning applicants about when the river element of the metric is needed and is largely ignored. It would be useful to include a short paragraph in the supporting text of Policy 40 – Rivers and Corridors that highlights the river element of the BNG metric will need to be submitted where the BNG guidance advises this is necessary to ensure that the local plan's policies are robust and effective.</p>	<p>An Additional Modification could be considered to add a paragraph after the supporting text at paragraph 21.92 of Policy 40.</p> <p>Suggested modification: To add a paragraph after the supporting text at 21.92 to read "The river element of the BNG metric 4.0 (or any superseding version), set out in Policy 39 and the supporting text, will need to be submitted where the BNG guidance advises this is necessary in order to provide increased watercourse connectivity and associated habitat improvements."</p> <p>A draft of the Biodiversity Net Gain Background Topic Paper was shared with the EA on 28 November 2023.</p>	Biodiversity Net Gain Paper (see details on comment 453)	Agreed in relation to reference to river element of the BNG metric.
Policy 40 Rivers and River Corridors	495	<p>Riverside Strategy Approach</p> <p>We welcome that Part A of Policy 40 – Rivers and River Corridors has been updated to reflect how flood risk works can also benefit the biodiversity of the river corridor.</p> <p>Policy 40 – Rivers and River Corridors</p> <p>There is an 8 metre buffer zone policy in paragraph 21.89. We are pleased to see that this includes culverted watercourses, however, this is an important policy, and we would strongly recommend that this is moved into the Rivers and River Corridors policy box (not just in the supporting text). We note that it is in the main policy box of the Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Policy but not the Rivers one. We are pleased to see that this buffer policy also includes culverted watercourses.</p> <p>We would also strongly recommend that in conjunction with this buffer zone policy, the council requires a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan detailing how this buffer will be protected and enhanced in the long-term. This is in line with our previous Regulation 18 comments.</p> <p>We welcome the specification of the interrelated nature of Policy 8 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage (Strategic Policy) & Policy 40 – Rivers and River Corridors within paragraph 21.89.</p> <p>We are pleased to see that Part A of this policy has been expanded to include better access to rivers, the creation of new habitats, and improvements to flood defences and storage. As per our comments to the</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>The Council considers the reference to setback at paragraph 21.89 and to culverted watercourses at 21.69 is adequate and is covered sufficiently, when read in conjunction with Policy 8.</p> <p>Note the comment concerning Landscape and Ecological Management Plans, however, consider adding this requirement is unnecessary as this would be picked up within a Landscape Scheme required elsewhere in the Plan.</p> <p>The Council note the comments on adding in references to good ecological status/potential. Details are set out in Policy 9 on water quality with details at paragraph 16.95. Note the suggested amendments proposed and an additional modification could be</p>	N/A	<p>On-going discussion to agree a modification in relation to referencing good ecological status/potential.</p> <p>On-going discussion to agree a modification in relation to referencing the Biodiversity SPD and exploring details for aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Agreed in relation to water quality to ensure that development meets the objectives of the Water</p>

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
		<p>Regulation 18 consultation, this policy should acknowledge the need to bring all waterbodies in the borough into good ecological status/potential in line with WFD requirements.</p> <p>While we welcome the inclusion of River Thames specific policy wording, other waterbodies should be referenced and included within the policy. The WFD is an important aspect that should be mentioned within the policy as it's a key piece of legislation that we will assess developments against. This policy should be specific about the nature of the development adjacent to rivers with stronger wording to support this in order to ensure that development meets the objectives of the WFD.</p> <p>We suggest that this policy is updated with the following suggested wording: "Development on sites that contain a watercourse or are situated next to a watercourse will comply with the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated for not doing so, development should be set back 16m from the landward side of Thames Tidal flood defences, and 8m from the top bank of all other main rivers (including fluvial sections of the Thames). • Development proposals that include culverting and hard bank protection, including sheet piling, will not be permitted. • Buffer zones should be planted with locally native species of UK genetic provenance and free from any formal landscaping, including gardens. • To reduce light spill into the river corridor outside the buffer zone, all artificial lighting should be directional and focused with cowlings, in line with guidance for the reduction of intrusive light produced by the Institute of Lighting Professionals. • Where watercourses have been historically modified adjacent to or within development sites, the watercourse should be restored to a natural state. This includes the de-culverting of watercourses, re-naturalisation of riverbanks and restoring the natural width/depth of a watercourse where it has been degraded. • Where barriers to fish movement (e.g., weirs) are present in a watercourse adjacent to or within a development, the design should include the removal of that barrier, or where not feasible, measures to allow for the natural movement of fish within the watercourse. • A management plan for the undeveloped buffer zone should be produced to ensure biodiversity is maintained. Where invasive species are present, these should be included to ensure they are not spread as a result of the development." <p>As previously highlighted, the DEFRA Biodiversity Net Gain Metric will assess land within 10m of the river as part of the river habitat. Including the requirement for a 10m buffer will aid developers in achieving a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Public access (D) should not impinge upon or preclude the future greening of a buffer zone between new development and the river wall. Ideally walkways and footpaths should respect this buffer zone and be set back from the top of bank to allow for a naturalised buffer between the river and the engineered environment. Our starting point for new development on tidal rivers is a 16m buffer.</p> <p>We are pleased to see that in paragraph 21.96 they state they will support initiatives to de-culvert rivers where it is feasible and practicable to do so. We would also strongly recommend that they add that they are opposed to culverting watercourses as well because of the adverse ecological, flood risk, human safety and aesthetic impacts. This was also requested previously.</p> <p>We are also pleased to see that you have taken on board our comments in relation to fish passage in paragraph 21.90.</p> 	<p>considered during the Examination, although seek further clarity on where this amendment is suggested.</p> <p>Note comments seeking a link to BNG. Although this requirement is covered in Policy 39, and paragraph 21.78 also mentions the potential for a BNG SPD, which would be able to cover this in more detail, an Additional Modification to cross-reference could be considered. See response to comment 488.</p> <p>Support noted.</p> <p>Suggested modifications: Add reference to water quality to ensure that development meets the objectives of the Water Framework Directive: <u>The Council expects development adjacent to rivers to contribute to improvement in water quality where relevant in accordance with Policy 9 Part C.</u></p> <p><i>The Council is keen to seek suggestions from the EA regarding these details and where in policy or supporting text, to add to this SoCG.</i></p> <p><i>There is no further proposed modification from the Council at this stage to cross-reference to the BNG SPD, which can further explore details for aquatic habitats, in the supporting text to Policy 40 (the anticipated SPD is referenced in the Plan at paragraph 21.78). The Council is willing to consider suggestions to add to this SoCG from the EA.</i></p>		<p>Framework Directive, as required by Policy 42.</p> <p>The Council and EA have had further discussion and identified that the issue of encouraging soft engineering to riverbank protection arises in the consideration of applications within the Borough.</p> <p>Agreed in relation to the following change to add at the end of para 21.89: <u>The Council encourages soft-engineering approaches to riverbank protection and the incorporation of an undeveloped buffer zone, where development can contribute to the natural state of the river environment that accords with Policy 39 Biodiversity and Geodiversity.</u></p>
Policy 41 Moorings and Floating Structures	497	<p>In our Regulation 18 response, we recommended that the wording in Policy 41 – 'Moorings and floating structures' should be strengthened, however this recommendation has not been taken forward as part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan. Row 997 of your 'Statement of Consultation – Local Plan' (dated June 2023) provides justification for not progressing with this recommendation. We are satisfied with this reasoning and content with the proposed wording for this policy.</p> <p>Any new moorings or floating structures that could bottom out on a falling tide and preclude intertidal mudflat habitat should as a requirement incorporate a timber or metal grid structure to ensure mudflat is preserved and future maintenance to reinstate the bed is not required.</p>	<p>Comment noted regarding Council's response to Regulation 18 consultation (comment 997) regarding resisting new houseboats including extensions to existing houseboats.</p> <p>The Council considers that the policy provides the framework to protect the river and its biodiversity, against which proposals can then be assessed through individual planning applications.</p>	N/A	<p>On-going in relation to whether need further details about mudflat habitat.</p> <p>The Environment Agency's position is that Part C.2 ensures biodiversity of the river is protected. If there are no opportunities to add further details, then policy 41 still addresses the risk.</p>
Policy 43 Floodlighting and Other External Artificial Lighting	501	<p>Lighting; Lighting should be informed by guidance set out in the Artificial Lighting Guidance - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust (bats.org.uk) in addition bird species may also be affected by artificial lighting creating a false dawn and using up vital reserves, especially in the winter.</p> <p>Direct overlighting of the watercourse is not permitted as this affects the diurnal rhythms of fish species.</p>	<p>The Bat Conservation Trust's website signposts to the updated Institute of Lighting Professionals' Bats and Artificial Lighting Guidance which is explicitly mentioned in the Policy's supported text and thus a modification is not considered necessary.</p>	N/A	Agreed.

Section / Policy	Rep No.	Environment Agency Representation (in full)	Council's Response (including any proposed modifications)	Background Paper ref	Common Ground Agreed?
Policy 45 Tall and Mid-Rise Building Zones	515	<p>With reference to Tall and Mid-Rise Building Near the River Thames Frontage B. This policy should include the expectation that developments will require an overshadowing assessment. Overshading affects diurnal rhythms of fish species and leads to limited growth of vegetated areas and thus could result in inadvertent negation of policies 8, 9, 34 and 39.</p> <p>We have provided comments on several policy units relating to Water resources and quality, Land Contamination and Waste. Whilst the following recommendations for each policy do not affect the soundness of the plan, they could strengthen each respective policy and the overall the Local Plan.</p>	<p>The Council's response to the EA's comment on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 1031) was to note that there is sufficient reference in other policies in the Local Plan (specifically policies 39, 40 and 42) to enable and ensure assessment of the impact of a tall building on rivers' ecosystems, and that the submission of a transient overshadowing analysis could be requested as part of the planning application process in line with these policy requirements, where deemed relevant.</p> <p>A draft of the Background Topic Paper was shared with the EA on 28 November 2023.</p>	Biodiversity Net Gain Paper (see details on comment 453)	On-going in relation to whether there is sufficient guidance on overshadowing of rivers' ecosystems.
Policy 53 Local Environmental Impacts	554	<p>4. Land Contamination Part M of Policy 53. Local Environmental impacts We welcome the inclusion of text to emphasise the risk of new development to water quality and request appropriate mitigation where required. Groundwater is constantly moving and once contaminated it can take a very long time to recover if at all. Therefore, the overarching approach to groundwater protection needs to be considered at the strategic planning stage. In our Reg 18 response we recommended stronger and more clearer wording to clarify what is required both in terms of assessment and suitability when it comes to any proposed development. We acknowledge that there are requirements in the supporting text regarding details of required assessment and mitigation and welcome this as it mirrors what is required within the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>5. Waste Part I of Policy 53. Local Environmental impacts We requested amended to include additional detail on developer's requirements and for any waste sites specifically to be mentioned. In response it was not considered necessary to specifically mention waste sites, with regards to applicant's requirements for new developments near these sites, as this is covered within 'nuisance-generating uses' and would be subject to the agent of change principle. Although we agree that Part C of Policy 53 somewhat address this issue, we would still recommend further detail on specific development requirements. This would ensure consistency with each application and establish a baseline for what each developer is required to consider so they can ensure that it is considered as earliest as possible in their design process to maximise opportunities to minimise environmental impacts.</p>	<p>The Council's response to the EA's comment on the Regulation 18 Plan (comment 1105) was that an amendment was made to the supporting text to clarify that agent of change relates to nuisance-generating uses, and not exclusively those that are noise-related. The rest of the policy was deemed sufficient to address the EA's concerns, whilst it was noted that the EA would be a statutory consultee as part of the planning process where proposed development was located near to safeguarded waste sites. No further amendments considered necessary.</p>	N/A	On-going in relation to whether Part I should reference specific requirements for waste sites.
	N/A	<p>Highlights an inconsistency - that the functional floodplain definition and mapping should be updated to incorporate land riverward of the tidal flood defences as functional floodplain.</p>	<p>The Council agrees that this is an oversight. Sites riverward of the tidal flood defences can flood frequently; they are undefended and any proposals to increase the vulnerability of an already existing use need to be considered in the context of this land being treated as functional floodplain.</p> <p>Suggested modification: <i>There is no further proposed modification from the Council at this stage to clarify the functional floodplain is defined as land riverward of the Thames Tidal Flood Defences, as the Council is keen to seek suggestions to add to this SoCG from the EA.</i></p>	N/A	<p>The Council and the Environment Agency agree the following modification for clarification to paragraph 16.66: The borough contains a number of islands in the River Thames. Where the access and egress to and from the island begins within the functional floodplain, for the purposes of new development, such islands will be considered and treated as functional floodplain (Zone 3b), even if parts of the islands may be within an area of lower probability of flooding. For the River Thames, the functional floodplain is defined as land riverward of the Thames Tidal Flood Defences. In line with the guidance set out in the Council's SFRA, new developments are restricted to 'Water Compatible' and 'Essential Infrastructure' (subject to an Exception Test) as per the guidance in the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG.</p>