

NOTTING HILL GATE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

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 was subsequently 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 Addendum report extends the LDF SA / SEA Scoping Report to include the emerging issues and options around future development at Notting Hill Gate.

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 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 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Furthermore, issuing the SEA/SA Report alongside the draft version of

¹ Available from:
<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/localdevelopmentframework/sustainabilityappraisal.aspx>

the Notting Hill Gate SPD 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.

2.3 The methodology for the preparation of the scoping report is structured in line with the Government's *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Directive, 2005*, which provides guidance on the European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" or SEA directive, and the *Plan Making Manual*, which includes:

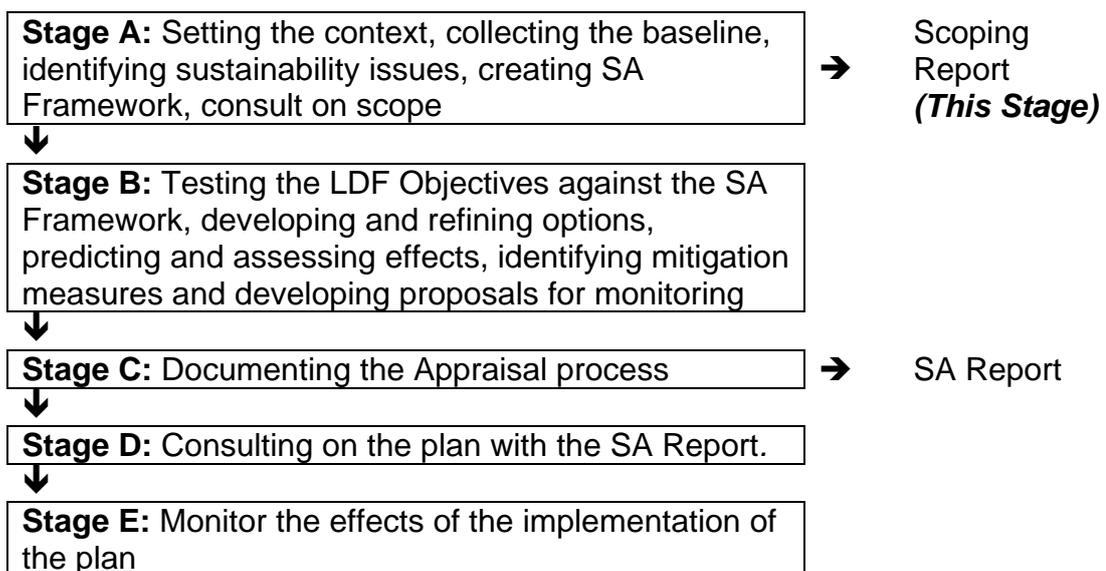
- Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainable development objectives
- Collecting baseline information
- Identifying sustainability issues and problems
- Developing the SA framework
- Consulting on the scope of the SA

2.4 In accordance with the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*, which converted the SEA Directive into UK legislation, the council will consult with the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage, allowing them 5 weeks to comment. All feedback received will be considered and the scope of the appraisal amended if needed.

Contents of this report

2.5 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



- 2.6 **Please note:** This scoping report will be used to prepare the SA for the Notting Hill Gate SPD, which will be made available for consultation alongside the draft SPD. Should comments on this scoping mean that the SA needs to be amended, the revised SA will be made available for further consultation prior to the adoption of the SPD
- 2.7 Stage A of 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.
- 2.8 This report seeks to supplement the LDF SA Scoping Report which was adopted by the Council in November 2005.
- 2.9 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 NOTTING HILL GATE: Background and Overview

- 3.1 The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea adopted its Core Strategy in December 2010. Table 3.1, page 40 of the document contains a table which identifies a range of issues which are expanded and translated into a list of strategic objectives and topics to be addressed through planning policy.
- 3.2 Within the Core Strategy, a vision for Notting Hill states that *“Notting Hill Gate will be significantly strengthened as a District Shopping Centre, with improved shops and restaurants that reflect the needs of the local catchment. Boutiques and premium-quality retailers will become a feature of the area, as they are in Kensington Church Street and Pembridge Road. The centre will continue to be a major office location. Notting Hill has a long-standing reputation for arts and culture; Notting Hill Gate will capitalise on this in developing the arts and cultural offer. The street will become more pedestrian-friendly, with improved crossing facilities, fewer barriers, less street clutter, reduced vehicle impacts and station entrances relocated within buildings. All development will be of the most exceptional design and architectural quality, creating a ‘wow factor’ that excites and delights residents and visitors. Pedestrian links to Portobello Road Special District Centre will also be enhanced through good design, legibility and clear wayfinding”*.
- 3.3 Policy CP16 ‘Notting Hill Gate’ states that *“The Council will require development to strengthen Notting Hill Gate’s role as a District Centre by supporting high trip generating uses; improving retail and restaurant provision including some anchor retail to serve the local catchment; and deliver new distinctive identity through high quality architecture and design of the public realm. The Council will also resist development which prejudices opportunities for wider regeneration of the area and compromises delivery of the vision.”*

- 3.4 Notting Hill Gate is a lively centre with a typical mixture of offices, restaurants and bars together with retail uses. The station is served by 3 underground lines (Central, District and Circle). This level of provision would be more typical of higher level 'major' or 'metropolitan' town centres as three lines provides for direct access to a wider direct range of destinations than is found at the typical 'district' centre level. The station itself is one of the main gateways for visitors travelling to Portobello Market each weekend, and is a key access point on the Notting Hill carnival route (typically, the Carnival receives circa 1m visitors during Carnival weekend in August every year, and many of these arrive via Notting Hill Gate station). These factors combine to make Notting Hill one of the busier town centres within its particular classification in London. Furthermore the town centre's PTAL rating of 6a is the second highest possible category on a score where 1 is the lowest and 6b is the highest.
- 3.5 Notting Hill Gate is designated as a district centre by Annex 2 of the London Plan. The town centre contains a mixture of offices, restaurants, bars and general retail uses. At its southernmost tip, the boundary of Notting Hill Gate district centre at Sheffield Terrace is less than 150 metres away from the far northern edge of Kensington High Street Major Centre at Gloucester Walk. This is a key planning consideration, as the London Plan defines a 'central' area as *'a location with very dense development, a mix of different uses, large building footprints and typically buildings of four to six storeys, located within 800 metres walking distance of an International, Metropolitan or Major town centre'*. Areas which are 'central' in nature are thus typically considered suitable for higher-density development.
- 3.6 Clearly, Notting Hill Gate meets the criteria for a 'central' location set out above as the key sites built by London County Council during the late 1950's and 1960's at Astley House, United House and David Game House each have four storeys; while Ivy Lodge contains six storeys, Campden Hill Towers 18 and Newcombe House 12. It is also acknowledged that, individually and collectively, these buildings are now approaching the end of their natural lifespan.
- 3.7 The purpose of the SPD is to clarify the planning policy framework applicable in Notting Hill Gate, supplementing Core Strategy policy CP16. To address the planning needs and challenges for the future, including the high level of footfall at the station plus its location adjacent to two other acclaimed centres (in Portobello and Kensington High Street) may mean that some features may thus be required in Notting Hill Gate which would be atypical of a district-level centre, and instead would have more in common with a higher order major or metropolitan level centre under the London Plan's Town Centre Network.
- 3.8 Paragraph 23 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework also requires Local Authorities to *'recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of (town) centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites'*.

4.0 STAGE A: Tasks A1-A4

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

- 4.1 An initial review of all applicable policies, plans and strategies took place as part of the LDF scoping report ², however many of these documents were superseded with the adoption of the Coalition Government’s National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012.
- 4.2 This section therefore outlines the documents which postdate the original scoping report, but are still considered to be of relevance with respect to producing the SPD for Notting Hill Gate.

National Policy
National Planning Policy Framework (adopted March 2012)
Regional Policy
The London Plan (adopted July 2011)
Local Policy
Core Strategy for the Royal Borough with a focus on North Kensington Development Plan Document (adopted December 2010)

Task A2 – Collecting Baseline Data

- 4.3 The SA/SEA Scoping report for the Core Strategy identified the key characteristics of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
- 4.4 The Issues and Options exhibition for Notting Hill Gate set out the key characteristics and issues for Notting Hill Gate exhibition material, and the supporting evidence base, is available on the Council’s.
- 4.5 Three themes were identified:
- Strengthening the identity of the town centre – the role of retail, offices, surrounding residential and the existing cultural uses in underpinning the vibrancy of place, and the potential to reinforce the cultural identity of the place.
 - Improving the streets and public spaces – the unattractive nature of the existing streetscape, with three lanes of traffic, pedestrian barriers, and congested pavements, and the potential to improve this
 - Improving buildings and architecture – the poor quality of the 1950’s buildings and the potential for significant improvements.

² http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/pdf/rbkc_vol_1_scoping_report.pdf

4.6 A range of evidence has been assembled in order to identify the issues and options, and to inform the forthcoming SPD. These are:

- Public Realm Feasibility Study
- Tube Entrances Feasibility Study
- Views Photo Survey
- Context Appraisal
- Scoping Study for a New Cultural Facility
- Summary of Retail Evidence
- Office Market Assessment
- Development Viability Study

4.7 All these reports are available on the Council's website.

4.8 Taken together with section 4.3 of the original LDF Scoping Report, this addendum, the SA and the Core Strategy provide a comprehensive summary of the key social, economic and environmental issues which are identified as being of the utmost importance to the Royal Borough.

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

Sustainability problem	Supporting Evidence
Economic	
Land values	<p>Land values are high and are stimulated by the high demand for residential accommodation. Protecting other land uses on a finely grained basis is thus a vital issue to be addressed by the strategy (para 2.3.5 Core Strategy); as is ensuring the development of lower-value land uses, and particularly those uses which are not liable to pay the RBKC Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>There is a shortage of small office units <300m2 and particularly <100m2.</p>
Social	
Community Facilities	<p>Exceptionally high residential values in the Royal Borough mean that lower value uses are in danger of being 'outpriced' and lost to residential uses.</p> <p>The Core Strategy defines community facilities as care homes, community halls, doctors, dentists, hospitals and other health facilities, laundrettes, hostels, libraries, police and other emergency facilities, schools and other educational</p>

	<p>establishments, places of worship, sports facilities, youth facilities and petrol stations. Public houses were added to the list in 2012.</p> <p>There is a shortage of homes for elderly people in the Royal Borough.</p>
Heritage assets	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 borough residents
Crime	Notting Hill Gate town centre lies within the Pembridge ward. In terms of crime deprivation, some areas of Pembridge ward contain high levels of crime. Community safety improvements may be needed, allied to any new development.
Environmental	
Traffic	Vehicular traffic and associated congestion cause problems along busy routes in the borough. Two thirds more parking permits have been issued than parking spaces.
Air quality	Diesel trains approaching and leaving Paddington station are a key cause of air pollution in the north of the borough.
Open Space	There is a deficiency of open space in many areas. There is a shortage of open space in the Borough, and a shortage of areas in which to create additional open space.

Task A4 - Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 4.9 The 16 SA Objectives from the LDF SA/SEA Scoping Report are set out in Table 3.

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

- 4.10 It is not proposed to add any further Objectives or Sub-objectives to the existing SA Framework. Of particular relevance are objectives 2, 3, 9a, 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16, which are considered appropriate in terms of assessing the implications of the Notting Hill Gate SPD. Of less relevance are objectives 4, 5, 7, 9 and 14. However it is likely that elements of the options will have a relationship with these objectives.
- 4.11 It is considered that objectives 1, 6, 8 or 11 hold little or no relevant for this piece of work.

- 4.12 The different options for the development of the area will be appraised against these SA objectives. Changes may be made to the list of objectives arising from the consultation on this Scoping Report addendum.

Data gaps and availability of evidence

- 4.13 Due to the fact that the designated town centre area is surrounded on all sides by the Ladbrooke, Pembridge, Kensington and Kensington Palace conservation areas, development at Notting Hill Gate could have potential adverse effects on the visual appearances of properties within protected conservation areas.

Future trends

- 4.14 Predicting the nature of future trends is difficult. Doing so is dependent on multiple factors, including the global, European and national climate, and decisions which are taken at regional, national and European level. However, the Core Strategy has set a target to plan for 600 new homes per year, together with a minimum 60,000 sq m of office floorspace through to 2028. Moreover, demand for new commercial and residential floorspace is expected to remain high across both the Royal Borough and Greater London as a whole. Consequently, it is considered to be appropriate to continue to plan for the future needs of Notting Hill Gate.

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, Natural England 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 6 November to 11 December 2013
- 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 a future Notting Hill Gate SPD 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 issues identified for RBKC the correct ones?
 - Do the SA objectives identified as being most relevant encompass all the necessary issues?
 - Do you have any further comments on the options provided thus far?

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Following consultation on this addendum scoping report, the Council will carry out a sustainability appraisal which involves assessing the various options put forward against the borough's relevant SA objectives.
- 6.2 In addition, the Stage B assessment will include:
- Testing the SPD objectives against the SA Framework;
 - Developing and refining options;
 - Predicting and assessing effects;
 - Identification of mitigation measures; and
 - Developing monitoring proposals
- 6.3 The draft SPD 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 will be for eight weeks from 26 November 2013 to Monday 20 January 2014 (inclusive). 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 the SPD and the accompanying SA process can be obtained from:

Neighbourhood Planning
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
The Town Hall
Hornton Street
London W8 7NX
email: neighbourhood.planning@rbkc.gov.uk