

need additional dedicated office floorspace, however the long-term impacts remain uncertain and there is a need to plan for economic recovery. In Richmond the evidence base highlights that the lack of sufficient employment floorspace provision is a constraint on the future employment and business growth in the borough, but in recognition of work trends, it is felt that significant jobs growth could be delivered through the refurbishment and upgrading of outdated stock, to better facilitate such working practices. A new generation of industrial and workshop style provision could also meet future industrial needs but also work for office uses, and be used flexibly as businesses grow and adapt.

- 19.5** Proposals for intensification and re-purposing of existing employment land should consider the location and its character. Site proposals should be well designed, readily available and adaptable to meet changing business needs and should have regard to operational requirements (including servicing) and mitigate impacts on the transport network where necessary.

Permitted Development Rights

- 19.6** The Council has made an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for a change of use from Class E to residential. This covers large parts of the designated employment locations for offices and industrial land and non- designated

employment land and premises, identified for their contribution to the overall employment land. It is the Council's intention to continue to enforce its Article 4 Direction to require development involving the loss of employment floorspace to go through planning permission.

Affordable, Flexible Workspace

- 19.7** Richmond is an enterprising borough; with one fifth of the working age population self-employed and more businesses surviving three years compared to elsewhere in London. Overall, the borough has been relatively resilient to the economic pressures of recent years; however, there are some economic challenges, particularly as a result of limited land availability for employment purposes, and a shortage of office space across the borough leads to increases in rental values and costs for local businesses. The promotion of flexible and affordable workspaces allows us to respond to changing business needs and create robust, future-proofed places, including successful town centres and the promotion of local supply chains and local employment hubs which support the spatial strategy and the living locally concept. The Council will support provision of small units to accommodate a variety of local businesses and small firms at existing employment locations and to provide the opportunity for residents to set up their own enterprise, enabling them to work closer to home.

Policy 22

Promoting Jobs and our Local Economy

- A. Proposals for employment floorspace should support suitable workspace for the borough's locally significant and diverse sectors, in accordance with London Plan Policy E8, including those of particular importance to the borough's local economy:
1. Flexible workspace hubs including co-working space and serviced offices in the borough's suburban town centre locations;
 2. Space to accommodate small and micro firms, for start-up, incubation and accelerator with corresponding business support;
 3. Voluntary, community and local healthcare organisations;
 4. Media and creative industries;
 5. Scientific research and laboratory space;
 6. Theatre, television and film studio capacity;

7. River-related and river-dependent industries; and
 8. Opportunities to develop the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector and support the local circular economy.
- B. Proposals must provide opportunities for local employment and training, as required by Policy 50 'Education and Training (Strategic Policy)' part **B D**.
- C. Proposals for the provision or re-provision of economic uses must provide for a high standard of workspace which reflects local economic needs and is of a design that enables use by a variety of different occupiers including:
1. Adequate floor-to-ceiling heights which are sufficient for the operation of the intended use as well as the provision of serving requirements such as ventilation, heating, lighting, electricity and cabling;
 2. Adequate doorway and corridor widths are provided together with clear and flexible floorplates with few supporting columns, to allow for ease of movement and facilitate the efficient use of the floorspace;
 3. Level thresholds and inclusive access throughout the building;
 4. Adequate servicing and loading facilities, including access bays and service yards, and goods lifts for multi-story developments, as appropriate;
 5. Adequate facilities that promote cycle usage, including workspace showers, changing rooms, and lockers, proportionate to the scale of the development and quantity of cycle parking required (see Policy 48 'Vehicular Parking Standards, Cycle Parking, Servicing and Construction Logistics Management');
 6. Natural light and ventilation. Windowless and basement economic floorspace will be resisted, unless considerations specific to the use prevent this; and
 7. Good telecommunications connectivity, including broadband connections and mobile connectivity (see Policy 27 'Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure (Strategic Policy) ').
- D. The design and layout of the development must ensure that the proposed uses can successfully co-exist with surrounding uses, having regard to the amenity of adjacent occupiers and the operational requirements of existing and future businesses, ensuring that any potential conflicts will be adequately mitigated *in accordance with London Plan Policy D13 Agent of Change*.

19.8 The borough is home to nationally important scientific institutions such as The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) and head office of the Laboratory of the Government Chemist (LGC), as well as academic institutions such as St Mary's University. As such, scientific, innovation and research, provision of incubator units and laboratories will be supported as well as other uses important to the local economy, such as education, sports and leisure, arts, culture, entertainment, creative, historic and river related uses that add to the overall economic diversity of the borough. Various leisure, cultural and historic sites including Hampton Court Palace and Marble Hill House, the River Thames and its

tributaries, and Richmond Park and Bushy Park offer opportunities for economic spin offs as well as contributing to supporting a high quality and unique environment.

19.9 Proposals should capitalise on locational advantages related to clustering, compatibility with the wider area and the provision of appropriate infrastructure. Clusters are important for local economies, provide diverse employment opportunities for local residents, and bring knowledge, competition and support to businesses. London Plan Policy E9 encourages collaboration between businesses, higher education providers and other relevant research and innovation organisations. Opportunities for temporary

meanwhile or pop up uses to support the local economy will be supported. The benefits of meanwhile use also include short-term affordable accommodation for SMEs and individuals, generating a short-term source of revenue for the local economy and can attract longer-term business investment.

19.10 Richmond has a slightly larger share of small and especially micro firms compared to London as a whole and a greater number of home workers. The Borough accommodates several large research institutions but there is no complementary local offer for smaller firms operating in the same sector.

19.11 Recent evidence suggests possible growth options for Richmond in the media and creative and scientific research industries and identifies a demand for creative workshops and small-scale R&D incubator or co-locating space as gaps in the workspace market which operators would be keen to explore. These would benefit from a range of unit types, such as identified in the supporting text to Policy 25 'Affordable, Flexible and Managed Workspace'.

19.12 The promotion of flexible workspaces allows us to respond to changing business needs and create places, including successful town centres and the promotion of local supply chain and local employment hubs, which suit the particular needs of Richmond which is dominated by small businesses. Logistics hubs that provide facilities for last mile deliveries by electric vans or cargo bikes will be supported in sustainable locations. These enable local deliveries to be made more efficient and less polluting.

19.13 A sustainable borough is one that has a large range of local employment opportunities for its residents and where all residents have access to those opportunities and other services without the need to travel far, or which are accessible by sustainable forms of transport, as set out in Policy 1 'Living Locally and the 20-minute neighbourhood (Strategic Policy)'. Therefore, it is important that employment land is retained close to residential areas to provide a choice of employment opportunities within the borough now and in the future to help to maintain Richmond upon Thames as a borough where both economic and social wellbeing is high. There may be an opportunity to grow the local economy in terms of new technologies and the green economy, that will contribute to the circular economy and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

19.14 Any proposal that includes new economic floorspace must ensure that the design of the development is suitable for modern business needs and could provide space for a broad range of potential occupants with minimal intervention to the fabric of the building. This can improve the quality of businesses that will be attracted and the jobs that will be created. Full fit-out of the premises beyond shell and core will be encouraged in order to ensure that new development is fit for purpose, does not remain vacant for extended periods, and provides floorspace to meet the needs of businesses without incurring avoidable delays.

Policy 23

Offices

Retention of offices

- A. There is a presumption against the loss of office floorspace in all parts of the borough. Proposals which result in a net loss of office floorspace will be refused. Any refurbishment of existing office floorspace should improve the quality, flexibility and adaptability of office space of different sizes (for micro, small, medium-sized and larger enterprises) as set out in London Plan Policy E1.

New offices