

Item No. N/a	Classification: Open	Date: 12 February 2020	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning
Report title:		Neighbourhood Planning – Application for the designation of the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Dulwich Wood	
From:		Strategic Director of Place and Wellbeing	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning:

1. Notes that the consultation on the emerging Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area designation closed on Thursday 31 October 2019, and 101 representations have been received.
2. Agrees to designate the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood as the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Localism Act 2011 (by amending the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the 1990 Act')) introduced new provisions which empower parish councils and designated Neighbourhood Forums ('NFs') to initiate the process for making Neighbourhood Development Orders and Neighbourhood Development Plans in relation to designated Neighbourhood Areas. The powers came into force on 6 April 2012 when the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ('the 2012 Regulations') came into force.
4. A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan which sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole, or part of, a Neighbourhood Area. It may contain a range of policies or proposals for land use development that will carry weight in the determination of planning applications. Neighbourhood Development Orders grant planning permission in relation to a particular Neighbourhood Area for development specified in the Order or for a class of development specified in the Order. Both Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the relevant area.
5. Section 61G of the 1990 Act sets out the powers and duties of local planning authorities in relation to the designation of Neighbourhood Areas. Sub-section (4) sets out a number of considerations which the local planning authority must have regard to when determining an application for the designation of a specified area as a Neighbourhood Area. The local planning authority is not obliged to designate the entire area specified in the application if it does not consider it appropriate to do so, but if it refuses to designate the entire area for this reason, it must give its reasons for that decision and must use its powers to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more designated Neighbourhood Areas. If

a body or organisation is designated as a Neighbourhood Forum for a particular Neighbourhood Area, it is authorised to act in relation to that Area for the purposes of promoting a Neighbourhood Plan/Order.

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7. Once a Neighbourhood Forum has been designated, it may submit a proposal to the local planning authority for the making of a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order, which will be submitted to independent examination. If, following that examination, the council is satisfied that the draft Plan/Order meets the requisite conditions, the council must hold (and pay for) a referendum on the making of the Plan/Order.

Neighbourhood Area preparation stages

8. Under regulation (5) of the 2012 Regulations, it states where an organisation or body submits a neighbourhood area application, it must include a series of supporting documents accompanying the application. It also needs to demonstrate that the application complies with requirements set out in 61G(4) of the 1990 Act. These will be elaborated in further detail under the section 'Key Issues for Consideration'.
9. Regulation (6) of the 2012 Regulations requires local planning authorities to publish the application and any supporting material (found in the appendices) as soon as possible after receiving a Neighbourhood area application. It is required to be publicised on the local authority's website and in any other manner as the local planning authority considers is likely to bring the application to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the area for a minimum of 6 weeks, in order to allow for the receipt of representations.
10. The application for Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area has been consulted on for a period of 6 weeks between the 20th September to 31st October 2019, in accordance with regulation (6) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
11. 101 representations have been received by Southwark, the results will be analysed under the 'Consultation' section of the report.
12. Following Regulation (6) and working jointly with LB Lewisham, consultation has now concluded and the decision can be made to designate the Forum.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The requirements of Regulation (5) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

13. Regulation 5 of the 2012 Regulations requires certain documents to be submitted with a neighbourhood area application. Sydenham Hill Ridge has submitted the following supporting documents to accompany their application, including:
 - A map which identifies the area; (Appendix C)
 - A statement explaining why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area (Appendix E)

- A statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of s.61G of the 1990 Act (Appendix E)
14. As such, the council considers that the requirements of Regulation (5) of the 2012 Regulations have been satisfied in relation to this application.

The requirements of section 61G subsections (4) of Town and Country Planning Act 1990

15. Under subsection (4) of section 61G in the 1990 Act a local planning authority must, in determining an application as a neighbourhood area, have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area, and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.
16. The Supporting Statement submitted by the members of Sydenham Hill Ridge (Appendix E), states that communication with local councilors has broadly demonstrated support of the Sydenham Hill Ridge area designation due to the potential benefits. Appendix E discusses why the area is appropriate for the designation as a Neighbourhood Area and conveys the desirability of the designation in light of the significant community support for the designation of the proposed neighbourhood forum and area.
17. The council considers that the proposed area is capable of designation as a neighbourhood area under s.61G. However, the council does not propose to make a decision as to whether to designate the application boundary as a Neighbourhood area for Sydenham Hill Ridge until the period for making representations has expired and any representations received have been considered.

Consultation

18. The consultation for Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area has been publicised in the following ways for a period of 6 weeks.
- Publicising a Press notice in the Southwark News
 - Sending out emails to subscribers in the Planning Policy mailing list, in addition to statutory consultees and
 - Updating relevant webpages on the Southwark council website.
19. Of the 101 responses received regarding the designation of the Neighbourhood Area, 95 stated support and six stated an objection. Thirteen respondents provided their address, and of these 7 live in Southwark.
20. Most representations received expressed that they are content with the application. The comments supporting the area designation touched on themes such as the importance of the local character and the frustrations of residents feeling like they are on the edge of two boroughs and rarely considered when it comes to planning matters. Comments stated that the designation will promote unity and cohesion in the local community and allow residents to more easily assist with the strategic planning of the Sydenham Hill area, and to ensure that local environmental and social assets are given protection.

21. Representations which objected to the designation regarded the need to provide greater protection to the local environment from the potential threat which may be caused by future development.
22. Historic England where the only statutory consultee that submitted a representation that identified a need for draft heritage policies in response to Bell Wood House (Southwark). Bell Wood House is on the Heritage at Risk register and Historic England are therefore encouraging policy that can best enhance and preserve heritage assets.

Financial implications

22. There is no financial implication for the council at this stage regarding the designation of the neighbourhood area.
23. However, should Sydenham Hill Ridge progress to the stages of producing a Neighbourhood Plan which does proceed to the referendum stage, it will incur inevitable cost to the Council. This cost could be similar to a ward election, which is usually around £25,000 per referendum. It is likely to be shared between LB Lewisham and Southwark, since Sydenham Hill Ridge is a joint operation between the two boroughs.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

24. The recommendation requests that the Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning note that the consultation on the emerging Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood area designation closed on Thursday 31 October 2019, and 101 representations have been received.
25. It is further recommended that the Cabinet Member agrees to designate the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood as the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area.
26. Consultation in respect of the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area application (as detailed at paragraph 18 of this report) has been carried out in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
27. The council may designate an organisation or body as a neighbourhood area if satisfied it meets the conditions set out in section (5) of the 2012 Act and it must also have regard to the requirements set out in section 61G(4) of the 1990 Act. As detailed in paragraphs 19 – 22, the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area application has been assessed against these statutory criteria and has been found to be compliant.
28. Officers will need to note that Regulation 7 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 requires the Council to publish their decision on the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood area application as soon as possible after a decision has been taken.
29. The Equality Act 2010 introduced the public sector equality duty, which merged existing race, sex and disability equality duties and extended them to include other protected characteristics; namely age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief and sex and sexual orientation, including

marriage and civil partnership. In summary those subject to the equality duty, which includes the council, must in the exercise of their functions: (i) have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and (ii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

30. In addition, the Human Rights Act 1998 imposed a duty on the council as a public authority to apply the European Convention on Human Rights; as a result the Council must not act in a way which is incompatible with these rights. The most important rights for planning purposes are Article 8 (respect for homes); Article 6 (natural justice) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (peaceful enjoyment of property).
31. The decision in this report is not considered to impact on equalities or human rights.
32. Paragraph 7 (Part 3 (D)) of the Southwark Constitution provides that it is the role and function of the Cabinet Member to agree to significant policy issues in relation to their area of responsibility. Paragraph 17 of this part delegates to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and New Homes (new title since 2018 elections is Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning) responsibility for agreeing broad consultation arrangements, in relation to their areas of responsibility.
33. Decision 1 of (Table A), paragraph 16, of the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Decision Making report dated 6 March 2015 clearly states that the decision to agree an application for designation of a neighbourhood area for 6 weeks consultation and consideration of the consultation responses thereafter can be taken by Individual Cabinet Member decision. It is therefore considered that the recommendation sought in this report falls within the Cabinet Member's decision-making remit.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (PW18/012)

35. This report is requesting the Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning to note that the consultation on the emerging Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood area designation closed on Thursday 31 October 2019, and 101 representations have been received.
36. This report is also requesting the Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning to agree to designate the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood as the Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Area.
37. The strategic director of finance and governance notes that there are no financial implications arising from this report. Should the Neighbourhood Plan for Sydenham Hill Ridge proceed to the referendum stage, it will be subject to future IDM report, including identifying resources for any commitments.

Equalities Impact Assessment

34. The council considers that an Equalities Impact Assessment will not be needed for this occasion, as the application submitted complies with subsection (4) of section 61G in the 1990 Act. This is elaborated under 'Key Issue for Consideration', paragraph 15 of this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The Localism Act	Link (please copy and paste into your browser): http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted	planpolall@southwark.gov.uk
The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations	Link (please copy and paste into your browser): http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made	planpolall@southwark.gov.uk

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Neighbourhood Area application to Southwark
Appendix B	Constitution CIO
Appendix C	Designated Sydenham Hill Ridge Area May 2019
Appendix D	List of Supporters & Members May 2019
Appendix E	2019 Neighbourhood Area Supporting Statement
Appendix F	Consultation responses and officer comments

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Juliet Seymour , Planning Policy Manager	
Report Author	Lauretta Doku, Graduate Planner	
Version	Final	
Dated	12 February 2020	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	12 February 2020	