

## How to Use the TLS in the Development Control Process

The Thames Landscape Strategy is set out in a report known as the **Thames Landscape Strategy 2012 Review** and should be used to inform development control decisions, management plans and projects along the river between Weybridge, Hampton and Kew Bridge. The Thames Landscape Strategy is free to use by anyone – planners, members of the public and statutory agencies.

### **The TLS, Development Control and Planning Applications:**

The TLS works through its partnership to inform strategic policy and to ensure that the aims of the Strategy are implemented on the ground.

The TLS as an organisation does comment on planning applications but acts only to remind the relevant local planning authority of any TLS guidance that may be applicable. The TLS constitution does not allow for the TLS to interpret its guidance nor to provide any more information than is supported by the TLS Review. The TLS as an organisation cannot support or object to any given application.

The Thames Landscape Strategy is however, a public document that has a groundswell of support, a strong partnership of riparian organisations, local groups & civic societies and has a respected track record of success. It is a robust evidence base and has undergone considerable consultation. Anyone can use the Thames Landscape Strategy to support or to object to a planning application or policy proposal. Simply follow the links on our website to the Thames Landscape Strategy Review 2012 and use whatever section/s you feel may support your case. There is strength in numbers – so if you feel that a particular TLS section is particularly helpful please do pass on the right information.

### **A Framework for Landscape Planning and Management**

The plethora of statutory agencies and authorities with responsibilities along the river through London and Surrey results in complicated systems of planning and management. It is important to understand the framework within which the Thames Landscape Strategy operates, looking first at the GLA and local authorities, then at other statutory and non-statutory bodies.

### **The London Plan**

The London Plan 2012 contains a comprehensive set of policies for the Blue Ribbon Network that includes the River Thames and other London waterways. Policy 7.29 encourages boroughs to identify Thames Policy Areas within their local plans (previously known as LDFs) and prepare detailed appraisals of their stretches of the river and its environs, and notes that the Thames Landscape Strategy Hampton to Kew fulfils this role. Paragraph 7.93 suggests that strategies should be reviewed regularly and lists the matters which should be included.

In addition, paragraph 7.94 highlights that the strategies should also identify areas of deficiency, and the actions needed to address these deficiencies. Paragraph 7.95 sets out that the Thames strategies should be used as guidance for LDFs and development control decisions. They also include specific implementation projects for local authorities and other organisations in a position to implement river-related projects. They should be used to identify important riverside sites and determine the river-related expectations for them. As such the strategies should be expressed through DPD policies or SPD as appropriate.

The Surrey bank of the river between Hampton and Weybridge is located in Elmbridge Borough. The Elmbridge Local Plan's Core Strategy policy CS 12 provides the strategic policy framework for the River Thames Corridor and its tributaries up until 2026.

### **Local Authorities**

The local authorities are the principal planning authorities in the Strategy area with responsibility for land use planning and building control. The authorities are: Elmbridge Borough Council; London Borough of Hounslow; London Borough of Richmond upon Thames; Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

In 1994, it was envisaged that the TLS would be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the four boroughs and although only Richmond and Hounslow did, the Strategy has been used extensively to shape planning outcomes in Elmbridge and Kingston. In the absence of statutory status much of the Strategy's strength has come from the community support the Strategy receives based on a robust character study and a track record of achievement. Over time many of the Strategy's recommendations have been incorporated into local and regional plans or are included in national agency guidelines.

The four TLS Boroughs all have strong policies with respect to development adjoining the riverside and the protection of views, which post date, take account of and refer to the TLS. Much of the riverside is within various conservation areas, which have their own studies/appraisals. This mechanism was reinforced during the preparation of the TLS Review following advice from the GLA and GOL who both recommended that the TLS Review should provide the evidence base for the development of policies and plans (for the river corridor) by each of the constituent boroughs, rather than being taken forward as a supplementary or policy document in its own right. In this way, the TLS sets out guidance and projects for the river corridor as a whole, grouped together in one coordinated document. This should be used as a material consideration by the local planning authorities backed up their relevant core policy.

The Thames Landscape Strategy is a handbook to guide change along the river corridor that acts as the day-to-day link between the authorities, riparian communities and policy.