

CONSERVATION POLICY REVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is being submitted by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as an addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Local Development Framework (LDF). It is for consultation in line with the requirements of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The LDF SA Scoping Report was the subject of community engagement in early 2005 and has subsequently been adopted. The LDF SA Scoping Report comprises of three volumes, namely the Scoping Report (Sept 05), Baseline Characterisation Figures (Aug 05), and Context Review (Sept 05), which are all available on the Council's website¹.
- 1.2 The LDF Interim Sustainability Appraisal report was produced in November 2005 and, together with the LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options report, was the subject of community engagement during November and December 2005. However, in accordance with advice from the Government Office for London, the Council revised the Core Strategy Issues and Options report and, together with a revised Sustainability Appraisal Update Report, was re-issued for further stages of community engagement throughout 2008 and 2009. The Core Strategy was finally adopted in December 2010.
- 1.3 This report extends the LDF SA / SEA Scoping Report to include the issues around updating our conservation policies as part of the wider Core Strategy review. The intention is that all our policies concerning conservation and character will be consolidated and updated. This includes our Extant UDP policies, which were adopted in 2002 and thus have not previously been subject to an SEA. These currently form a separate document, but we intend that any relevant policies will be incorporated into the Core Strategy. The Extant UDP policies and Core Strategy policies are included in this report as Appendix 1 and 2.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Legislative Background

- 2.1 In the summer of 2001, the European Union legislated for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) with the adoption of Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (the 'SEA Directive'). The Directive was incorporated into UK law with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and applies to a range of UK plans and programmes whose

¹ Available from:

<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/localdevelopmentframework/sustainabilityappraisal.aspx>

preparation began after 21st July 2004, or whose formal adoption is not complete by 21st July 2006.

- 2.2 The SEA/SA report supports public consultations as required by Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Furthermore, issuing the SEA/SA Report alongside the Extant UDP policies (which will move to a specific draft policy) will help to provide objective information for consultees, so that responses can take full account of the predicted sustainability impacts of different 'options'. It will also identify the information being fed into the decision making process and how this has informed the decisions.

Contents of this report

- 2.3 Figure 1 below sets out the outputs at each stage of the SA/SEA process. This Addendum report documents the Scoping (or Stage A) of the process, setting out the context and objectives of the SA / SEA. It also establishes the baseline and decides on the scope of the SA/SEA.

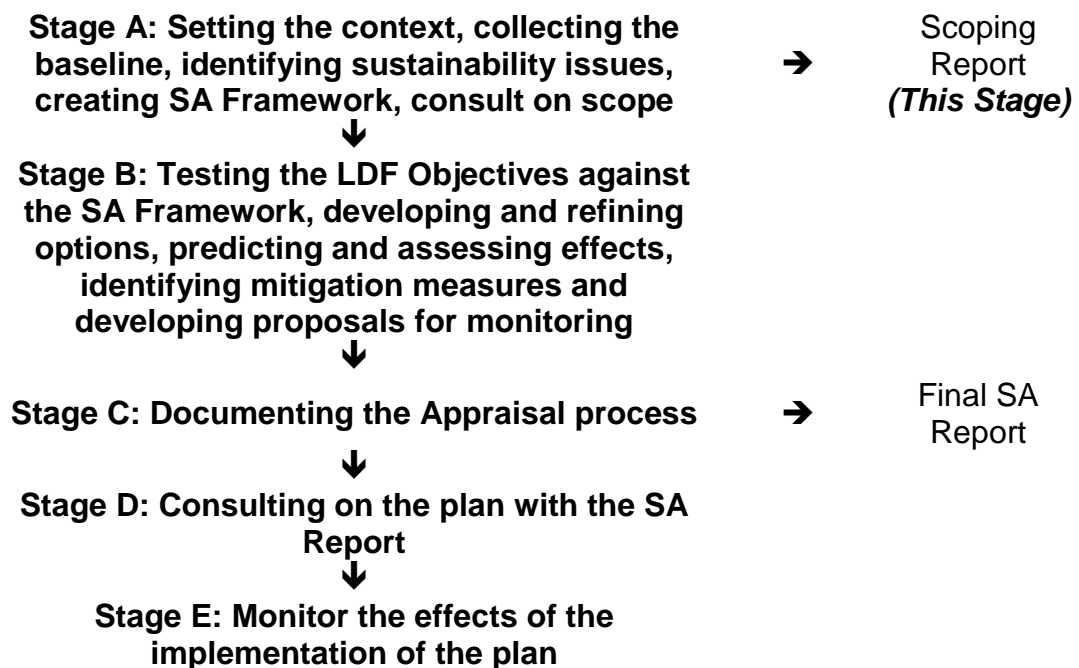


Figure 1. Outputs from the SA process

- 2.4 Stage A from figure 1 (as set out in subsequent sections of this report) is divided into the following 5 key tasks:
- A1 – Context;
 - A2 – Baseline;
 - A3 – Sustainability issues;
 - A4 – SA Framework; and
 - A5 – Consult on scope.

- 2.5 This report seeks to supplement the LDF SA Scoping Report which was adopted by the Council in November 2005.
- 2.6 The main body of this report is divided into sections which document Stage A of the SEA process and, in particular, tasks A1 to A5.

3.0 CONSERVATION POLICY: Background

- 3.1 The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea adopted its Core Strategy in December 2010. One of our strategic objectives in the Core Strategy is for *Renewing the Legacy*, which is an integral part of the central vision of Building on Success. The exceptional quality of the built environment underpins the reputation of both Kensington and Chelsea, and our residents' quality of life.
- 3.2 Strategic objective CO5 sets out to pass to the next generation a Borough that is better than today, of the highest quality and inclusive for all. This will be achieved by taking great care to maintain, conserve and enhance the glorious built heritage we have inherited and to ensure that where new development takes place it enhances the Borough.
- 3.3 In the Core Strategy particular reference is made to the Borough's townscape, which is unique in its high quality, finely grained, historic built environment with a strong context and character. The Council has a reputation of upholding high standards of conservation and design.
- 3.4 The purpose of the policy review is to consolidate our planning policy concerning character and conservation. The main issue is to ensure the Core Strategy subsumes the Extant UDP policies and strategic conservation guidance found in our Conservation Area Proposals Statements.

4.0 STAGE A: Tasks A1 to A4

Task A1 – Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives

- 4.1 An initial review of policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives (PPPSIs) was carried out as part of the LDF Scoping Report. This section outlines those PPPSIs which are considered to be of particular relevance to the policy regarding conservation and character. These are set out in Table 1 below which includes also additional policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives not included in the LDF Scoping Report but relevant to the update of conservation policy.
- 4.2 The key messages from these PPPSIs which need to be taken into account are set out in Volume 3 of the main LDF SA / SEA Scoping Report and in the October 2009 updated Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Table 1: List of relevant policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives

National
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
London
The London Plan (adopted July 2011)
Local
Local Development Scheme 2005 (revised 2007)
Core Strategy for the Royal Borough with a Focus on North Kensington Development Plan Document (adopted December 2010)
Conservation Area Proposals Statements
Article 4 Directions
Extant UDP policies (Adopted May 2002)
Emerging policies from the Core Strategy Review

Task A2 – Collecting Baseline data

4.3 The LDF SA / SEA Scoping Report identifies the key characteristics of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Below is a summary of the baseline information which directly relates to conservation policy within the context of the borough.

4.4 **Baseline Indicators investigated**

Objective 16. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage
Conservation areas number and % of borough
Number of listed buildings on Buildings At Risk register
Number of conservation areas and those that do not have Conservation Area Proposals Statements
Number and condition of archaeological priority areas.
Historic buildings, sites and conservation areas, including locally listed assets, affected, whether in an adverse or beneficial way”.
Visitor numbers to key attractions in RBKC such as the museums.

Characterisation

4.5 A large part of the Borough derives its character and townscape from its heritage of eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. The Council has designated 35 Conservation Areas, encompassing about 70% of the Borough. The Borough also contains some 4200 buildings which are listed at Grade II or above for their special architectural or historic interest. Figure 1 illustrates the areas covered by conservation areas, and the location, concentration and designation of listed buildings and monuments in the borough.

4.6 There are further areas of architectural character and historic interest such as the strategically important view of St. Paul’s Cathedral. The strategic

importance of the Thames and the functions it serves in addition to its importance for archaeology are recognized



Figure 1: Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

Data 'gaps' and availability

4.7 No data gaps have been identified

Task A3 - Main social, environmental and economic issues and problems identified

4.8 Section 4.3 of the original Scoping Report, along with the Sustainability Appraisal iterations and the Core Strategy provides a summary of the key social, environmental and economic issues that have been identified as of the

most importance to the Royal Borough. The most relevant of these are listed below:

Sustainability problem	Supporting Evidence
Economic	
Average house prices	Average house prices the highest in the UK at over £850,000 in 2008, creating a barrier to entry for low and medium level earners. (July 2009 update)
Value of land and property	Stimulated by the insatiable appetite for residential accommodation. Protecting other land uses on a finely grained basis is thus a vital issue to be addressed by the strategy (par. 2.3.5 Core Strategy)
Environmental	
Open Space – there is a shortage of open space in the borough, and a shortage of areas in which to create additional open space.	RBKC Inception Meeting (10/02/05) Open space per resident ha / resident – Second lowest proportion of open space to total land areas and lowest per population in London and the UK
Social	
Heritage asset	The preservation and enhancement of the historic environment, achieving high quality new developments and having a high quality streetscape are all very high priorities for our residents (par. 2.3.16 Core Strategy).
Crime	RBKC Inception Meeting (10 – 02 – 05) Total notifiable offences are declining, however, there have been increases in sexual offences, burglary, fear of crime is higher than England and Wales averages and drug offences are on the increase.

Task A4 - Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 4.11 The Council's 16 SA objectives set out in the LDF SA / SEA Scoping Report are shown in Table 3 below. Changes may be made to these in light of the consultation on this Scoping Report Addendum.

Table 3: Sustainability Appraisal Framework: SA objectives

SA objectives
1. To conserve and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity
2. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
3. To support a diverse and vibrant local economy to foster sustainable economic growth
4. To encourage social inclusion (<i>including access</i>), equity, the promotion of equality and a respect for diversity
5. To minimise effects on climate change through reduction in emissions, energy

efficiency and use of renewables and adopt measures to adapt to climate change
6. To reduce the risk of flooding to current and future residents
7. To improve air quality in the Royal Borough
8. To protect and enhance the Royal Borough's parks and open spaces
9. To reduce pollution of air, water and land
9a. To prioritise development on previously developed land
10. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport to reduce energy consumption and emissions from vehicular traffic
11. To reduce the amount of waste produced and maximise the amount of waste that is recycled
12. To ensure that social and community uses and facilities which serve a local need are enhanced, protected, and to encourage the provision of new community facilities
13. To aim that the housing needs of the Royal Borough's residents are met
14. To encourage energy efficiency through building design; maximise the re-use of building's and the recycling of building materials
15. To ensure the provision of accessible health care for all Borough residents
16. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage

- 4.12 It is not proposed to change or add any further Objectives or sub-Objectives to the existing SA Framework as these Objectives, and in particular Objectives 2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 16 are considered appropriate in terms of assessing the implications of an updated conservation policy.

5.0 CONSULTATION

Task A5: Consultation on the Scope of the SA/SEA

- 5.1 In accordance with the regulations implementing the SEA Directive, the Council has a statutory duty to consult the three statutory SEA Consultation Bodies, namely English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency, on the scope of the assessment contained in this Addendum Scoping Report. In accordance with these regulations, the period of consultation is 5 weeks, from the **4 October** until the **8 November 2012**.
- 5.2 This report focuses primarily on tasks A1 – A4 and when commenting on this report, respondents are asked to consider four key questions:

- Are the policies / plans / programmes / strategies / initiatives that have been highlighted as being of relevance to an updated conservation policy appropriate?
- Do you know of any further baseline indicators that might provide useful information? If so, please provide the information or a source for the data.
- Are the sustainability problems identified for RBKC the correct ones?
- Do the SA objectives encompass all the necessary issues?

6.0 NEXT STEPS

6.1 Following consultation on this Scoping Report, the Council will carry out a sustainability appraisal on an updated conservation draft policy. The SA / SEA report (or 'Stage B' of the SA process) involves assessing the various options put forward against the Borough's relevant SA objectives.

6.2 In addition, this 'Stage B' assessment will include:

- Testing the policy objectives against the SA Framework;
- Developing and refining draft policy;
- Predicting and assessing effects;
- Identification of mitigation measures; and
- Developing monitoring proposals

6.3 The draft policy will be put out for public consultation in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council is required to notify stakeholders when the Council is likely to consult, which in this instance will be December 2012 – January 2013. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the draft policy will be published alongside the policy document. These documents will be available on the Council's website.

Further Information

Further information on the development of a draft conservation policy in the Borough and the accompanying SA process can be obtained from:

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