

URS

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London Borough of Waltham Forest Development Management Policies Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal

Non-Technical Summary
January 2011




Waltham Forest
London Borough of Waltham Forest

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1 Introduction

1.1 About this Non-technical Summary

1.1.1 Scott Wilson has been commissioned by London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Development Management Policies Preferred Options, which is a component of the Borough's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

1.1.2 The Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) will set out the criteria based policies against which planning applications will be considered and determined. This DPD is required to comply with the Core Strategy and take into account the Governments statements on planning policies and the Mayors London Plan.

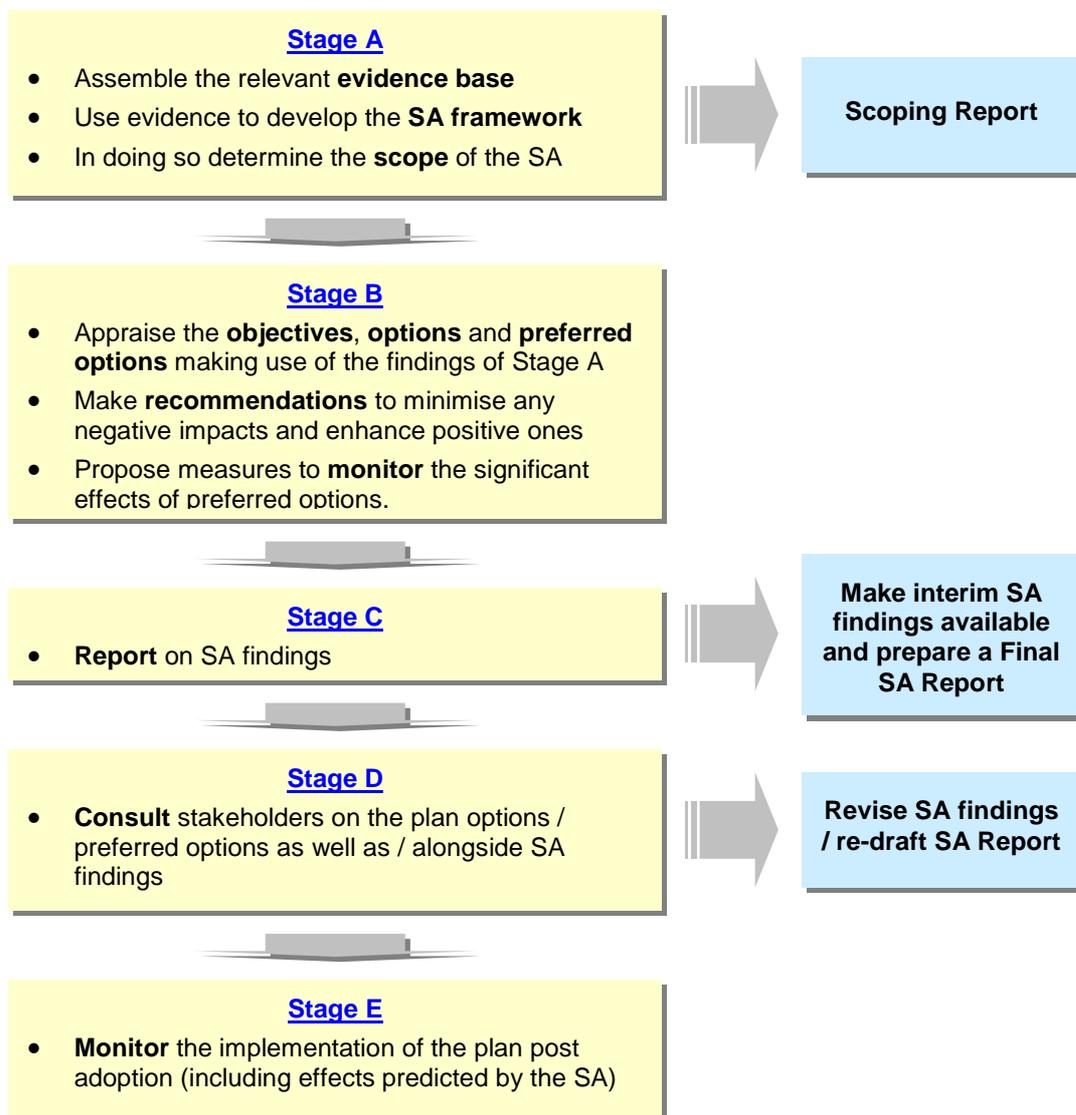
1.1.3 This report is a non-technical summary of the findings of the SA of the Development Management Policies Preferred Options. Its purpose is to report the findings of the SA in a way that can be easily understood and without the use of jargon or technical language.

1.2 Background

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

1.2.1 SEA and SA are processes by which the environmental, social and economic effects of a strategic action (a plan or a programme) are considered during its preparation. The aim is to identify the likely effects of the plan or programme in advance so that adverse effects can be minimised and beneficial effects can be enhanced. The findings of SA should be reflected in the adopted plan to help ensure that it maximises its contribution to future sustainability.

1.2.2 There are five stages undertaken for SA, as outlined below:



1.2.3 A Scoping Report for the SA of the Waltham Forest LDF was produced in July 2006 and was subject to consultation with the statutory consultees¹. In light of the time lapse between the production of the Scoping Report and the development of the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), and the potential for a change in the baseline situation in the Borough, the Council felt that it would be pertinent to revise and update the Scoping Report to reflect any such changes.

1.2.4 The Revised Scoping Report builds on the original Report and updates the baseline data and policy context to ensure that the key sustainability issues identified reflect the current situation. The sustainability objectives were also updated in the context of the identified issues to reflect these changes. The Scoping Report is available in full to download from the Council's website at: <http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/planning-policy/local-dev-framework/ldf/ldf-core-strategy-background.htm>

1.2.5 The Development Management Policies Preferred Options SA Report focuses on documenting the results of Stages B, C and D of the SA process. The Preferred Options policies have been

¹ The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage

appraised and recommendations have been made to enhance beneficial effects and minimise adverse ones. The Development Management Policies Preferred Options SA report should be read in conjunction with the Scoping Report and with the previous SA report which accompanied the Issues and Options Consultations.

- 1.2.6 Following consultation on the Preferred Options Development Management Policies DPD the Council will produce a Proposed Submission Version of the DPD. At this stage a SA Report will be produced to fulfil the requirements of the 'Environmental Report' as defined by the SEA regulations and which will include an examination of Cumulative Effects.
- 1.2.7 Stage E of the process (monitoring) will be undertaken by the Council following adoption of the Development Management Policies DPD and documented in the Annual Monitoring Report. Monitoring proposals are contained in the report. These proposals set out the indicators considered necessary to enable the Council to identify whether the adopted Development Management Policies DPD is contributing towards achieving sustainable development. These indicators are provisional and a definitive list of monitoring indicators will be published in a final SA Statement following adoption of the Development Management Policies DPD.

1.3 Development of the Development Management Policies DPD

- 1.3.1 The proposed timetable for the production of the Development Management Policies DPD:

| Key Milestone | Timescale |
|--|--------------------------|
| Issues and Options consultation | March – April 2010 |
| Preferred Options – (current stage) | January - February 2011 |
| Publication of submission version DPD for final public consultation | September - October 2011 |
| Submission of the DPD and SA Report to the Secretary of State with the representations received at the publication stage | January 2012 |
| Independent Examination/ Hearing Sessions | April 2012 |
| Adoption and publication of the Development Management Policies DPD | August 2012 |

- 1.3.2 The Development Management Policies Preferred Options consultation document contains the proposed draft policies. These have been developed from the issues and options put forward in the Issues and Options consultation.

2 Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal

2.1.1 The Sustainability Appraisal has concluded that the Development Management Policies Preferred Options is broadly sustainable. In general it is likely to have beneficial effects across a range of issues: economic, environmental and social, although some minor adverse effects are also possible. In eight particular respects it is considered likely that there will be significant effects over and above those that would have occurred, under the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2.2 Likely Significant Effects

Human Health

2.2.1 **Policy DM14:** Co-ordinating Land Use and Transport promotes mixed use developments and development in locations that minimise the need to travel, including locations that are highly accessible by public transport. It requires developments to address issues of transport demand and capacity generated by the development and facilitate movement by all modes of transport. It is therefore likely to offer minor benefits in the shorter term and more significant benefits in the longer term, given the lead-in times for major development, in relation to improving opportunities for access to local services, facilities and employment by sustainable transport.

2.2.2 **Policy DM15:** Sustainable Transport Network actively encourages sustainable travel and requires well-connected networks of streets that offer natural surveillance. It requires the enhancement of public transport interchanges and connections and seeks to ensure that the walking and cycling environments are attractive to users. There are likely to be minor benefits in the shorter term with significant benefits occurring over the longer term in relation to improving access to services and facilities through an integrated sustainable transport system.

Economy

2.2.3 **Policy DM26:** Managing Changes of Use in Town Centres supports the retention of retail and community uses within identified shopping areas. Similarly, smaller retail parades within local centres will be protected. This will ensure that retail uses predominate within town and local centres, which will contribute towards their viability.

Transport

2.2.4 **Policy DM14:** Co-ordinating Land Use and Transport promotes mixed use developments and development in locations that minimise the need to travel, including locations that are highly accessible by public transport. It requires developments to address issues of transport demand and capacity generated by new development and to facilitate movement by all modes of transport. It is therefore likely to offer minor benefits in the shorter term and more significant benefits in the longer term, given the lead-in times for major development.

2.2.5 **Policy DM15:** Sustainable Transport Network offers minor benefits in the shorter term with significant benefits occurring over the longer term in relation to improving access to services and facilities through an integrated sustainable transport system. The preferred option actively encourages sustainable travel and requires well-connected networks of streets that offer natural surveillance. It requires the enhancement of public transport interchanges and connections and seeks to ensure that the walking and cycling environments are attractive to users.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.2.6 **Policy DM29:** Built Heritage Assets is likely to offer significant benefits in relation to conserving the historic built environment. It seeks to preserve the character of conservation areas and does not allow the demolition of listed buildings or permit uses, alterations or extensions that would be detrimental to them. Archaeological heritage will be preserved in situ unless other measures are shown to be more appropriate. The policy also seeks to retain and enhance buildings within the local list of buildings of architectural/historical interest and also for ensuring that the character of buildings within Walthamstow Town Centre is regarded.

Climate

- 2.2.7 **Policy DM11:** Resource Efficiency and High Environmental Standards expects new developments to minimise, reuse and recycle materials and other resources from all stages of development, design, demolition, construction and operation. This option requires new developments to be designed with regard to sustainable design principles and to achieve the required zero carbon rating in line with government targets. This approach contributes to reductions in greenhouse gases and the conservation of energy over the plan period. The policy also requires high environmental standards for existing developments where extensions and retrofitting are involved.

Air

- 2.2.8 **Policy DM11:** Resource Efficiency and High Environmental Standards requires new developments to be designed with regard to sustainable design principles and to achieve the required zero carbon rating in line with government targets. This approach contributes to reductions in greenhouse gases and the conservation of energy over the plan period.

Biodiversity

- 2.2.9 **Policy DM36:** Biodiversity is likely to offer significant benefits in relation to conserving biodiversity and protecting the ecological integrity of Natura 2000 sites over the medium to long term. The policy requires the submission of a biodiversity report where a development proposal will affect a site, species of habitat recognised for biodiversity value. In addition to this, the policy seeks to extend the green infrastructure network and supports the use of native and climate change tolerant species. Resources of value should be retained, restored and enhanced where appropriate. Other measures in the policy include the protection, enhancement and extension of Green corridors, the maintenance of Local Nature Reserves, the protection of important trees and the protection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The policy offers a fairly comprehensive set of measures to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the Borough.

Landscape and Townscape

- 2.2.10 **Policy DM29:** Built Heritage Assets is likely to offer significant benefits in relation to conserving the historic built environment. It seeks to preserve the character of conservation areas and does not allow the demolition of listed buildings or permit uses, alterations or extensions that would be detrimental to them. Archaeological heritage will be preserved in situ unless other measures are shown to be more appropriate. The policy also seeks to retain and enhance buildings within the local list of buildings of architectural/historical interest and also for ensuring that the character of buildings within Walthamstow Town Centre is regarded.

2.3 Mitigation and Monitoring

Mitigation

- 2.3.1 Mitigation means taking measures to offset adverse effects or to enhance beneficial effects and is essential in making a plan or programme sustainable. The SA has identified a few minor adverse effects and no significant adverse effects due to the evolution of the document and the content of the Preferred Options policies. Therefore the measures proposed as mitigation (recommendations) are relatively limited but generally relate to clarifying and refining the policies. These recommendations can be viewed in the main SA Report. The Council will consider these measures along with comments received during the consultation period in the production of the Proposed Submission Development Management Policies DPD.

Monitoring

- 2.3.2 A set of general indicators for monitoring the effects of the Development Management Policies DPD has been proposed and will be considered by the Council. These indicators will be refined during the Proposed Submission Development Management Policies SA as indicators are intended to provide a means of determining whether the Development Management Policies DPD is having an unexpected significant adverse effect and therefore an indicator will be proposed for each sustainability problem identified during the Scoping of the SA. Indicators will also be proposed to monitor the known likely significant effects of the Development Management Policies DPD (discussed above), although these are all expected to be beneficial.

2.4 Next Stages

- 2.4.1 Following the consultation on the Preferred Options Development Management Policies the Council will consider the comments received on both the SA Report and the consultation DPD document and use these to inform the production of the Submission Version DPD.