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| <b>Item No.</b><br><b>11</b>       | <b>Classification:</b><br>Open | <b>Date:</b><br>16/01/03                        | <b>MEETING NAME</b><br>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee |
| <b>Report title:</b>               |                                | Southwark Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Review |  |
| <b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b> |                                | Borough-wide                                    |  |
| <b>From:</b>                       |                                | Strategic Director of Regeneration              |  |

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the programme for scrutinising the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) set out in paragraph 20 be agreed.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The first draft for deposit of the new UDP – also known as ‘The Southwark Plan (2002)’ – was agreed by Council Assembly on 30 October 2002, and is attached at Appendix A. Council Assembly also resolved that the plan should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3. Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 December 2002 resolved that the Unitary Development Plan be referred to Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee for completion and report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the end of the 2002-03 Municipal Year. That scrutiny should have particular regard to:
  - Assessment of the appropriateness of the Opportunity Areas and Action Areas identified within the UDP document;
  - Assessment of the proposed housing densities for areas within the borough;
  - Understanding sustainability appraisals.
4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee also resolved that each of the scrutiny sub-committees be asked to comment on areas of particular concern within the UDP and these comments to be incorporated into the final scrutiny report from Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
5. An officer presentation first given to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 9 December 2002, and subsequently to this Sub-Committee on the Southwark Plan is attached at Appendix B.

### KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

6. The issues surrounding the particular aspects of the UDP identified by Overview and Scrutiny Committee for examination are discussed below:

#### Opportunity Areas and Action Areas

7. The draft UDP identifies two opportunity areas and five action areas.

8. The opportunity areas, London Bridge and Elephant and Castle, were identified in the Mayor of London's Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) also known as 'The London Plan'. The SDS identifies 28 opportunity areas in all throughout London on the basis that they are capable of accommodating substantial new jobs or homes and their potential should be maximised.
9. The action areas have been identified by Southwark as areas that have significant potential (although less than in the opportunity areas) for increases in residential, employment and other uses. These correspond to the designation 'areas for intensification' in the London Plan. These are
  - Canada Water
  - Bankside and The Borough
  - Bermondsey Spa
  - Old Kent Road
  - Peckham
10. The opportunity areas and the action areas are affected by the same policy in Part II of the draft UDP, policy 1.2 Action Area Plans. This policy says that the Council will prepare action area plans which will form supplementary planning guidance (SPG) for each area. These SPG or development frameworks identify the specific characteristics of the area that need to be enhanced or developed. These, together with a range of other SPG documents that deal with specific areas of the borough or specific topics, are out to consultation at the moment.

### **Housing Densities**

11. The draft UDP sets guidelines for the density of new housing development. This responds to the Government's planning policy guidance notes (PPG) set out in PPG 3 – Housing. This requires local planning authorities to support the Government's strategy of concentrating housing growth on brownfield sites in cities and making the best use of land. The density guidelines in the draft UDP also respond to the requirement in the draft London Plan to maximise the potential of sites and to base density guidelines in their UDPs on principles set out in the London Plan.
12. The new draft UDP sets three broad ranges of housing density based on three zones as required by the London Plan. These are the central zone, the urban zone and the suburban zone. The plan applies the central zone density range to the central London area which corresponds to the Congestion Charging Zone boundary and to action areas with high public transport accessibility: Peckham, Old Kent Road, Bermondsey Spa and Canada Water. The suburban density zone is considered mainly to apply to outer London but extends a short way into Dulwich. The rest of the borough is in the urban zone.
13. Housing density is measured in terms of habitable rooms per hectare (hrph). The current Southwark UDP adopted in 1995 contains a guideline range of 170 to 210 hrph for new residential development suitable for families. Exceptions where higher densities are appropriate are identified. The new draft UDP indicates much higher densities of 700 - 1100 hrph in the central zone (typically intensive 8 - 10 storey developments), 300 - 700 hrph in the urban zone (typically 4 – 5 storey development of flats with communal open space and balconies for most flats) and 200 - 350 hrph in the suburban zone (typically houses with gardens). These density guidelines will be achieved with restrictive car parking standards including car-free developments in the most accessible locations. However, Policy 5.5 in the draft UDP on density specifies that the guidelines densities will not take precedence over the context and urban design

considerations of any development proposal.

14. The London Plan sets a target for Southwark of 29,530 new dwelling units by 2016. This is the second highest target for any London borough. The new draft UDP contains policies that should facilitate a high rate of housing growth in order to meet this target. This could lead to a growth in the population of Southwark by over 60,000 from the current level of 242,600 (2001 mid-year estimate).

### **Sustainability Appraisals**

15. The new draft UDP is intended to be a major influence in achieving sustainable development. It states that the Council's sustainability objectives include achieving sustainable development that balances the needs of the environment, economy and society. All planning decisions are, in effect, seeking to achieve a balance between these needs. The sustainability appraisal required for a wide range of planning applications by policy 3.13 in the new draft UDP is intended to provide a systematic process for ensuring that these considerations are properly considered and balanced against each other.
16. The sustainability impact assessment will encompass environmental and transport impact assessments.
17. They are intended to make planning decisions more transparent by showing what trade-offs have been made between the needs of the environment and social and economic requirements.

### **Policy implications**

18. The UDP may be seen as providing the spatial expression of the Community Strategy – setting out the land-use and development implications of the Council's priorities.
19. The UDP is part of the portfolio of the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development who convened an advisory panel of Members to assist her in overseeing the preparation of the first deposit draft. This panel may be reconvened to oversee future stages of the process.
20. The first draft for deposit of the new UDP was approved by Council Assembly. The plan has been placed 'on deposit' according to statutory procedure and the period for comments ended on 10 January. Officers will now seek to negotiate with all objectors to the plan to see if objections can be overcome by making revisions to the policies or proposals. A revised second draft will then be prepared and placed before the Council Assembly. The views and recommendations of this and other scrutiny sub-committees can be taken into account in the second draft which is currently expected to be ready in Autumn 2003. The plan may then proceed through the public inquiry stage to final adoption which is currently expected to be in 2004.
21. It is proposed that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee consider the issues set out above and that further examination takes place at subsequent meetings up to the end of the municipal year when the sub-committee shall report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In particular, the sub-committee should consider:
  - The choice of action areas and the proposals put forward for them
  - The capacity of the borough to take new housing and the appropriateness of the density guidelines and
  - The operation of the sustainability impact assessments, how they will assist in making decisions more transparent and whether they will lead to more sustainable development.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers  | Held At  | Contact                         |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| The Southwark Plan and draft Supplementary Planning Guidance | Planning Policy Unit<br>Regeneration<br>Department                                     | Simon Bevan<br>020 7525 5411    |
| Overview & Scrutiny Committee:<br>Agenda and Minutes         | Constitutional Support<br>Unit, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Peckham<br>Road, London SE5 8UB | Lucas Lundgren<br>0207 525 7224 |

## AUDIT TRAIL

|   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Lead Officer</b>   | Paul Evans – Strategic Director of Regeneration |                          |
| <b>Report Author</b>  | Simon Bevan – Acting Planning Policy Manager    |                          |
| <b>Version</b>  | First draft                                     |                          |
| <b>Dated</b>  | 13 December 2002                                |                          |
| <b>Key Decision?</b>  | No  |                          |
| <b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER</b> |   |                          |
| <b>Officer Title</b>  | <b>Comments Sought</b>                          | <b>Comments included</b> |
| Borough Solicitor & Secretary   | No  | No                       |
| Chief Finance Officer   | No  | No                       |
| <b>Executive Member</b>   | No  | No                       |
| <b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services</b>          |   |                          |