

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment

### Sustainability Appraisal

A sustainability appraisal has been carried out at each of the main stages in the preparation of the Southwark Plan going back to the First Draft for Deposit in February 2002. The purpose is to analyse and review how the plan will affect economic, social and environmental objectives. Assessment of the impacts of policies on the quality of life of specific groups including those affected by cross cutting issues such as race, gender, disability, sexuality, faith and age and specific user groups e.g. small businesses, voluntary sector agencies etc. Policies in the plan have been assessed against the following 33 sustainability objectives which have also been assessed for their compatibility with the Community Strategy:

1. Focus development at locations with current or planned good public transport links, spare capacity, and easy access by walking or cycling
2. Reduce car dependency by improving transport choice.
3. Encourage mixed use development, with provision of key local services, and amenity
4. Ensure more efficient use of natural resources, especially soil, mineral aggregates, water and energy.
5. Protect and enhance biodiversity and natural habitats, and create new wildlife habitats
6. Maximise benefits of regeneration schemes for local people
7. Actively promote new clean technologies e.g. in sectors including the environmental economy, renewable energy and pollution control
8. Develop sustainable tourism industry
9. Ensure inward investment projects are sustainable
10. Improve river and canal ecological and amenity qualities, and seek more sustainable uses thereof
11. Protect, maintain, restore and enhance existing open spaces, create new open spaces, and ensure access to open spaces and wider public realm is maintained.
12. Improve health, reduce health inequalities, and promote healthy living
13. Reduce crime and fear of crime
14. Ensure access to good quality affordable housing for all
15. Ensure, where possible, new development occurs on derelict, vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings, and that land is remediated as appropriate.
16. Encourage communication between different local communities, in order to improve understanding of differing needs and concerns.
17. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and plan for further reductions to meet or exceed national climate change targets
18. Improve air quality
19. Reduce amount of waste requiring final disposal through waste minimisation, and increase proportion of waste reused, recycled, composted and recovered
20. Minimise ambient noise using best practice
21. Substantially increase proportion of energy purchased and generated from renewable and sustainable resources
22. Promote investment in and use of sustainable rail and water freight transport
23. Create a climate for investment, with a modern employment structure based on a combination of indigenous growth and inward investment
24. Promote high quality urban design in conjunction with sustainable construction principles and techniques

25. Tackle poverty and social exclusion in areas of particular need
26. Maintain and enhance the quality, integrity and distinctive character of the area
27. Maintain and enhance the historic environment and cultural assets of the area.
28. Avoid development that will impact on areas at high risk from flooding
29. Increase tree cover as appropriate and ensure active and sustainable management of existing woodland
30. Improve the image of the borough as part of an exemplary sustainable city
31. Actively challenge discrimination against all marginalised groups
32. Ensure equal opportunities to employment and occupation
33. Respect people and value their contribution to society

Many of the objectives have been translated directly into policies for the development and use of land so it is unsurprising that the resulting plan can be shown to be highly supportive of them. However, to carry out the appraisal the plan was assessed against the objectives using the following scoring system.

- 0 Unacceptable and/or seriously threatens sustainable development objectives
- 1 Does not comply with sustainable development objectives
- 2 Complies with sustainable development objectives as covered by general statements
- 3 Complies with sustainable development objectives, provides detailed evidence and added value
- Not related

Naturally a policy or section of the plan which is assessed as unacceptable or seriously threatening the objectives or not compliant with the objectives of the plan will need to be carefully examined. Also, not all policies will provide detailed evidence and added value. Scores should, therefore, be in the range 2 to 3. The scores indicated which parts of the plan were more or less supportive of the council's sustainability objectives and highlighted areas where further consideration was needed.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Although the sustainability appraisal includes assessment of the impact of policies on social issues, a specific equalities impact assessment has also been carried out to assess whether the Unitary Development Plan helps to meet the Council's commitments under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. This has informed the plan to produce better policies.

The assessment considered questions in relation to each policy of the plan such as:

- Does the policy meet corporate priorities around equalities? This includes improving community relations.
- To what extent are its aims consistent with wider Council policies on equality, diversity and social inclusion? Eg does the policy help reduce racial tensions, increase a sense of belonging among different communities or groups?
- To what extent does will the policy present any barriers to any community group?
- Does the policy contribute to improving quality of life of specific groups?
- Does the policy include measures to help promote equality of opportunity?
- What practical changes will help reduce any adverse impact on particular groups?
- What will be done to improve access to an take up of services or understanding of the policy?

The scoring system used in the sustainability appraisal was adapted and used to summarise the the results in relation to each part of the plan and each aspect of equalities. The scores for different sections of the plan could therefore track improvements that were made to better reflect equalities objectives as follows:

Section	1 <sup>st</sup> Draft	2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft	Pre- Inquiry	Final Changes
Tackling poverty and envouraging wealth creation	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5
Life chances	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Clean and green	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.5
Housing	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.6
Sustainable transport	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5

The equalities impact assessment concluded that the Southwark Plan performs acceptably in meeting the equalities objectives.

Examples of policies that were highlighted for improvement through the equalities impact assessment process are as follows:

- As noted in the main report, the issue of the competing demands coming from the community for work space and for suitable meeting space for community groups including faith groups has been and continues to be carefully examined.
- Links were identified between policies on parking standards for the mobility impaired, residential design standards, quality of design and the development of live-work units which helped to inform the policies so that the needs of people with mobility impairment were fully considered.
- It was noted that fully inclusive access to the river Thames may not be achievable.
- The policy relating to Travellers and Gypsy sites was carefully considered to ensure that it properly reflected the identified needs and did not create barriers to equality of opportunity for these racial groups as defined in the Race Relation Amendment Act 2000.