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The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
Room 331,  
The Town Hall,  
Horton Street  
London W8 7NX

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

Dear Sirs

**Proposed Submission Core Strategy for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea with a focus on North Kensington**

I write further to the public consultation on the above LDF document and enclose a copy of our representations in respect of the proposed policies for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

A copy of these representations has also been sent via email.

Yours sincerely

**Sarah Round**  
**Senior Planner**

For and on behalf of  
The London Planning Practice LLP

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enc. Core Strategy Reps

**Proposed Submission Core Strategy for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea with a focus on North Kensington**

**Development Plan Document**

**Local Development Framework**

**Publication Stage Representation Form**

Please e-mail this form to: [planningpolicy@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@rbkc.gov.uk)

*Alternatively send this form to:*

Planning Services  
Policy Team  
Room 328  
The Town Hall  
Hornton Street  
London  
W8 7NX

*For further information:*

Visit our website at: <http://ldf-consult.rbkc.gov.uk>

Phone the LDF hotline on: 020 7361 3879

**Responses must be received no later than midday Thursday 10 December 2009**

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To be "sound" a core strategy should be JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE and consistent with NATIONAL POLICY.

"Justified" means that the document must be:

- founded on a robust and credible evidence base
- the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives

"Effective" means that the document must be:

- deliverable
- flexible
- able to be monitored

"Consistent with National Policy" means that it is consistent with government guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements

Yes

No

Do you consider the core strategy to be legally compliant?

Do you consider the core strategy to be Sound?

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**If you have selected YES and you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the core strategy, please be as precise as possible when setting out your comments below**

Please make it clear which Paragraph number, Vision box number, Policy box number or Objective box number you are commenting on.

**Please attach additional pages as required**

**If you have selected NO do you consider the core strategy to be unsound because it is not.**

Justified

Effective

Consistent with national policy

*Please tick the appropriate box*

Please give details of why you consider the core strategy to be unsound or not legally compliant. Please be as precise as possible when setting out your comments below.

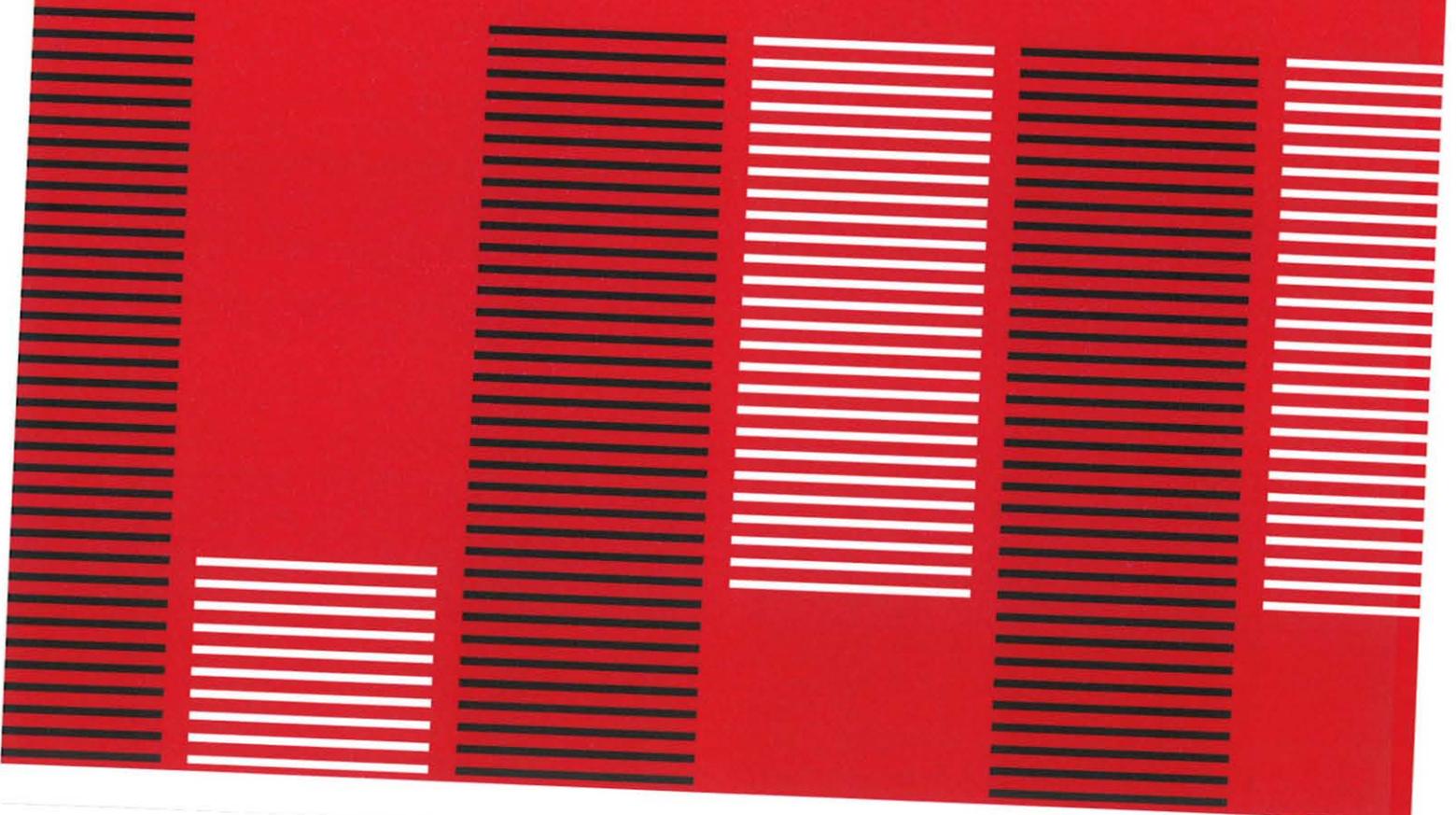
Please make it clear which Paragraph number, Vision box number, Policy box number or Objective box number you are commenting on.

*Please see attached representations.*

**Please attach additional pages as required**

The London Planning Practice LLP

Core Strategy Representations;  
31 Holland Park  
December 2009



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in respect of the Core Strategy for the Royal Borough with a focus on North Kensington.
- 1.2 The evaluation of this Core Strategy will be based on the 'soundness' of the plan in relation to the tests identified within "Local Development Frameworks Examining Development Plan Documents: Soundness Guidance July 2008'.
- 1.3 Our clients own 31 Holland Park which is within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and as such the policies within the plan will have a bearing on how this property may be developed in the future.
- 1.4 This statement therefore sets out a review of the planning policies within the Core Strategy and an assessment of the soundness of the plan in relation to these policies.
- 1.5 Recommendations are made in relation to the changes required to make the plan sound.
- 1.6 The context of the proposals is defined within this document as follows:
  - Core Strategy Considerations
  - Recommended Changes



## 3 CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The following sets out the key considerations of the main policies within the Core Strategy against the evidence base and whether they are sound, justified or consistent with national policy.

### **ii) Residential**

3.2 Policy CH2 of the Core Strategy relates to the provision of new housing, dwelling mix and affordable housing.

3.3 The Council has recently carried out a Housing Market Assessment for the Borough which demonstrates that there is a definitive need for larger dwellings for families in both the market and affordable housing sectors. The Council have emphasised that 80% of new dwellings over the next 20 years should be large dwellings of 3 and 4 bedrooms.

3.4 This is to some degree conflicting with other policies in the Core Strategy such as part (f) of Policy CH2 which seeks to *“resist development which results in the net loss of five or more residential units”*

3.5 This is a very restrictive policy when applied to all future development within the Borough and would not assist in allowing the Council to meeting other objectives such as addressing housing need.

3.6 The policy should be expressed as a ratio rather than numbers of units and other circumstances allowing a greater proportion of units to be lost should be considered particularly where they relate to the refurbishment of listed buildings or where other historic benefits are achieved.

### **iv) Sustainability and Renewable Energy**

3.7 Policy CE1 seeks the following in respect of sustainable development requirements:

*“a) require an assessment to demonstrate that all new buildings and extensions defined as major development achieves the following Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM standards:*

***Residential Development: Code for Sustainable Homes***

- *Up to 2015: Level Three;;*
- *2015 to 2021: Level Four;*
- *2021 onwards: Level Five.*

***Non Residential Development: Relevant BREEAM Assessment***

- *Up to 2015: Excellent;*
  - *2016 onwards: Outstanding;*
- c) require an assessment to demonstrate that the entire dwelling where subterranean extensions are proposed achieves Code for Sustainable Homes Level Four;*
- h) require development to incorporate measures that will contribute to on-site sustainable food production commensurate with the scale of development;”*

3.8 Currently there is only a Code Level 3 requirement for new homes. In 2010 this will become part of the Building Regulations and all new build development will be required to be built to Code Level 3. At this point it will be deliverable through another regulatory code and will then cease to be a proper subject for planning control. It would not therefore be necessary or reasonable to set a higher standard in planning legislation. Such a higher standard would therefore require a full appraisal of the viability and feasibility of incorporating such measures into new development. The Council should not try to restrict development to including technologies that are already covered by Building Regulations and should pay particular reference to the need to assess the viability of a development should these be required.

3.9 There is also reference in this policy for those developments proposing subterranean development to be compliant with Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. It is wholly unreasonable for the Council to seek that Code Level 4 is achieved in developments seeking extensions to existing properties. In the conversion of existing buildings the Council acknowledge that it is

unreasonable to seek Code for Sustainable Homes and retain the BREEAM levels of 'very good'.

3.10 Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 achieves a high level of sustainable design techniques significantly above the building regulations standards and enshrined within the ability to achieve this level relates to the fabric of the building, renewable energy technologies and water preservation. These elements are much more easily achieved in the construction of new development rather than the extension of existing buildings, hence the reason that the Code is not applied to conversions of existing buildings. Therefore there is no justification of the requirement for subterranean extensions to be compliant with Code Level 4 and this element of Policy CE1 is not justified.

v) ***Extensions and Alterations***

3.11 Policy CL2 relates to the extension and alteration of existing buildings and includes reference to the creation of additional storeys and subterranean development in the Borough at part (g) of this policy.

3.12 Part (f) sets out that the Council will ***“require additional storeys and roof level alterations to be sympathetic to the architectural style and character of the building and to either assist in unifying a group of buildings or where there is a detached building to be below the prevailing building height.”***

3.13 This policy and its supporting text at paragraphs 34.3.22 – 34.3.28 of the Core Strategy are extremely prescriptive in establishing a scale of development that would be considered acceptable by the Council across the Borough as a whole. This is a blanket approach policy and would not allow for each site to be considered on its own merits.

3.14 The Royal Borough is located within Central London and some locations, especially where they are in close proximity to transport nodes, town centre uses, could accommodate tall buildings. This will aid the creation of more housing, aid regeneration or the refurbishment of derelict / underused buildings.

- 3.15 By restricting alterations and extensions to existing detached buildings to a height below that prevailing, will constrain development to creating a flat and uninspiring skyline.
- 3.16 As such the Council's policies should be promoting development and design solutions that optimize the potential of sites whilst addressing the need to create high quality and inclusive design that responds to local context and reinforces a sense of place.
- 3.17 Within some parts of the Borough higher buildings could be appropriate to define important routes, crossings, nodes and retail hierarchies.
- 3.18 Part (g) requires that ***it can be demonstrated that subterranean development does not involve excavation underneath a listed building.***
- 3.19 This part of the policy is unsupported by technical evidence or analysis from a reputable historical buildings expert and the Council's arbitrary approach to resisting subterranean development under listed buildings is unjustified.
- 3.20 Paragraph 3.12 of PPG15 states that *"in judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question."*
- 3.21 Paragraph 3.15 also follows on to state that *"Achieving a proper balance between the special interest of a listed building and proposals for alterations or extensions is demanding and should always be based on specialist expertise; but it is rarely impossible, if reasonable flexibility and imagination are shown by all parties involved"*.
- 3.22 It is therefore argued that as an alternative, if subterranean development is proposed beneath a listed building, the harm to the special interest of the building should be assessed based on specialist expertise. It can already be demonstrated that the structural integrity of buildings are not affected by most subterranean development providing it is carried out in a sensitive and structurally sound manner.

3.23 If the policy remains the Council should at least demonstrate that harm is caused by such development in order to justify this part of Policy CL2.

3.24 This policy is therefore wholly inappropriate, and not in accordance with the advice in PPS12 and PPG15.

**vi) Residential Amenity**

3.25 Policy CL5 relates to the requirement for new development to achieve high standards of amenity both in relation to the development proposed and to adjoining occupiers.

3.26 The policy sets out a requirement for development to require good daylight and sunlight amenity for buildings and amenity spaces, which includes commercial uses as well as other residential properties.

3.27 This requirement for the preservation of sunlight and daylight to commercial properties cannot be applied as rigorously as it can for residential properties, as the BRE Guidelines does not apply as rigorous requirements for natural light and sunlight to these uses. The policy should therefore take on board the requirements of the BRE Guidelines and adhere more appropriately to these in seeking the preservation of amenity.

## 4 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

4.1 Early analysis as part of the background evidence to the Core Strategy shows that some of its policies are either unjustified or inconsistent with National policy and should be either removed or revised.

4.2 Suggested changes are as follows:

### 4.3 **Policy CH2**

**Delete the following parts:**

*(f) resist development which results in the net loss of five or more residential units;*

*(g) require development that results in the amalgamation of residential units to be subject to a s106 agreement to ensure the resultant units are not further amalgamated in the future;*

### 4.4 **Policy CE1**

*“a) require an assessment to demonstrate that all new buildings and extensions defined as major development achieves the following Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM standards:*

*Residential Development: Code for Sustainable Homes*

- *Up to 2015: Level three;*
- *2015 - 2021: Level four;*
- *2021 onwards: Level five.*

*Non Residential Development: Relevant BREEAM Assessment*

- *Up to 2015: Excellent;*
- *2016 onwards: Outstanding;*

### 4.5 **Policy CL2**

**part (f)**

*“require additional storeys and roof level alterations to be sympathetic to the architectural style and character of the building and to either assist in unifying*

*a group of buildings or where there is a detached building to have a height reflective of local context.”*

**part (g)**

*“require it is demonstrated that subterranean extensions meet the following criteria:*

*i excavation underneath or adjacent to a listed building will be resisted where it has a clear and detrimental impact upon the character and setting of a listed building.*