Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 15 February 2011	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Recycling
Report title:		Streetscape Design Manual for Public Consultation	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Strategic Director of Environment	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet member approves the Draft Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (SSDM) Part I (General Interest) documents attached as appendices 2 and 3 to this report for issue for public consultation in the new year.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

2. Streets and spaces are the public face of the borough, conduits for movement, and the places where much of Southwark's dynamic cultural and community life takes place. They are as important to residents and visitors as the buildings and landmarks they provide settings for. However, designing and managing them to balance the many competing demands they are expected to serve whilst still achieving high quality results is a complex task. This requires clear procedures and good communication of design requirements and overall priorities.

3. The Draft SSDM has been prepared to explain the council's priorities, standards, requirements and related procedures for the design of those streets and spaces that form part of the adopted public highway. It will be amongst the most important documents influencing the appearance, arrangement and functionality of these important community resources.

4. The Draft SSDM considers the following design and management issues:

   - Achieving visual quality and robustness in design.
   - Supporting and encouraging inclusive social activity within public spaces.
   - Providing street greenery for pleasure and other environmental design features that help improve climatic quality.
   - Promoting and supporting community safety through design and management.
   - Meeting the accessibility and inclusion needs of vulnerable pedestrians so that they can use and navigate public space.
   - Promoting road safety.
   - Accommodating necessary vehicle movement needs within the context of the above

- Promoting sustainability in design and construction materials.

5. The intended benefits of having the SSDM are to:

   - Promote greater quality, constancy and efficiency in the design of streets and spaces, so improving the appearance of the public realm and integration between neighborhoods whilst still allowing for distinctive design in our most important community spaces.

   - Improve the extent to which non-traffic related functions are considered in and provided for in the design of public spaces (e.g. visual amenity, environmental performance, social uses), so broadening their overall benefit to the community.

   - Demonstrate to residents and businesses the standards they can expect the council to deliver and things it will prioritise when it undertakes improvement or maintenance works to the borough's streets and spaces, so providing the basis for accountability and on-going development.

   - Provide information for private developers and their agents about aspects of the council's adoptable standards for the design of existing or proposed new adoptable highway and related approval processes, so improving the ease of investing in the borough and satisfaction of working in partnership with the council.

6. Production of the Draft SSDM responds in part to the agreed recommendations of scrutiny and over-view committee B's 2010 review into Street Clutter that required that the SSDM should establish how the council proposes to address this issue. This concern cuts across the manual.

Overview of Parts

7. The Draft SSDM comprises of a series of documents divided into two main parts.

8. Part I (General Interest) contains the Summary Guide which sets strategic design objectives and policies for the borough and provides an over-view of the broader SSDM structure. It also contains a Regulating Plan that breaks the borough into various Specification Areas which are referenced in Part II content.

9. Part II (Technical Information) will contain detailed requirements for the design of spaces within the highway, building upon the framework established in Part I. These will include details of acceptable materials, construction details and design standards and related design development and approval procedures.

10. This report presents the Draft SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents. It is proposed that the public are consulted on these documents for 6 weeks between the end of January and mid-March 2011. Thereafter it is proposed that the documents (amended as appropriate) would be adopted by decision of the cabinet.

11. See 47 below regarding the proposed means of agreeing SSDM Part II

(Technical Information) documents.

Components of the Draft SSDM Part I (General Interest)

12. Appendix 1 provides a brief over-view of the structure of the Draft SSDM showing both Part 1 and Part 2 documents.

13. The following Draft SSDM Part 1 (General Interest) documents setting out general information are appended to this report:

    - Summary Guide - This is attached as appendix 2 to this report. Note that this document includes an appendix providing the policy and strategy context rationale for the strategic policies and objectives proposed within the guide. This is available as background information to this report.

    - Regulating Plan - This is attached as appendix 3 to this report.

14. In addition the following further document is attached to this report for information, though note that it is proposed that this will be agreed under delegated authority by the appropriate chief officer or head of service.

    - Introductory Guide For Members Of The Public - This is attached as appendix 3 to this report.

15. The first and most important of the Draft SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents is the Summary Guide (presented as appendix 2 to this report). This will provide a broad introduction as to:

    - the purpose and reasons for having the Draft SSDM Parts I & II,

    - the interaction between the various components of Part I & II documents

    - the main components of the quality system that the SSDM introduces, and

16. In addition, this document establishes the strategic design objectives and policies that will be used to guide decision making, improvements, and development of requirements within Part II (Technical Information) documents. An appendix to the Summary Guide (available as background information to this report) sets out the policy and strategy justification for the proposed strategic design objectives and policies.

17. The next Draft SSDM Part 1 (General Interest) document is the Regulating Plan (presented as appendix 3 to this report). This designates to each part of the borough one of four potential Specification Areas. This provides an important part of the framework for Draft SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents which will establish suitable surface materials, types of street furniture and landscaping details for each of these. Some procedures and written design standards may also reference Specification Areas. The boundaries of most of the Specification Areas are defined by direct reference to those of designations within the adopted Local Development Framework Proposals Map or other designations made under statute by the council acting as Local Planning Authority (e.g. conservation areas). As such, were these designations to change, then those in the Regulating Plan would change too.

18. The last of the SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents is an Introductory Guide to the SSDM written for members of the public. This provides a very simple over view of the elements of the SSDM that are likely to be of interest to the wide public. It is proposed that future further such guides would be produced for developers and their agents and internal council officers from other departments.

19. In order that they can be updated readily, it is not proposed that these Introductory Guides would form part of the adopted SSDM (see 14 above). Consequently, appendix 4 is provided here as background information only.

Interaction with other council documents relating to design and adoption of the public highway

20. The Draft SSDM in its entirety (i.e. both Parts I and II) is one of a series of documents setting standards for the design and construction of the public highway. Rather than being a stand alone reference for the design and adoption of public highways, the SSDM is intended to be read with these other documents that are not part of the SSDM. These other documents are being developed in two phases. A summary of each is provided below.

    Phase A:

    - SSDM – Part I (General Interest) and Part II (Technical Interest) documents.

    - Network Management Plan – approach to balancing allocation of highway space and movement.

    - Highways Asset Management Plan – details of procedures and strategies for the management of highway assets, including roads, footways, lighting columns and other items of street furniture within these.

    Phase B:

    - Southwark Highways Adoption and Development Control Manual – details procedures for adoption of highways as highways maintainable at the public expense and for establishing necessary works to the public highway associated with new developments.

    - Southwark Highway Specification – details of engineering and contract requirements for the underlying design and construction of carriageways.

    - SSDM – further Part I (General Interest) and Part 2 (Technical Information) content (see 27 for further details).

21. Development of other phase A non-SSDM documents is being undertaken concurrent to that of the SSDM.

22. It is intended that work on phase B will follow the completion of work on phase A.

Interaction with the Local Authority exercising planning functions

23. In addition to setting out important elements of the council's adoptable standards for streets that are proposed to be adopted as highways maintainable at the public expense, the SSDM introduces a process driven approach to the development of schemes. All projects for the improvement, maintenance or creation of highways maintained at public expense will be required to follow these – whether internally or externally delivered or promoted. Developers seeking approval from the Highway Authority for works to the adopted public highway (including those that would create new adopted public highway) will be required to follow this process to gain consent from the Highway Authority.

24. All development proposals impacting upon the highway or creating new highway space will be encouraged to meet the adoptable standards set out within the SSDM. Where it is proposed that streets be adopted as highways maintainable at the public expense this will be subject to them meeting the SSDMs adoptable standards amongst, other things. Where it is proposed that streets remain as private streets the Highway Authority will never the less promote the construction and design of these to the adoptable standards of the SSDM. It is proposed that the forthcoming Southwark highways adoption and development control manual (see above) will provide further detail on these matters.

Assessment of Design Standards and Criteria

25. The overall design process (be that for internal street improvement projects or those related to private developments) will be over-seen by public realm Design Quality Officers who will also serve to check standards are being met and prepare design assessment reports for approval at key stages. A fee will be levied for their services for both internal and external schemes. See 39 below for further information.

26. Procedures introduced through the SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents will cover the involvement of members of the public (including street leaders) in informing the initial scope of projects and (for some larger schemes) feeding their views into the assessment of design proposals through public review meetings that would supplement rather than replace wider consultations. In this way, the SSDM will clarify for the first time expectations for the public as to the level of involvement they can expect and how this will take place.

Further development of SSDM with phase B

27. Once adopted, the phase A SSDM content as presented in this report and in SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents would apply only to the adopted public highway. However, it is proposed that the extension of the document to housing land and parks be investigated as one of several priorities for expansion during phase B of development work. Other priorities would include:

    - Development of a Street Element Palette for the *Strategic Cultural Area* Specification Area: Of the four Specification Areas proposed, development of an associated palette of specifications for paving elements and items of street furniture has been left to the second phase in order to allow time for more detailed liaison with conservation and design officers in this special

area. This recognises unique circumstances on account of world importance and the greater availability of planning related contributions for works to the public highway.

- Development of Minor Variant Area palette items: It is proposed to permit a small number of variations from Specification Area palettes in certain locations on account of local character. For example, whilst all items in the standard palette would apply in Dulwich, white picket bollards might be used their rather than black plastic ones on account of local precedent. Proposed locations for such areas and potential variants include:

  Dulwich (main footway surfacing and bollards)

  Rotherhithe and Canada Water (main footway surfacing)

  Park Edge Streets (main footway surfacing and bollards)

  Bermondsey Spa (block paving within the carriageway)

28. It is proposed that Information gained within the public consultation on the phase A SSDM content would be used to inform some of the above (see 43 below).

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Policy Implications

29. The Summary Guide (appendix 2 to this report within Part 1 (General Interest)) adopts a series of strategic design objectives and policies. These have been informed by a review of wider policy and strategy influences at the national, regional and borough levels, as well as consideration of additional evidence from research reports. This will be published as an appendix to the "summary guide" but is included as background information to this report owing to its size. As such, the proposed strategic design objectives and policies accord with the Sustainable Community Strategy, Mayors Transport Plan and other important policy influences for the council acting as Highway Authority. Crucially, the objectives and policies also recognise the need to accord with and contribute towards meeting the policies and objectives of other strategies and policy documents prepared by local strategic partnership partners that are not of direct relevance to the Highway Authority (e.g. certain LDF documents, Southwark Health Strategy etc...).

30. The resulting proposed strategic design objectives and policies can be found in chapter 1 of the Summary Guide (attached as appendix 2 to this report). This includes several policies that specifically address different aspects of the prevalence of street clutter in accordance with the recommendations of an earlier scrutiny and overview committee report.

31. These strategic design objectives and policies as set out in chapter 1 of the Summary Guide are fundamental to the SSDM in several ways:

- The policies will provide the basis and justification for the design standards and requirements set out in the SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents that will be agreed under delegated authority by chief officer of head of service decision in accordance with the constitution.

- The policies will be used within the design process for individual schemes to provide evidence of reasonable decision making for audit trail purposes related to Road Safety Audits (RSAs) that are commonly conducted on most design proposals. Where design decisions are taken not to follow a RSA recommendation this will be justified by a risk: benefit analysis that assesses the impact of the RSA recommendation on balance across all the policies.

- A set of Design Indicators related to the policies will be developed and included in Part II (Technical Information) content. Targets for improvements against these will be set for projects at their outset and proposals assessed against these throughout their development. This will allow the council to monitor and evidence how it is fulfilling these policies. Similarly, a series of Monitoring Indicators will be established to assess and monitor outcomes related to objectives.

Community Impact Statement

32. Public spaces are forums for planned or informal social interaction and conduits for movement, allowing access to services and opportunities (as well as providing potential space for such opportunities themselves). Their design can also have a substantial impact on a wide range of concerns that may not at first be obvious – from local climate and air quality, to property values and community confidence.

33. All members of the public gain from public spaces in at least one of these respects. As such their design can have a limiting or enabling effect on equality, diversity, rights and social cohesion. This is particularly so in a comparatively densely populated borough like Southwark where:

    - residents and visitors may lack sufficient private space of their own or other convenient off highway public space to meet their needs; and

    - existing public space within the highway can consequently be under intensive pressure to meet a wide variety of often competing demands (for instance, parking places for businesses vs. space for children's street play or urban greenery).

34. Southwark's status as a major destination for international visitors adds further complexity, in that the needs of those from outside the borough must also be considered in some respects.

35. Strategic design objectives and policies contained in the "summary guide" have been developed with regard to the council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and the various statutes this replaces, anticipating potential impacts in light of research findings and past experience. Further discussion and identification of potential impacts in relation to individual policies is provided in annex 1 to appendix 2 of this report.

36. A full 3 stage Equalities, Diversity and Rights Impact Assessment (EQIA) is being conducted on the draft SSDM in accordance with existing requirements. The draft stage 1 scoping report has been produced and submitted to the Equalities and Disability Panel. This is attached to this report as appendix 5. This report considers the potential impact of the SSDM on particular groups

and communities in further detail. It is intended that this would cover both SSDM Part I and Part II content.

Other Impact Assessments

37. No separate Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required.

38. No Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 12 – Local Spatial Planning is required.

Resource Implications

39. The principal resource implication associated with the SSDM is the proposed introduction of design quality officers to oversee the development of projects and enforce the requirements of the document.

40. Further to advice provided by finance officers (see *supplementary advice from other officers* below) it is proposed that the positions of design quality officers be self funding. To facilitate this it is proposed to levy a fee for involvement of these officers on all projects, be these internally funded and developed or external development proposals. In respect to the application of this fee to works proposed by private developers, this is permissible under the Highways Act 1980 which allows Highway Authorities to recover reasonable costs associated with the creation of s38 or s278 agreements. This would be recovered under an existing fee for network approvals already included in the "fees and charges schedule".

41. Officers are currently undertaking modeling to determine an appropriate level for such fees, but it is likely that these will be set at fixed rates corresponding with the different levels of size and complexity of projects. It is likely that additional top-up fees will be charged in relation to determining departure requests and/or supervising works on site.

42. Additionally, the standardisation of surface materials and street furniture creates potential opportunities for the council to obtain better value for money from suppliers through changes to procurement arrangements and to increase the sustainability of the production, delivery, installation and maintenance of products via these. Further work is required to determine how these opportunities can best be exploited.

External Consultation

43. Appendix 6 summarises the proposed plan for consulting the wider public on Draft SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents. It also indicates the proposed means of agreeing Draft SSDM Part 2 (Technical Information) documents.

44. In addition to requesting general comments on SSDM Part 1 documents it is proposed to ask for public views on a small number of specific design issues. Those proposed would include:

- Questions regarding the views of the wider public on 2-3 priority design issues affecting equalities target groups (it is proposed that these would be selected through initial work on the stage 2 EQIA impact assessment report).This information would be used to inform the final stage 3 EQIA action plan that will presented alongside the final SSDM for adoption.

- In the Rotherhithe/Canada Water areas – views on preferred paving materials from a small number of options. This information would be used to inform a subsequent 'minor variant area' palette for this locale that would be developed in the second wave of work on the SSDM.

- In the Dulwich area – views on preferred paving materials from a small number of options. This information would be used to inform a subsequent 'minor variant area' palette for this locale that would be developed in the second wave of work on the SSDM.

45. In addition to providing evidence to address important issues, it is hoped that asking these targeted questions will allow the public to engage with what is otherwise likely to prove a dry and technical document, despite its great importance to residents.

46. Officers are also minded to carry out a broader opinions survey with members of the public regarding their attitudes to the public realm. Whilst this would not be directly related to the SSDM (Part I) documents it is considered that this would provide evidence to inform its final adopted content. However, this will be linked to the availability of resources for such activities.

47. It is proposed that SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents will be agreed under delegated authority by the relevant chief officer or head of service in accordance with the constitution. Draft Part II documents will be made available as background information to the consultation on Part I documents and any responses received would be used to determine whether the adoption of particular documents should be treated as "key decisions" and/or consulted upon with the cabinet member and recorded in accordance with constitutional requirements.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance (NS022011)

48. The purpose of this report is for the Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Recycling to agree the Draft SSDM Part I (General Information) to be approved for consultation with the general public.

Finance Director

49. The major implications of this report are in respect to proposed funding of new positions for a number of Design Quality Officers to over-see quality management procedures related to the SSDM. These positions will need to be self-funding.

Head of Procurement

50. Procurement do not consider it necessary to comment upon this report.

Deputy Chief Executive

51. The Deputy Chief Executive's department (formerly Regeneration and Neighborhood's) welcome the SSDM as providing a clear consistent approach to bringing quality and consistency to the public realm which will help enhance the council's regeneration programmes. The Highway Authority is a consultee

on planning applications and the SSDM will be useful in informing the highways authority's comments and responses.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Appendix A to SSDM Summary Guide Policy framework justification for strategic design policies	Environment and Housing Third Floor, Hub 1 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	David Farnham, Public Realm Design Quality Manager

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Over-view of SSDM portfolio structure
Appendix 2	Summary guide
Appendix 3	Regulating plan
Appendix 4	Introductory guide for members of the public
Appendix 5	Draft EQIA stage 1 scoping report
Appendix 6	Consultation plan

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Gill Davies, Strategic Director of Environment	
Report Author	Des Waters, Head of Public Realm	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 February 2011	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	**Comments Sought**	**Comments included**
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Yes
Finance Director	Yes	Yes
Head of Procurement	Yes	Yes
Director of Regeneration	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Officer		15 February 2011

Appendix 2

Southwark Streetscape Design Manual

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FOREWORD

It is a privilege to introduce this progressive milestone for Southwark's public realm, this Southwark Streetscape Design Manual.

Going forward this Streetscape Design Manual will be the key reference document for all public realm works in this local authority area. For our residents, businesses and public sector partners to know what we are doing to consistently improve and maintain standards throughout our borough's streets and public spaces. For private developers to be sure what adoptable standards we will require from new public spaces and streets maintained at public expense.

We want to say goodbye to the days of too many people and organisations making interventions in the public realm in an unplanned way.

Furthermore, we are putting behind us the tendency to focus solely on some functions of streets to the detriment of others. Orthodox thinking has until now favoured movement over place; a good example of which is the installation of guard rails with the outcome of facilitating traffic speeds over the freedom of safe pedestrian movement.

In bringing forward our Streetscape Design Manual we have also taken into consideration Southwark's Sustainable Community Strategy priorities such as healthier lifestyles, equality of participation in public life, community safety, climate change avoidance and adaptation, quality of life, social cohesion, cultural vibrancy and access to jobs and opportunities. Every one of which, relying on supportive design in our streets and spaces.

Of course developing such a comprehensive approach to maintenance and management of our public realm is a long term endeavour rather than a quick fix. Preparing fair and robust design requirements and policies that balance all needs takes time. Moreover, products and legislation change regularly and there is an ongoing requirement to respond to new ideas and concerns.

In response to this we have made the Southwark Streetscape Design Manual a living document that can be added to over time. At its heart is a simple new approach: before we begin developing proposals for a location we'll first look at what the issues, opportunities and priorities are there and agree a "quality plan" for what the designs that will be developed will aim to deliver. Following these and other procedures will help us make decisions that are better for Southwark and fairer for residents.

It is a source of considerable pride to know that we are one of the first authorities in the UK to set out this quality auditing approach.

As Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Recycling I commend this document to residents, stakeholders, private developers and our Southwark Alliance partners. I look forward to working with them to further develop the manual in the coming years to create streets and spaces that reflect our unique character and make a reality of our vision for a sustainable community.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND STRATEGIC DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Introduction

The Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (SSDM) sets out the council's requirements for the design of streets, including how to configure these to deliver the vision set out in our Sustainable Community Strategy and other important policy documents. It does not cover parks and estates roads.

It is made up of a portfolio of linked documents in two parts as shown in figure 1. Part 1 documents contain general interest information prepared for both members of the public and design professionals. Part 2 documents are technical in nature and, whilst available to the public, have been written largely with use by professional designers in mind.

The portfolio has been designed to be 'living' so that its contents can grow and evolve over time, allowing us to continuously improve our standards, procedures and policies.

This document is called the summary guide. It sits at the top of the portfolio and the following chapters aim to:

- Chapter 2: ...explain the wider context in which street design takes place which has influenced the format of the SSDM.

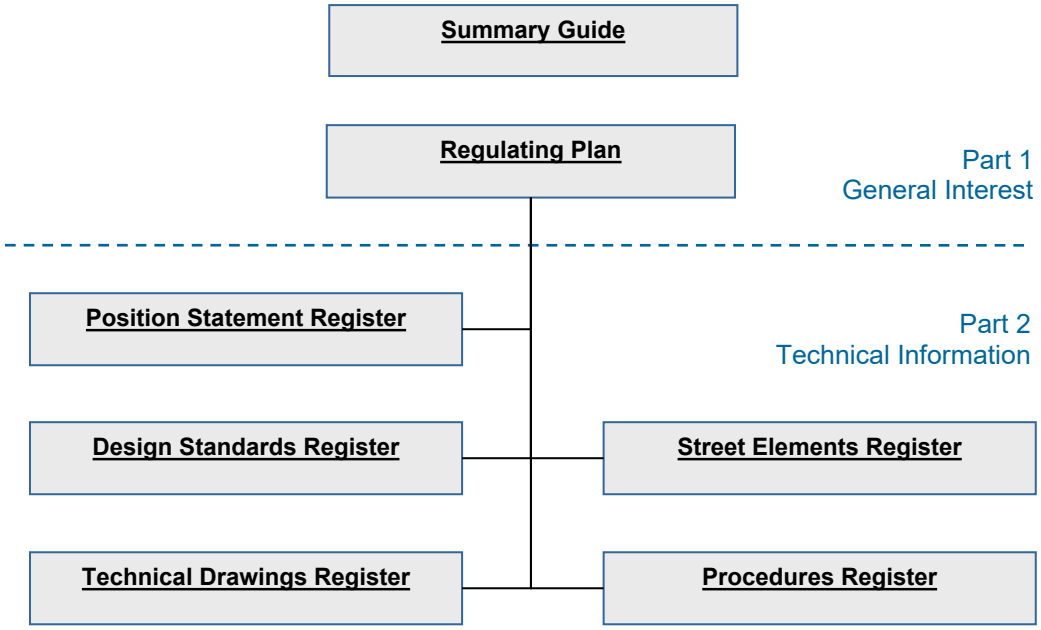
- Chapter 3: ...outline the scope and format of the SSDM as well as summarise the interaction with other strategic documents relating to the development of the public highway.

- Chapter 4: ...provide an overview of the different parts of the SSDM portfolio, explaining how these inter-relate with one another, and how they are to be used by those designing streets and public spaces in the borough. Related procedures to enforce the requirements within these through a quality system are also explained.

- Chapter 5: ...set out the framework created within the "quality system" to balance priorities when taking decisions on the development of design proposals to improve the public realm and the SSDM itself.

- Chapter 6:...give a brief summary of the first steps anyone proposing works to the public highway will need to go through within our quality system before they can begin developing design proposals.

This summary guide along with the other components of the SSDM portfolio can be found on-line at www.southwark.gov.uk. These should be checked regularly as they are subject to frequent update and revision.



Note
The portfolio also includes other non-adopted elements. These are omitted from the above for simplicity. See figure 4 for a full over-view of the structure.

Figure 1: SSDM – Main portfolio structure

Our strategic design objectives and policies

Fundamental to the SSDM and our approach to improving streets are our strategic design objectives (objectives) and policies (policies). These have been chosen following a review of key policy influences and other evidence that is included as Appendix A to this summary guide. Information box 1 provides details of how the SSDM will help meet several of these by tackling street clutter.

All these objectives and policies have been selected on the basis that they represent priorities for the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Because of this they will be given special consideration when developing project proposals.

Many other priorities exist and our procedures will provide the opportunity for these to be raised and considered where they come up.

In developing the objectives and policies, we have attempted to reconcile them with one another wherever possible. However, inevitably some conflicts remain. When these arise when reviewing design proposals for individual schemes it will be the task of those involved in assessing the proposals through our “quality system” procedures to balance these to the maximum overall benefit. This will involve taking a risk:benefit approach. Similarly, when disagreements between objectives and supporting policies arise when developing new content for the SSDM, the officers involved with this will need to do likewise.

We will also refer to policies when deciding how to respond to matters raised through “design reviews” of project proposals (see chapters 4 and 5).

Relationship between the objectives and policies

Figure 2 shows which policies support which objectives. Individual policies can contribute towards meeting more than one objective.

The objectives

The objectives are the improvements that we hope the physical changes we make will bring about. They are:

- SDO1: More inclusive and accessible streets
- SDO2: More active travel in streets healthier lifestyles for residents
- SDO3: Improved road safety and reduced road danger
- SDO4: Greater permeability for all street users and enhanced journey experience
- SDO5: Visually simplified street layouts
- SDO6: More sociable streets and spaces
- SDO7: Economic improvements in our communities
- SDO8: Greener streets that are better adapted to climate change
- SDO9: Improved security and community confidence
- SDO10: Greater sustainability in our use of resources

The policies

Each of our objectives is supported by one or more policies. These describe the physical changes we intend to make that we think will help achieve the objectives. They are as follows:

- SDPi Levels: Provide level access along footways, at crossing points, and at boundaries with private properties.
- SDPii Obstructions: Remove and reduce intrusions within footway clear widths from all street-furniture, vegetation, licensed seating, a-boards and vehicle parking whilst ensuring that remaining intrusions are appropriately conspicuous.
- SDPiii Rest opportunities: Provide benches or informal seating opportunities for less mobile pedestrians at regular intervals.
- SDPiv Crossings: Provide frequent and direct opportunities for pedestrians to cross the street at junctions and along links, with appropriate levels of conflict control.
- SDPv Navigation aids and protection for pedestrians: Provide a traffic free path for vulnerable and visually impaired pedestrians with appropriate navigation aids in all streets.

Policies		Objectives		
		SDO1	SDO2	SDO3
SDPi	Levels	✓		
SDPii	Obstructions	✓		
SDPiii	Rest opportunities	✓		
SDPiv	Crossings	✓		
SDPv	Navigation aids and protection for vulnerable pedestrians	✓		
SDPvi	Street user priority		✓	
SDPvii	Supporting children and young people's right to play and congregate in public space and travel independently		✓	
SDPviii	Road danger reduction	✓	✓	✓
SDPix	Avoiding conflict between pedestrians and cyclists	✓		✓
SDPx	Enhancing permeability for all modes of transport	✓	✓	
SDPxi	Creating the conditions for smoother journeys at consistent low speeds	✓	✓	
SDPxii	Visual clutter reduction		✓	
SDPxiii	Enhancing sense of place		✓	
SDPxiv	Vibrancy, vitality and opportunities for interaction		✓	
SDPxv	Expanding vehicle traffic free space and the wider pedestrian realm	✓	✓	
SDPxvi	Respecting historic assets and local distinctiveness			
SDPxvii	Bringing streets up to area standard specification			
SDPxviii	Increasing tree and ground canopy cover		✓	
SDPxix	Designing in sustainable urban drainage systems			
SDPxx	Community adoption of green spaces in streets			
SDPxxi	Perceived personal safety		✓	
SDPxxii	Recycling and materials			
SDPxxiii	Ease of maintenance of materials			

Figure 2 – Relationship between strategic design objectives and policies

Objectives						
SDO4	SDO5	SDO6	SDO7	SDO8	SDO9	SDO10
		✓				
✓		✓				
					✓	
✓			✓			
✓						
	✓		✓			
	✓		✓		✓	
	✓		✓		✓	
		✓	✓		✓	
			✓		✓	
			✓			
					✓	✓
				✓		
				✓		✓
				✓	✓	✓
		✓			✓	
						✓
						✓

- SDPvi Street user priority: Prioritise street users in our decision making in the following order of descending importance: disabled and vulnerable pedestrians, other pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and community transport, freight vehicles, taxis, powered-two-wheelers, private cars.

- SDPvii Supporting children and young people's right to play and congregate in public space and travel independently: Create safe conditions for children's independent travel by foot or bicycle. Support their right to play or congregate civilly in public spaces. Make provision on or off carriageway for informal play space where this is requested or no alternatives opportunities exist.

- SDPviii Road danger reduction: Tackle safety concerns by addressing the things that are the root cause of actual or perceived danger (rather than just responses to this) whilst enhancing conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and social activities, rather than design them out.

- SDPix Removing conflict between street users: Create conditions so that cyclists and other vehicles can safely and comfortably share carriageways, so avoiding conflict with pedestrians on footways and associated street clutter.

- SDPx Enhancing permeability for all modes of transport: Provide permeability for all modes of transport (with a particular focus on access to town centres and public transport facilities) unless this would impact negatively on active modes of travel or equalities target groups.

- SDPxi Creating the conditions for smooth journeys at consistent low speeds: Create conditions that support consistent low speed travel at 20mph or less for all types of vehicles whilst removing sources of delay, physical discomfort and stopping and starting for both pedestrians and vehicles - providing this can be achieved without impacting negatively on active modes of travel or equalities target groups.

- SDPxii Visual clutter reduction: Avoid visual clutter from street furniture, traffic signs and road markings and needless changes in paving surfaces by reducing and removing this when it is found - particularly where there is no mandatory requirement for it and where hazards are readily foreseeable to street users.

- SDPxiii Enhancing sense of place: Configure improvements so that buildings, landscapes and the social activities that take place in or around them appear as the most noticeable elements of the street – not traffic infrastructure, signs or road markings – and there is a clear unobstructed visual relationship between these areas and the carriageway.

- SDPxiv Vibrancy, vitality and opportunities for interaction: Provide for relevant social uses on all streets alongside traffic and movement requirements. In doing so design in provision for incidental social interaction wherever possible to address social isolation, increase sense of community, and make it more attractive for people to walk and cycle.

- SDPxv Expanding vehicle traffic-free space and the wider pedestrian realm: Take opportunities wherever possible to reclaim unused or unjustified carriageway space for vehicle traffic free pedestrian activity, social use or street greenery. In doing so try to redesign parts of the street used by vehicles for pedestrian use too whilst preserving existing pedestrian space as traffic free.
- SDPxvi Respecting historic assets and local distinctiveness: Retain historic street elements in all instances, enhancing these where possible within the limits of

available budgets and our statutory duty to maintain the highway to satisfactory standards. Retain existing locally distinct street elements or other unique aspects of character outside of our standards where these are of value.

- SDPxvii Bringing streets up to specification area standard: Replace existing sub-standard street furniture, surface materials and design details so that they meet or exceed the relevant specification area standard, applying this consistently irrespective of existing local precedents except where these are of particular heritage value or are locally distinct and accepted to be of value.

- SDPxviii Increasing tree and ground canopy cover: Improve levels of tree canopy and ground cover shading in streets associated with new developments to achieve environmental, social and economic gains, focussing in particular on increasing large broad-leaved tree stock. Require any new trees pits created in existing streets to meet our pit construction specifications in full to avoid damage to surfaces and associated accessibility problems.

- SDPxix Designing in sustainable urban drainage systems: Try to design grassed or planted areas (including around street trees) into footways wherever possible so that surface water can soak into these to mitigate flooding risks. Provide permeable highways surfaces with associated attenuation or soak away facilities on new roads wherever possible subject to resolving maintenance issues.

- SDPxx Community adoption of green spaces in streets: Where residents request new areas of street planting that might not be feasible due to limited maintenance funding, encourage community groups to plant, adopt and maintain these areas themselves providing suitably robust maintenance arrangements can be agreed, appropriate species are used, and funding for planting is available.

- SDPxxi Personal safety and enforcement: Configure design improvements so that residents and visitors feel safe to use all the boroughs streets and are not deterred from visiting particular areas by personal safety concerns. Design out circumstances that may promote social conflict between people using streets that could escalate into incidents. Design prohibitions intelligently to minimise signage and road marking clutter whilst keeping these enforceable.

- SDPxxii Sustainability of materials: Require that the products used in streets and the suppliers of these have third party accreditation to national or international standards for responsible supply chain sourcing and management and product environmental performance. Utilise products with the lowest whole-life environmental impact. Utilise reclaimed and recycled natural stone products where new such products cannot be sourced within the EU cost effectively.

- SDPxxiii Ease of maintenance: Use materials that can be maintained and obtained with a level of ease appropriate to the importance of their area of use and the community. Design features to minimise the potential obstruction to traffic that may be required as a result of maintenance works to them or reinstatement following utilities works by statutory undertakers.

Measuring our success

To see that the policies are implemented and the objectives met, we will develop a series of indicators.

For objectives we will establish a small number of strategic monitoring indicators (monitoring indicators). These may be measured using evidence that is either qualitative (e.g. people's personal perceptions about whether something has improved) or quantitative (e.g. linked to figures, for instance on accidents). Some of these will be things we will need to ask the public for their views on. Others will be things that council officers can measure directly from statistics. We will collect information on these as part of "monitoring assessment reports". These reports may also include further monitoring information on issues requested by funders and the success of "trial" elements of the scheme (i.e. new design approaches that we are trying). The assessments will be conducted once the scheme has been in place for some time, so that users can develop experience of the improvements and trends can become apparent. See chapters 4 and 5 for further information.

For policies, we will introduce a number of "design indicators". Individual policies may be associated with more than one of these. Again, each will set out a series of levels of performance in relation to an aspect of physical provision within design proposals (e.g. the frequency of crossing facilities) that can be measured directly by council officers using quantitative evidence. Improvement targets above existing provision will be set at the outset of projects through "quality plans". Performance against these targets will be periodically assessed during the development of design proposals through "control document" "assessment reports" so that corrective action can be taken if necessary to keep the project on track. See chapters 4 and 5 for further information.

Our current list of design performance and strategic monitoring indicators will be set out in the SSDM forms and check-lists schedule (see figure 4).

CHAPTER 2: THE WIDER CONTEXT FOR THE DESIGN OF STREETS

Understanding street design

The streets of Southwark are the public face of the borough and its villages. In addition to providing routes for movement and transport between destinations, they are where much of our dynamic social and cultural life takes place. This makes them as important as the buildings and landmarks that surround them in making Southwark an attractive place to live, work, visit or conduct business.

To the public, the process of designing and maintaining streets is often thought to be fairly straightforward. This can promote frustration when results fall short of expectations.

The reality of street design can be extremely complex. It involves numerous technical design and construction issues, a careful balance of a wide range of duties, priorities and legal considerations, and the coordination of many different funding streams and stakeholder views.

Individual issues or items of street furniture can be controlled by a wide range of stakeholders both within and outside of the council, each with their own objectives. Though individually appropriate, these objectives can often conflict with those of other departments or stakeholders. For instance, an urban design officer's desire to improve the appearance of the streetscape by removing some bollards might be supported by an access officer keen to remove obstructions to pedestrians with impaired visibility or mobility. However, it could conflict with a safety officer's concerns about potential liability or harm to the public, or a maintenance officer's concerns about potential future damage to the footway from vehicles over-running it. Even something as seemingly simple as removing a traffic sign can be fraught with legal and technical difficulties and require a large amount of coordination and liaison between teams and departments.

We have been successful in the past in meeting many individual objectives and have implemented many successful projects. However, as a result of the complexity explained above the overall quality of streetscapes on balance has often suffered (see Information box 2). The problems that have arisen from this have included poor visual appearance, conflicts between motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, poor accessibility, little recognition of valued townscapes and historic features and a general loss of local distinctiveness and opportunities for social activity. These undermine our attempts to deliver our vision to make Southwark a cleaner, greener and safer borough and to meet a host of important concerns.

Information box 2: 'Frankenstein streets' and our solution.

Designers use this term to describe streets that have been subject to numerous uncoordinated improvement works by different stakeholders such that elements appear "hacked-on" rather than pleasingly resolved and integrated.

The dis-benefits of this are not just visual. Where individual stakeholders are not aware of potential works by others, their proposals may actually have the effect of preventing or frustrating another's improvements. Important opportunities for synergy and cost savings may also be lost in the process.

To address this we are leading the way nationally by introducing a new interactive projects database that provides everyone in the council with access to information on all our current projects and many of those completed in past years. This is accessible via an interactive web-map, making it easy for designers to identify projects by others that might effect their own works and so to coordinate with those responsible for these projects to achieve wider benefits. We have also produced a version of this for the public which can be found at www.southwark.gov.uk.

In addition we are coordinating more of our individual improvement programmes so that we can undertake more schemes that redesign a street in its entirety - rather than just looking at individual elements like tree planting, cycling, parking, road safety or lighting at a time.

To be successful it is important that a common approach to the design of streets is established that is understood by all and that a set of shared design objectives and policies are clearly established. This is what the SSDM aims to do.

Who is responsible for Southwark's streets?

Most streets in Southwark are controlled by the council in its capacity as Highway Authority. These functions are exercised from within its "public realm" division. However some important strategic roads are controlled by Transport for London. Our roles and responsibilities as Highway Authority vary from those we exercise as Local Planning Authority (see Information box 3).

Information box 3: What is a Highway Authority, Streetworks Authority, Street Authority and Traffic Authority?

The term "highway" normally refers to carriageways, footways and other areas that accommodate the movement of people or vehicles. These can be private streets or streets adopted and maintained by a public authority – the common feature being that the public have an established or dedicated right to "pass and repass".

Highway Authorities are responsible for protecting safe passage and enjoyment of highways for the public and maintaining at public expense those highways they have adopted. Adopted highways are required to be designed to "adoptable standards". When a Highway Authority carries out works to highway for these purposes they do so as a Street works Authority. A Traffic Authority is responsible for placing traffic signs (including road markings) and making traffic and other orders, which are the legal documents giving effect to most restrictions shown on signs. It is also responsible for setting most speed limits. Lastly, a Street Authority is responsible for maintaining the expeditious movement of traffic on the highway (including that of pedestrians) by managing the network of highways, including through the coordination and control of streetworks and other construction activities. Most of these roles are performed within the one authority by the same departments and officers, the different roles simply being legal names related to duties introduced through statutes.

In Southwark, the local council is the Highway, Street Works, Traffic, and Street Authority for the majority of streets. The name Highway Authority is used in the SSDM as shorthand for the council acting in all these and several other related roles. They are exercised by the "public realm" division of Southwark Council. However, Transport for London are the Highway, Traffic, and Streets Authority for the biggest strategic roads. These are generally easily spotted as they have red-lines to their edges. Transport for London is also Traffic Authority for all traffic signals in London, including those on borough controlled roads. Most estate roads are also the responsibility of others – though often this will be the council in its role as the landowner for housing estates rather than as Highway Authority. As Highway Authority we have a range of powers. Of key importance are those to:

- *Set standards for design (adoptable standards) and carry out improvements to streets.*
  Introduce restrictions and prohibitions on movement or the use of spaces, including parking restrictions and speed limits.
- *Adopt streets so that they will be maintained at public expense where their design meets our adoptable standards.*
- *Carry out improvement works within the public highway or allow others to do this on our behalf. These may be either to streets that we have already adopted or to private streets under our duties to protect the rights of public users of those highways.*

The latter of these might involve anything from shifting kerbs and repaving footways to putting up signs and lighting. In the vast majority of instances we do not require any planning permission to make these changes. Though the council acting as Local Planning Authority may make comments about the design of public areas associated with a new development, only the council acting as Highway Authority has the power to approve them if they take place on a highway maintainable at public expense or if a developer wishes to have a planned new street or space they are creating adopted as one. In addition to our powers, we also have a range of statutory duties that we are required to fulfil. Information box 7 and appendix A provide further information on these.

What are streets for?

Historically our concerns as the council when shaping streets have largely been confined to meeting the various statutory duties we hold as Highway Authority in relation to traffic flow, road user safety and overall maintenance.

However, over the past decade, the Department for Transport and other government bodies have increasingly signalled the need for Highway Authorities to change their approach to designing. Important guidance has set out the need for us to give greater consideration to:

- the needs of vulnerable people, pedestrians and cyclists over other forms of vehicular traffic;

- the ”place” function of streets alongside their traffic and movement function. This means acknowledging and designing to support the social uses of streets (see Information box 4) and valuing their quality and appearance.

Information box 4: What are some of the potential social functions of streets?

The use of the public highway for activities other than movement is supported by case law. One of the most important precedents in this respect comes from a judge in the case of DPP v Jones 1999:

“the public highway is a public place that the public can enjoy for any reasonable purpose provided the activity in question does not amount to a public nuisance and does not obstruct the highway by unreasonably impeding the primary right of the public to pass and repass” Lord Chancellor, DPP v Jones 1999

Based on this any of the following activities (and many others beside) can be considered legitimate social uses within streets.

- *Informal meeting and conversation*
- *Children and young people’s play and congregation*
- *Rest and relaxation*
- *Public performance and cultural events*
- *Shop front seating and trading*
- *Gardening activities*
- *Street parties and celebrations*

Supporting this has been the recognition across national government policy and strategy that the design of streets and other parts of the public highway has a wider impact than on vehicular movement alone. National and local priorities require good design for streets and spaces in order to:

- promote healthier lifestyles,
- improve quality of life
- enhance community safety,
- prevent or adapt to climate change
- preserve and enhance local built and natural heritage
- provide equal opportunity to participate in public life and;
- support economic and cultural vibrancy of neighbourhoods and town centres.

Much of this is common sense in a densely populated borough like Southwark where the majority of residents rely on means of travel other than private cars, and where private space can be scarce. The quality of our internationally recognised townscape is responsible for attracting numerous visitors. Residents and businesses have long recognised the importance of streets to local commerce, improving quality of life, and creating community confidence.

This movement towards understanding that streets have wider functions beyond providing a place in which motor vehicles can be stored or moved has been consolidated by structural changes by government to the way priorities are set at the local level and how different agencies must interact to deliver these (see Information box 5). Practically, this means that the Highway Authority must now embrace many of the ideas that previously fell outside of *traditional* highways concerns and share in the responsibility for delivering them alongside other members of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Information box 5: How has the legislative context for us changed as Highway Authority?

Legislation has been introduced that requires the various partners in local areas to work more closely with one another through what are known as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). LSPs include the local council (of which the Highway Authority is one part), other major agencies such as the emergency services and primary care trust, and local voluntary and community groups. In Southwark the LSP is known as the Southwark Alliance.

LSP partners are jointly responsible for delivering a shared long-term vision for their area known as a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). This is the highest level plan in any Borough. All other plans and strategies produced by LSP partners must align to it.

Like many other individual statutory authorities, we are now under a duty to cooperate in agreeing the SCS vision as well as delivering many of the related plans and strategies of other partners. This means that as a Highway Authority, we have to plan to show how we will play our part in delivering a much broader range of objectives whilst continuing to meet our core statutory duties.

The legislative, policy and research context for designing streets

The legislative, policy and research context for designing streets has increased in complexity in recent years, but there is a common thread behind the various documents and changes mentioned above. These overriding themes include the following:

- There is now a much wider range of objectives that authorities are being asked to design streets to meet than in the past and they have been asked to give greater priority to certain road users.
- Central government has tasked authorities with developing their own design standards and approach to balancing the wider number of design considerations that now exist, including those around risk (see Information box 6).

- There is an increasing expectation to involve representatives of the local community in shaping decisions and approaches.

These have had a fundamental influence on the scope and format of the SSDM which is introduced in the next chapter.

Information box 7 provides a further summary of the key relevant influences on the SSDM that the document seeks to support and facilitate whilst Appendix A provides a more in-depth analysis.

Information box 6: Risk, liability and quality auditing

Various statutes impose duties related to safety on Highway Authorities (see information box 7 and appendix A). The means of meeting these are not typically defined. It is largely left to individual Highway Authorities to determine these. Preventing harm to the public and avoiding the risk to the tax payer from claims are important concerns. Common law rulings are an important influence.

Over-time, certain standard approaches to considering safety have developed that have been widely adopted by Highway Authorities on the basis that, being a relatively common place professional practice used by other authorities, this is likely to provide an effective defence in the event of a claim. One important example is the practice of conducting “road safety audits” (RSAs) of design proposals during their development and after they have been constructed. Though there is no mandatory requirement to do this or formal methodology, they are seen as a defensible way of satisfying a duty that is *implied* in a statute. The common method for these that most Highway Authorities use attempts to identify potential hazards related to design proposals and recommend means of addressing these. However it does not consider the likelihood or severity of an incident occurring or the impact of designing this out or mitigating it on any non safety related objectives.

There has been concern in recent years that the general dominance of safety in Highway Authorities thinking has led to an overly conservative approach that has impacted negatively (and sometimes needlessly) on wider objectives; for instance, improving the visual quality of streetscapes to support local economic development, or encouraging walking and cycling to address climate change or health issues. People have questioned whether designing out hazards is always justified on balance when these negative impacts on other objectives are considered and the likelihood and severity of an incident occurring is taken into account. Designers have been criticised for using potential safety features suggested in advisory guidance documents or RSAs indiscriminately with a view to covering all eventualities. There has even been criticism that the over-use of some safety features may actually be counter productive in its own right, inducing inattentiveness in drivers or frustrating pedestrians into dangerous behaviour. The use of pedestrian guard-railing in streets is one high profile example.

Numerous important guidance documents from government departments, agencies and professional institutes have recognised this problem in recent years. Noting the absence of any mandatory requirement or method for RSA and that common law rulings suggest the exposure to risk may have been over-stated, they have recommended a move towards a more balanced approach to developing and auditing schemes. They have suggested that this should weigh the risks and benefits of proposals in respect to a wider range of clearly stated objectives than road safety alone. Providing this is done reasonably and robustly, maintaining a logical *golden thread,* they consider that this is likely to be a reasonable defence in the event of an incident occurring. This has been termed “quality auditing”. Rather than prescribing a potential method for these, they have encouraged Highway Authorities to develop their own.

The SSDM provides our response to this recommendation. Further information on how we plan to address it can be found in chapter 4.

Information box 7: What are the strategic influences on how we design streets?

Statutory duties

The council has a range of statutory duties as Highway Authority on issues including management of traffic, promotion of safety, and maintenance of the public highway (including both adopted and non-adopted streets). Often, the means of meeting these duties is not prescribed. Although standard approaches that are widely considered to be acceptable have been developed over time, it remains down to individual authorities to determine the appropriate response. In addition to duties in its capacity as Highway Authority, the council is also subject to various wider duties regarding equalities and the need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people and the promotion of safety for our staff and contractors. In addition it must cooperate in the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and certain other Local Strategic Partnership Strategies.

Direct policy influences
These are policy or other strategy documents at the Southwark or London level that directly relate to transport, or those from other areas that sit above the SSDM. They include:

- *The Southwark Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): This sets out the shared vision for the long-term development of Southwark across a range of issues. This is expressed through a series of objectives that all LSP partners must cooperate to deliver and to which all their plans and strategies must relate, including the SSDM. Many of these objectives relate to this document.*

- *The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS): This sets out the Mayor of London's strategic proposals for the development of transport in the Capital, both in respect to specific scheme proposals, objectives and priorities. Many of these priorities relate to environmental, social and economic issues. Individual Highway Authorities at the borough level must set out how they intend to deliver the Mayors Strategy through a document called the 'Local Implementation Plan'. Much of the MTS relates directly to the SSDM, with streetscape quality being a major theme.*

- *The Southwark Transport Plan (STP): This is Southwark's 'Local Implementation Plan'. It sets out how we intend to deliver the MTS through individual scheme proposals that seek to implement strategic transport policies. As a local document it must align both with the MTS and the Southwark SCS. Facilitating the ambitions of this plan is an important consideration for the SSDM, though it must be appreciated that as transport is but one of many activities that occur in streets, its aspiration must be balanced with the requirements of other documents, strategies and duties.*

In direct policy influences

These are local policy or strategy documents that are not the Highway Authority's direct responsibility. However, under the duty to cooperate in delivering certain LSP strategies related to the SCS it must take them into account when developing important documents like this one to check that they are facilitating their proposals wherever possible. Those of greatest relationship to the SSDM include:

- *Southwark Local Development Framework, including the Core Strategy and various supplementary planning documents (the council us currently in the process of adopting a revised Core Strategy)*
- *Southwark Healthy Weight Strategy 2009–2012*
- *Safer Southwark Partnership Plan*
- *Southwark Climate Change Strategy*
- *Southwark Children's and Young Persons Plan 2010-2013*
- *Southwark Sports and Physical Activity Strategy*
- *Southwark Plan for Older People*

Council scrutiny committee reports

Scrutiny reports are produced by committees of elected members as part of the council's critical democratic over-sight role. They consider in public the council's performance on certain issues, hearing from officers and other stakeholders in the process. The resulting reports include recommendations that cabinet members responsible for affected services must respond to the cabinet on. At length, cabinet agrees actions to address the recommendations of the committee. As a result, these have substantial weight. In 2010 a scrutiny committee looked into the issue of street clutter in the public realm. An agreed recommendation of this review was that the SSDM set out how the council will achieve clutter reduction.

Other national and regional strategy documents

From time to time national government and its partner agencies announce new strategies on important issues which it wants to encourage local authorities to address. The SCS often provides the council's response to those that were published prior to its adoption. However, those that have been published since are deserving of further consideration. Some of the most important for us as Highway Authority include:

- *The Sustainable Construction Strategy*
- *The National Play Strategy*

Statutes on street design

There are very few binding statutory design requirements that Highway Authorities must meet when designing streets. The vast majority of requirements are down to individual Highway Authorities to determine with a view to satisfying their various statutory duties and other local objectives. Rather legislation tends to set out powers that may be used if desired or things that must be done if certain design elements are to be used – though the decision as to whether to use that element remains with the local authority. For example, legislation sets out the requirements associated with traffic signs and road markings, different types of crossing facilities and traffic calming devices, giving authorities the power to place these. However, it still remains down to the individual Highway Authorities as to whether or not they think a sign needs to be used at all.

National guidance on street design

There is no shortage of advice from central government and professional institutes to Highway Authorities on how to interpret the various acts and duties they are subject to and the intent of that legislation that exists on street design. One of the best known of these is the Traffic Signs Manual which provides the Department for Transport's recommendations as to how traffic signs and road markings should be used. Another is a circular that suggests how and when authorities might like to use their powers in relation to setting speed limits. Further guidance is provided by professional institutes relating to the built environment.

Whilst all this remains only advisory, some of it could be considered by the courts when judging any claim against a authority as it might be considered to represent reasonable professional practice. However, providing authorities have logical and reasonable grounds for doing otherwise, they are likely to have an acceptable defence. Reassuringly, the most important government, professional institute and agency guidance in recent years has reinforced this message. This includes the following documents:

- *Manual for Streets I and II (DfT, 2007 and CIHT, 2010)*
- *LTN 01/08 Traffic Management and Streetscape (DfT, 2008)*
- *Highways Risk and Liability Claims - second edition (UK Roads Board and ICE, 2009)*
- *Road Safety Audit Guidelines (CIHT, 2008)*

All of these emphasise the need to:

- *Design streets to meet both movement and social requirements,*
- *Set local design standards informed by a wide set of local objectives;*
- *Assess and audit streets on a broader range of grounds than safety alone, accepting that some design features that may appear unsafe may still be justified on the basis of benefits to other objectives.*
- *Keep a clear audit trail to justify decisions with a "golden thread" back to original objectives.*

Other evidence documents

In addition to all the national guidance above, government departments, professional institutes and campaign groups often publish research on matters related to public realm design. These can provide useful evidence to inform our judgements. Issues covered by recent research extend from how different potential types of kerb delineators can meet the needs of people with different kinds of disabilities, to older peoples concern's in relation to the design of the public realm and the benefits of trees.

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CHAPTER 3: OVERVIEW OF THE DESIGN MANUAL

The previous chapter set out the complex policy and legislative context for designing streets that the council has had to consider in preparing the SSDM.

This chapter introduces the resultant scope, format, and status for the SSDM that has been chosen in response to this.

However, it should be understood that the SSDM does not aim to be a single reference and direction document for every aspect of the design, construction and (where appropriate) adoption process for streets. It needs to be read in conjunction with other Southwark process and strategy documents that cover different aspects of the approval of changes to the public realm.

Scope of the design manual

The scope of the SSDM is limited to the following:

1. Setting out the council's adoptable standards for the surface design of streets and spaces and the broader construction of footways and non-vehicle trafficked areas. This is done using standards explaining our requirements on design, construction and landscaping issues (like the specification of footways, use of particular road markings, provision of street trees or the positioning of pedal cycle stands) and palettes setting out our requirements for the surfacing, street furniture and foundation materials that may be used for landscaping and construction purposes. All of these must be followed unless a departure is asked for and approved. We also provide a set of typical technical details showing how standards and materials can be achieved together, though these are not definitive.

2. Setting out the procedures that must be followed in developing and approving design proposals and for other design related purposes. This includes those for:

    - Agreeing at the outset the vision that design proposals must deliver which they will then be assessed and monitored against throughout their development.

    - Undertaking those assessments through a series of design reviews at critical points in the development and delivery of projects.

    - Obtaining necessary certificates and gateway approvals to allow projects to progress through design workstages.

    - How requests to depart from SSDM design requirements can be made and will be assessed.

3. Establishing the strategic design objectives and policies that will be referred to when developing future content for the SSDM, setting and monitoring progress towards the vision for each project, and when making judgements between risk and benefit about particular aspects of design proposals.

The above is of equal relevance to:

- All designers and consultants employed by the council.

- Private developers and their agents who are developing streets and spaces that they wish the council to adopt as part of the public highway, or whose proposals may require works to the existing public highway.

Issues covered

The SSDM considers the following design and management issues:

- Achieving visual quality and robustness in design.
- Supporting and encouraging inclusive social activity within public spaces.
- Providing street greenery for pleasure and other environmental design features that help improve climatic quality.
- Promoting and supporting community safety through design and management.
- Meeting the accessibility and inclusion needs of vulnerable pedestrians so that they can use and navigate public space.
- Promoting road safety.
- Accommodating necessary vehicle movement needs within the context of the above.
- Promoting sustainability in design and construction materials.

The following issues are excluded as they are explained in other documents:

- Adoptable standards for the underlying construction of areas frequently used by vehicles (though details of surface hard landscaping *are* provided)
- The council's policies and procedures with regard to private streets and the adoption of streets as highways maintainable at the public expense.
- Traffic management issues such as when particular movements should be prohibited, traffic lanes allocated for certain user groups or parking spaces provided.

As an example of the above, whilst the SSDM does not set requirements for when parking spaces are to be provided (or how many), it does set requirements for how these are to be positioned and designed when it is considered as a result of other documents that they are necessary. Only when aspects of these issues would have a significant impact on one of the main concerns of the SSDM may requirements be set in relation to these. To give another example, if there were several design approaches by which a particular identified movement need could be met, such as providing priority or improved conditions for cyclists, the SSDM may stipulate that certain design approaches are to be used and not others.

Areas of application

The SSDM applies to the following areas:

i. Existing or planned new streets and spaces adopted by the council as highways maintainable at the public expense or which are proposed to be adopted as such.

ii. *Existing or proposed new private streets which, whilst not currently highways maintainable at the public expense (or intended to be), are considered to be a highway due to an established right to pass or re-pass. Where such private streets are being proposed this may have important implications in respect to the level of security the council may require to cover potential expenses related to upgrading the street to adoptable standards, either for the purpose of carrying out works under the private streetworks code to private streets, or where it is latterly agreed to adopt the street as a highway maintainable at public expense. See the Southwark highways development control and adoption procedures for further information.*

At present, the SSDM does *not* apply to the following areas, thought it is intended to expand it to cover these through future on-going development:

- Public parks.
- Streets in housing estates other than for 'III' above.

Notwithstanding this, the council will endeavour to design other council owned areas of hard landscaped public space to SSDM standards where these immediately adjoin the public highway and are likely to be thought by the public to be part of this.

Lastly, the SSDM does not apply to streets controlled by Transport for London (generally identified by the presence of red lines to the edge of the carriageway). Designers are referred to Transport for London's Streetscape Guidance (Transport for London, 2009) for relevant guidance. The council is not responsible for the design of such streets, though it may be asked to comment on proposals where they might impact upon the borough road network.

Benefits of having a design manual

The intended benefits of the SSDM are to:

- Promote greater constancy, quality and efficiency in the council's own design activities.
- Demonstrate to residents and businesses the standards they can expect the council to deliver when it undertakes improvement or maintenance works to the borough's streets and spaces.
- Set out how these standards are related to the LSP's "Sustainable Community Strategy" vision and other important policy considerations – so demonstrating to Southwark Alliance partners how we can contribute to achieving their priorities and where they might support us through coordination of resources.
- Provide information for private developers and their agents about aspects of the council's adoptable standards for the design of existing or proposed highways that would be maintainable at the public expense (also applicable to private streets – see above) and the procedures that must be followed to obtain Highway Authority agreement to their design proposals for these purposes. However, developers and their agents should be mindful that following SSDM design processes and meeting the standards it sets out are only part of requirements for the adoption of streets. Other council standards and processes must also be complied with (see below and figure 3).

Interaction with other documents and references

The SSDM is one of several council documents of relevance to developers and designers, all of which should be read together. The other documents are:

- Southwark highway specification: This establishes our formal adoptable design specification for the underlying construction of parts of the street used by motor vehicles. It also provides requirements on the design and construction of conventional drainage systems including for off-carriageway areas. This interacts with the adoptable design specification for surface hard and soft landscaping of all areas of the public highway and the underlying construction of off-carriageway areas provided by the SSDM (see figure 3).

- Southwark highway development control and adoption procedures: This sets out our formal technical procedures for the adoption of streets and spaces as highways maintainable at the public expense and for the approval of works to create planned private streets. Meeting the requirements of both the SSDM and the Southwark highway specification (above) in respect to adoptable design standards are important components of these (see figure 3). However, there are further relatively complex elements related to auditing, traffic modelling, the provision of bonds and other forms of security, and satisfying the requirements of key statutes related to the adoption of streets. Developers are recommended to read this document closely.

- Southwark network management plan (NMP): This sets out how we intend to develop our street network in future to balance different modes of travel and different use activities. Designers should refer to this document to understand the likely potential to change existing movement arrangements on streets or to reallocate street space to particular uses or users. Where proposals could have an impact on parking or traffic flow, they will remain subject to approval from the council's Traffic Manager (this being a statutory role). However, to achieve an integrated approach to design, those approvals are negotiated through the SSDM quality system rather than through independent discussions with network management officers. Similarly, the council recognise that design quality and network management issues closely interact with one another. As such the NMP policy for developing our network includes several cross-cutting principles intended to benefit both areas (see information box 8).

- Supplementary planning documents: Sometimes the Highway Authority will set requirements for development sites in advance through documents within the Local Development Framework produced by the Local Planning Authority section of the Council. Normally these requirements will relate to the vision for the site that is to be achieved through its "quality plan". However, sometimes pre-agreed departures in terms of materials or design standards may be included too. Occasionally supplementary planning documents may include borough wide information on design requirements affecting the public highway. However, where this is the case these requirements will generally be cross-referenced within the SSDM.

- Conservation area statements and listed building and locally listed buildings and structures register: Where the Local Planning Authority section of the council designates conservation areas, it may also prepare related conservation area statements. These may identify aspects of the streetscape of particular value to be retained or strengthened or issues to be addressed

on account of their negative impact on the area. Appropriate local species of trees may also be identified. The Local Planning Authorities register of listed buildings and locally listed structures should also be referred to. The former of these may include buildings that changes to the streetscape may have a potential impact on. The latter may include street furniture or other structures within the adopted public highway. Whilst of only advisory status for the Highway Authority, the recommendations of these statements and items on the registers will never the less be important considerations when agreeing a "quality plan" for the improvements that are to be achieved in a project area before work begins on developing design proposals.

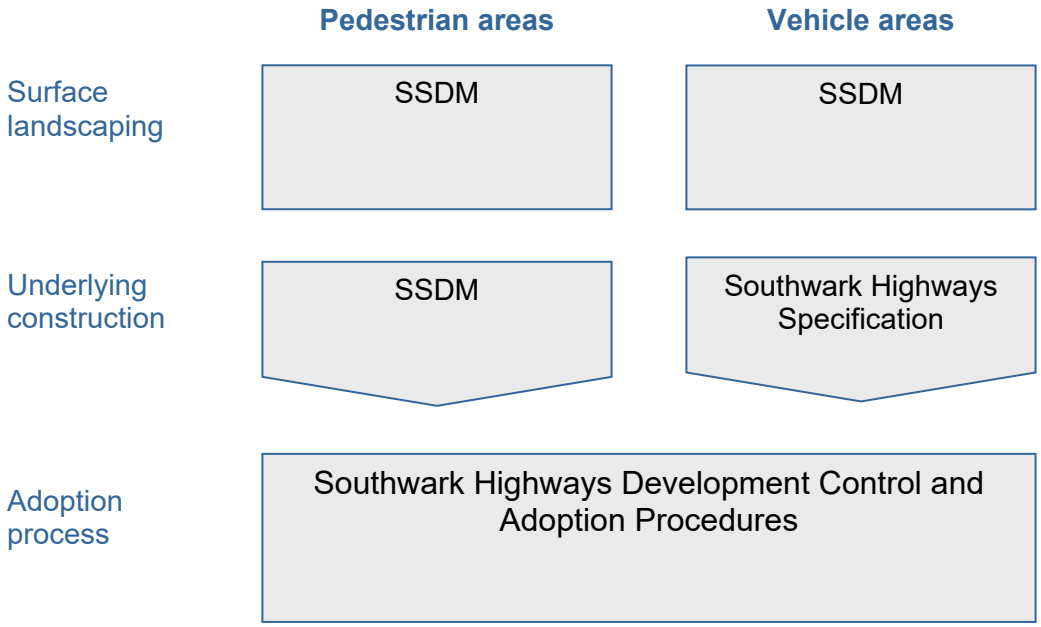

Figure 3: Southwark adoptable design standards and related requirements for streets maintainable at the public expense.

Information box 8: Our cross cutting approach to design quality and network management

Many of the issues that effect quality of design and place result from decisions about how we manage movement within our network of streets. Much of the signage, surface, street furniture and road marking clutter found in our streets is on account of decisions to implement certain speed limits or introduce measures to manage traffic flows. This can lead to the need for complex segregation of traffic for safety or traffic management purposes. As well as being visually negative, the traffic management infrastructure that results from this tends to increase the sense of vehicle dominance and priority in the street scene, reducing its friendliness for pedestrians and social uses. Decisions about allocation of street space can also impact on the availability of space for social activities, landscaping and other positive non movement functions of streets. Conversely, design can influence the need for network management interventions. Where streets are designed to support and emphasise social use and to promote natural courtesy between users, the need for traffic management and related safety measures is reduced.

We recognise the cross cutting nature of network management and design decisions. Because of this, we've developed our NMP and the SSDM to be mutually supporting.

Our NMP policy includes a number of principles for the long term development of our network that aim not only to improve how effectively it operates, but also to support good design and quality of place. These include:

- Development Principle 1: Improving network permeability
  We will look to reduce restrictions on access for users at junctions and along streets to encourage more balanced traffic flows, make travel by active modes of travel quicker and more convenient and reduce the need for related intrusive traffic management infrastructure.

- Development Principle 2: Introducing speed limits that make the carriageway safe for all users
  We will continue to implement the roll out of 20mph restrictions to all borough roads to improve overall road safety and ease of traffic flow and to make the carriageway safe, attractive and comfortable for all vehicles, so reducing the need for intrusive traffic management infrastructure that can become necessary where traffic speeds are higher.

- Development Principle 3: Balancing movement and place demands
  We will consider the need to support the non-movement functions of streets when taking network management decisions and look to increase the space available for pedestrian and social functions by using measures that allow us to more efficiently meet movement and parking needs.

- Development Principle 4: Supporting high quality design that will reduce the impact of street works on the network
  We will use materials, forms of construction, and means of management and communication that will reduce the need for street works and make these quicker to complete where required, whilst still allowing for high quality design.

In addition, designers should refer regularly to our “public realm projects database” which is available as an inter-active web-map at www.southwark.gov.uk. This provides easy access to information on all our current (and many of our past) street and public space improvement projects, so providing important context for designers.

Lastly, it should be noted that the SSDM has precedence over all non-statutory documents on the design of streets and spaces, including all design guidance documents produced by other authorities, agencies, groups or bodies.

Format of the design manual

The SSDM follows a portfolio structure as summarised in figure 1 (see chapter 1) and is broadly split into two parts. Part 1 contains “general interest” information. Part 2 contains “technical information”. It has been configured to be a ‘living’ document that can grow and evolve over time. There are many sound reasons for doing this (see Information box 9).

Part 1 – General Interest

At the top of the portfolio structure in part 1 of the SSDM is this document - the summary guide. This explains how the various parts of the SSDM are to be used together and sets out the strategic design objectives and policies that are a fundamental part of our approach to shaping streets and improving quality.

It is supported by a number of informal introductory guides. These provide a brief over-view of SSDM content appropriate to different user groups (for instance, members of the public, professional designers and developers).

Part 1 also contains the regulating plan. This maps specification area designations to which many of the technical information documents in part 2 relate.

Information box 9: Why make the SSDM a living document?

There are several reasons for making the SSDM a living document and adopting a portfolio structure. These include:

Flexibility – Products, legislation and the wider design context are constantly changing, providing opportunities for us to create better quality streets or improve our sustainability. We want to be able to update relevant parts of the SSDM to take advantage of these without having to revise and re-adopt the entire document on every occasion.

Quality management - we learn constantly from our practice and don't always get things right first time. We want the ability to monitor and amend practice to be an important part of our approach to design quality management. Having a living document helps us to do this.

Thoroughness – Many of the issues involved in street design are extremely complex and involve weighing a large number of competing duties and concerns (see Information box 7). Some of these have potential liability implications (see Information box 6). Where these decisions are rushed this tends to result in weak guidance that is hard to implement or enforce or that does not consider all objectives in the round. This can result in poor quality or unsafe design. Taking reasonable, robust and balanced decisions can take time. If every issue had to be considered in this way before we published the SSDM, this could take many years. Making the SSDM a living document means we can give these decisions the individual level of consideration they deserve without holding back the publication of positions on those issues that we have considered.

Part 2 – Technical Information

Part 1 of the SSDM provides the framework for the detailed technical information contained in part 2. This is comprised of several registers which set out our formal requirements for the following:

- Types of street furniture and paving materials (street elements register). A list of products that meet our requirements and which have been approved for use can be found with this (approved products list), though this does not form part of the SSDM.

- Standards on various design and layout issues (design standards register).

- Typical detail drawings showing how both the above can come together for common elements of streetscapes in construction and landscaping terms (typical details register). Note that these are not mandatory however and the requirements of the above take precedence meaning that where they can be satisfied by other details, this will be acceptable.

- Procedures related to the functioning of the SSDM and the wider development and approval of design proposals (procedures register). This is accompanied by a list of current relevant associated forms, check-lists and indicators (forms, check-lists and indicators schedule), though these do not form part of the SSDM itself.

- Statements explaining our approach on contentious design issues and providing a robust rationale for these (position statements register).

The requirements of the documents within each register must always be met unless departure approval is sought and approved. The only exception to this are documents within the typical details register as noted.

Each register groups together numerous standards, procedures, requirements and/or details. Each of these is a separate agreed document. Individual instances may be added or revised frequently, so designers are advised to check the registers regularly to confirm that they are using the most up to date information.

Further information on the content of each part of the SSDM and about how these work together can be found in chapter 4.

Status

This summary guide and the regulating plan have been adopted by the cabinet of Southwark Council following extensive public consultation. This means that the strategic design objectives and policies within the summary guide (see chapter 1) and the specification area designation in the regulating plan (see chapter 4) have substantial weight.

The various documents within the registers in part 2 (technical information) are each individually agreed under delegated authority by appropriate chief officers or heads of service in accordance with the council's constitution. The information they contain represents the council's requirements on that matter. Design proposals must follow the requirements they set out in all instances unless a departure authorisation is sought and approved. For information on how to make a departure request, see the procedures register.

CHAPTER 4: USING THE DESIGN MANUAL

This chapter provides further summary information on the different components of the SSDM portfolio. It also provides an overview of how these are to be used together by those designing streets and spaces in the borough. Much more detailed information about different parts of the portfolio can be found in the referenced documents themselves.

The different components of the portfolio

Figure 4 sets out the contents and function of the different components of the SSDM.

Figure 4 – Components of the SSDM portfolio

Summary guide

Over-view document explaining how the various parts of the portfolio work together, the basics of our quality system and establishing the strategic design objectives and policies that will form part of key procedures.

Introductory guides

A series of short guides providing the absolute basics on the SSDM that are likely to be of interest to particular user groups such as residents and businesses, developers and their agents and council officers. These may be updated at anytime.

Regulating plan

This plan identifies which of 4 'specification areas' a given location in the borough falls into. These dictate which hard landscaping products and details can be used in improvement schemes. The plan also shows 'minor variant' areas (not listed here) within which some alternative products may be used for certain elements on account of established local character.

Specification areas

- Standard
- Town centres
- Heritage
- Strategic cultural area

Part 1 (General Interest)

Part 2 (Technical Information)

Typical details register

Individual illustrative detail drawings for the construction and surface landscaping of common built components of the street, such as footways, entry treatments, dropped kerbs, tables and refuges. These are provided to show how the requirements of other registers can be met. They are not mandatory however and where those requirements can be met using bespoke details, this will be acceptable.

Separate sets of details drawings are provided for each of the 4 specification areas identified in the regulating plan, with some additional for minor variant areas where required. The materials shown on the drawings are referenced to those in the street elements register for the relevant specification area and so must be read in combination.

The drawings DO NOT include illustration of issues such as the arrangement of road markings or traffic signs. For these, refer to the design standards register.

Detail drawings may be revised periodically to fit with any changes to the design standards register or position statements register.

Design standards register

Individual standards setting out our requirements for the broader design of the public realm in respect to particular issues such as the use of yellow lines, the prioritisation of different types of entry treatment details or the placement of items of street furniture. These are grouped into the sub-registers indicated below for ease of reference.

These standards must be followed unless departure authorisation is asked for and approved.

Notes will include references to relevant position statements, technical drawings and street elements where appropriate.

Standards will be added and reviewed regularly.

Sub-registers

- Engineering issues
- General layout issues
- Traffic signs
- Parking
- Accessibility
- Street lighting
- Street greening
- Sustainability
- Miscellaneous

Procedures register

Individual procedures related to aspects of the design development, review and approval process. Some important procedures include:

- Project inception procedure
- Design departure approval procedure
- Design review procedures
- Street element approval procedures
- New content development procedure

New procedures will be added or existing procedures revised periodically.

Forms and check-lists schedule

This lists various forms and useful check-lists that are to be used with the contents of the procedures register as well as our current "design indicators". Some of these are paper based for downloading and returning to the Council. Others can be completed and submitted directly on-line.

We may update the list and the forms it contains regularly.

Key

- Division between parts 1 and 2 of the SSDM
- Document adopted by cabinet

Street elements register

Palettes setting specifications for various surfacing and foundation materials, items of street furniture and planting elements.

Different palettes of surfacing and street furniture elements are provided for each specification area. Permitted variations from these are also set out for minor variant areas whilst a "special items" register is also included listing elements that may be used throughout the borough in exceptional circumstances – but only with pre-approval. Foundation materials, street trees and other vegetation are typically generic to all areas. Elements are cross-referenced on appropriate typical detail drawings.

Where relevant, only products that meet these element specifications may be approved for use on the borough's street without needing departure authorisation. For the most part this applies to surface materials and street furniture only. Those which are currently approved are listed on the approved products schedule.

Elements may be added or removed and specifications revised regularly.

Palettes

- Surface material
- Street furniture
- Foundation materials
- Trees and other planting

Position statement register

Individual statements on contentious technical design and layout issues - for instance: the use of particular traffic signs or road markings or; the absence of kerb delineation from footways.

Position statements will only be developed when there is a proven need to do so due to consistent difficulties implementing the requirements set out in our design standards register.

The development and adoption of position statements will be subject to procedures set out in the procedures register. The contents of other parts of the SSDM portfolio will be periodically updated to fit with any changes to these statements.

Position statements may be added or reviewed at any time.

Approved products schedule

This lists the surface material and street furniture products that have been approved for use against different element specifications contained in the street elements register. Only these products may be used on the borough's streets without departure authorisation. The procedures register provides details of how to obtain approval of products for addition to the schedule.

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Working with specification areas, palettes and our departure system

Fundamental to the system the SSDM introduces are “specification areas”.

There are four of these designated in different locations around the borough. Which of these a project falls into can be seen by referring to the specification area regulating plan which can be found at www.southwark.gov.uk. Where major redevelopments that would comprehensively change a large area are planned, an alternative “specification area” designation for that area (and/or alternative street elements) may sometimes be agreed with the Local Planning Authority section of the council as approved departures. These will be identified in relevant planning documents and will take precedence over the regulating plan until this is updated to match.

Figure 5 below summarises the main characteristics of each specification area.

Each specification area has an associated set of street elements and illustrative typical detail drawings. The nature of these differs for each. This approach strikes a balance between efficiency and responding to character. Higher value elements are used in palettes where specification areas have conservation or community value or where they’ll be more intensively used by the public. This helps us achieve value for money. Some design standards or position statements may also vary between specification areas.

Street element palettes, and design standards associated with a specification area *must be* followed unless departure authorisation is sought and approved (see below). Typical details need not providing the requirements of street element palettes and design standards are otherwise met. This is not intended to stifle innovation and creative design, but rather to:

- Be fair by providing a similar level of investment in streets based on their specification area.

- Help promote integration and address inequalities between adjoining areas by designing these to a similar standard.

- Maximise spending efficiency and therefore the number of streets that can be invested in each year. Agreeing bespoke designs can be resource intensive. Understanding the engineering and maintenance implications of new approaches takes substantial time and money as does sourcing appropriate new products and developing related construction information. There are also sustainability and cost implications from ordering small quantities of uncommon materials that may not be used again elsewhere. Lastly, there is less certainty that bespoke designs and products will stand the test of time and not require costly replacement or correction in a few years. Applying a consistent set of materials, details and design standards of a good quality (and which were are confident about the durability of) saves time and money, meaning investment can go further.

- Help improve the quality of maintenance and repair works to streets. This is a major issue. At present the large number of different materials used around the borough creates substantial difficulties in these respects, leading to poor results on the ground. Having controlled palettes with a reduced number of materials makes it easier for officers and utilities partners to predict, understand and source the materials likely to be needed for repair of streets and to secure the long term availability of these.

- Help target innovation and distinctive designs towards the locations where they will be of greatest benefit to the public. Information box 10 explains the circumstances where departures will normally be considered with a view to achieving this.

So, while palettes and design standards will be robustly enforced in most instances, you can be confident that the materials and details being used are of a high quality and that this has been possible as a result of the economies this approach helps achieve.

Specification area	Description	Palette characteristics
Standard	Everyday streets not covered by one of the other designations	Most sustainable, affordable and easily maintained elements used. Character focus on simplicity and neutrality.
Town centres	These match the “major town centre”, “district town centre” and “local centre” policy designations defined in the adopted Southwark Local Development Framework Proposals Map.	Mix of standard and higher visual quality/value elements, with a focus on those with a modern character that are reasonably robust. Elements that are more sustainable used where possible.
Heritage	These match the “conservation areas” designated by the council acting as Local Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.	Higher visual quality/value elements, with a focus on sourcing those with a heritage character first and foremost.
Strategic cultural area	The key international commercial and cultural area along the River Thames. This matches the ”special cultural area” designations defined in the adopted Southwark Local Development Framework Proposals Map, though the small area around Rotherhithe Village is omitted.	Highest visual quality/value and most sustainable elements used. Character may be modern or heritage based dependant upon the context.

Figure 5: Over-view of specification area and street element palette characteristics

Information box 10: Departures from the SSDM

Where we may consider allowing departures
Except where related to safety or cost and construction feasibility issues, requests to depart from our street element palettes and design standards will only be considered in locations of existing or potential cultural, historic or community importance. This helps the extra time and resources required to agree bespoke design approaches to be targeted on areas where this might benefit the community. Specific instances include where parts of proposals relate to:

- *The creation or improvement of public spaces intended to accommodate social activity (e.g. squares, minor spaces on streets, or 'homezone' type areas that encourage social use of the entire width of the street)*
- *The retention or reinforcement of existing locally distinctive historic paving patterns or items of street furniture,*
- *The retention or reinforcement of existing non-historic features found in a location that are judged to be of value.*
- *The creation of interest and delight in streets and spaces for children and young people.*

Where it is agreed that one of these objectives could be met then the relevant part of the project area will be defined as a "special amenity location". However, related objectives and targets to deliver the improvements upon which this status has been justified will need to be included in the project "quality plan". The designation will also be recorded in this. For this and other reasons the existence of a "special amenity area" will normally be determined when agreeing the "quality plan" in the early stages of the project and will only be agreed later in the project by revision to the "quality plan" under exceptional circumstances.

The designation will mean that departures from SSDM street element palettes, and design standards will be considered for reasons other than safety or cost and construction feasibility (e.g. visual amenity). Elements from the "special items" palette in the street elements register may be used in such circumstances. Any other proposed surface material or item of street furniture not in this palette or the usual palette for the projects specification area will require full departure approval. Procedures must be followed as usual. Applicants should appreciate that agreeing all the above is likely to extend programme timescales.

It should be noted that approval of requests to depart from the requirements of street element palettes will remain dependant upon (amongst other things) the proposals exceeding the quality of the palettes items that would otherwise apply as standard.

[cont...]

Information box 10: Departures from the SSDM [cont....]

<u>Agreeing departures</u>
We have introduced clear procedures for how departure requests are to be made and considered. There are two potential levels of departure authorisation that might be required. In both instances, the onus lies upon those making the request to justify why there is a need to depart, rather than on those considering the request to justify why there is not.

Where we wish to encourage restraint by designers but accept that something may be appropriate in some situations, only "written approval" from named officers is needed. This is a relatively simple process requiring only informal discussion with officers and, subject to their agreement to the proposed departure, their formal written approval..

Where we want to strongly discourage something, considering it to be appropriate in only exceptional circumstances, "full departure approval" is needed. This requires the submission of comprehensive information about the proposed alternative approach and a thorough justification which is then formally considered. See elsewhere in this chapter for further information.

The single regular instance where departure from specification area palettes will be permitted without authorisation is where works are being undertaken in a heritage specification area that are funded *only* through highway maintenance programme budgets. Information box 11 explains why and what this means.

Information box 11: Why we will allow departures from the heritage specification area palette without authorisation when related to maintenance projects

The reason for introducing this exception relates to the importance of the council's key statutory duty to maintain the highway – this being the main objective of works undertaken via our street maintenance programme.

For many years now, funding for street maintenance has been constrained and many roads are in need of urgent repair. The natural stone materials that make up our heritage specification area palette are far more expensive than those in the standard specification area palette - so much so that it would significantly reduce the area we could maintain each year were we to use it across all heritage specification areas without other funding support. The concern to improve heritage specification areas must thus be balanced with that of maintaining the highway.

When undertaking street maintenance projects in heritage specification areas the council will always maintain (or replace where degraded) existing street elements of heritage value. For example, where natural stone paving is already present, this will be kept and maintained or replaced with appropriate equivalents from the specification area palette if necessary. However, the scope and extent of any upgrade of lower quality elements to that required by the heritage specification area palette (for example, the replacement of concrete paving with natural stone) will be dependent upon funding contributions from other council or external programmes.

Where no additional funding is available, designers will liaise with officers in the planning design and conservation team to identify priority locations and do their best to upgrade these to the requirements of the heritage specification area palette within the limitations of the available budget. However, elsewhere the palette for the standard specification area will be used.

Upholding standards through our quality system

There are several ways by which we will uphold and enforce our design standards. Each of these is discussed briefly in turn below.

1. The design quality board and design quality control officers

To oversee our quality system we are convening a design quality board (board) of senior council officers. Local stakeholders may be invited to make representations to this. The board has responsibility for authorising all controls within the quality system, including the issue of "gateway approval certificates" (see 6 above) based on recommendations from "design quality officers" (see below and 5). It also acts as the final arbitrator on:

- Departure requests where these are declined by responsible council officers but then contested by the applicants (see 2 below).

- Recommendations made by design quality officers within "quality audit reports" for changes that should be made to proposals that are not agreed by project team members (see 5 below).

The board has powers to call in projects and individual departure requests at any time and will regularly review projects. The board will meet regularly in full. To allow it

to respond to issues or submissions that are made between meetings without causing excessive delay, its functions on a day to day basis will be fulfilled by the "board chair" and an associated "board administrator".

In addition to the oversight provided by the board, each project will have a "design quality officer" (DQO) appointed to it. Rather than forming a part of the project team, their role will be to:

- Work with project team to see that SSDM requirements are met, including by conducting "design checks" prior to the issue of information for public consultation or auditing.

- Lead on the determination of requests to depart from SSDM requirements (typically in association with relevant other council officers – for instance tree officers when the request relates to trees)

- Prepare directly or assist in the preparation of "control documents" (see 4 below).

- Carry out "design reviews" of proposals and prepare related "quality audit reports" for the board (see 5 below). The latter include their overall gateway approval recommendation to the board. In a minority of instances they may issue these gateway approval certificates directly themselves.

Where a project relates to a new private development or works by others than the council, a fee will be charged for the involvement of the design quality officers.

2. Departure approval requirements

The quality system operates on a departure basis. All design standards and street element palettes *must* be followed unless departure authorisation is requested and approved. Only when an associated departure authorisation form has been issued is any element of a design proposal that departs from SSDM standards approved by the council – even should a gateway approval certificate have been issued accepting the proposals at that stage (see 4 below).

There are two types of departure approval that may be required. Further information on these can be found in information box 9.

Note that requests to use elements from the "special items" palette will only normally be considered for non safety or cost and construction feasibility purposes where a "special amenity location" has been designated. Use will require only written approval. However, the granting of this is entirely at the discretion of DQOs and the board (see 1 above). This will generally require assurance that the proposed application is in line with that described in the accompanying usage notes provided in the palette.

Where the departure proposal relates to the standards within the design standards register then the type of departure authorisation required, and the council officers that will be involved in determining whether this should be granted, will be as stated in the appropriate standard. This will always include a DQO, often in association with other officers.

3. Development phases and workstages

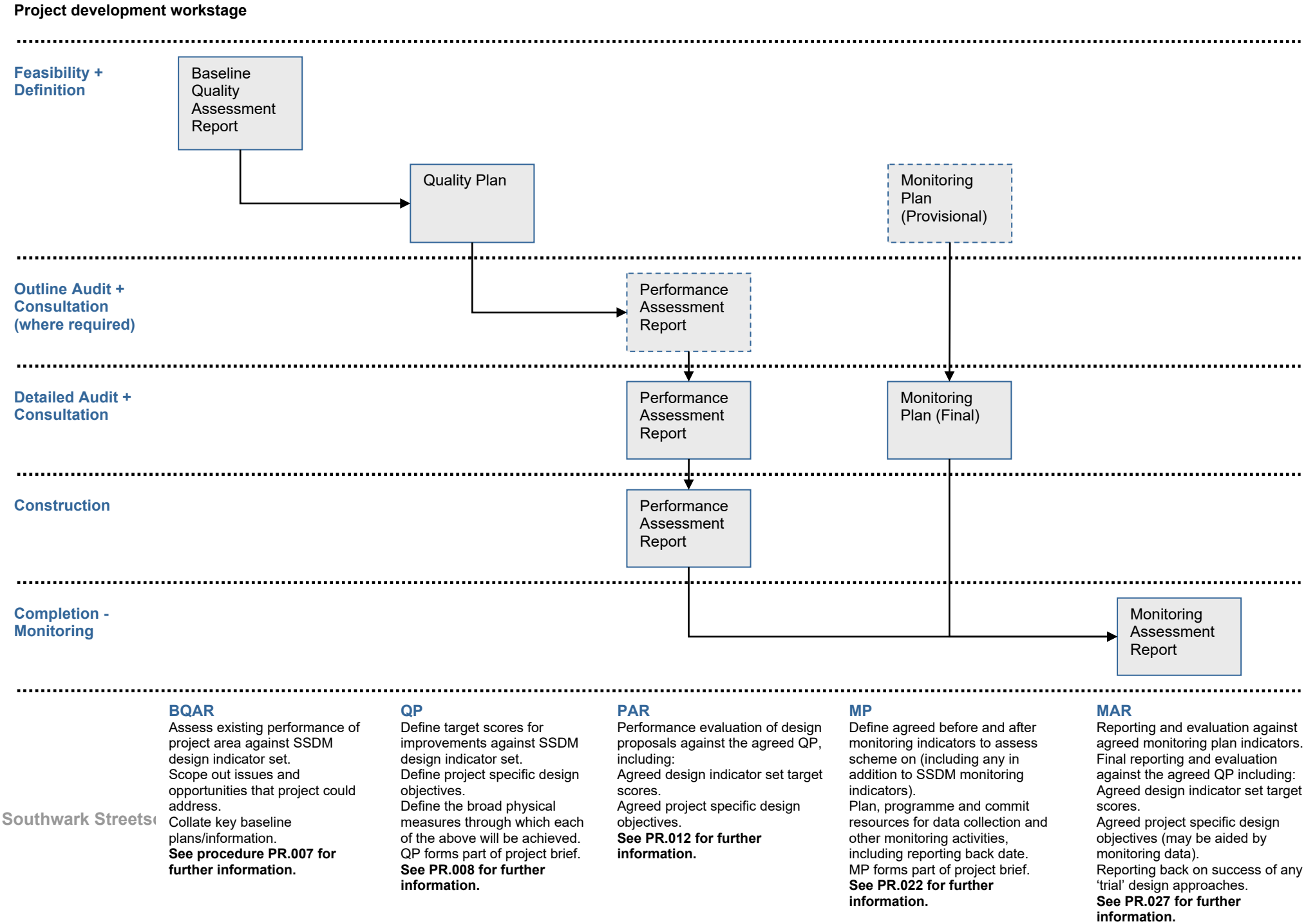
To clarify the process of agreeing and developing project proposals we've introduced a series of "phases" and "workstages". Figure 6 provides an over-view of what these are.

Phase	Workstage *[gateway approval certificate]*	Status	RIBA/LI Equivalent
Proposal	Scoping *[Scoping]*	Optional`	A
	Design definition *[Quality/monitoring plan]*	Mandatory	B
	Project definition *[Design scheme initiation]*	Optional	
Design scheme	Outline design development *[Audit/consultation information issue]*	Optional	C
	Outline design consultation/audit *[Outline design approval]*	Optional	
	Detailed design development *[Audit/consultation information issue]*	Mandatory	D-E
	Detailed design consultation/Audit *[Detailed design approval]*	Mandatory	
Construction scheme	Production information and contractor appointment *[Works commencement]*	Mandatory	F-J
	Construction *[Built scheme]*	Mandatory	K
Built scheme	Completion – Monitoring *[Project closure]*	Optional	L
	Completion – Full *[None]*	Mandatory	

Note
Where either an "outline design approval" or "detailed design approval" gateway approval certificate has been obtained then designs may be taken as having the Highway Authorities consent in the respects shown.

Figure 6 – Overview of project development phases and workstages

Figure 7 – Design quality control documents



Whilst some workstages are mandatory, others (such as those related to “outline design”) are optional and inclusion of these can vary with project requirements. Where developers are looking to obtain early Highway Authority consent for works that would impact upon highways maintainable at the public expense (existing or proposed) in advance of submitting a planning application to the Local Planning Authority section of the council, it is recommended that “outline design” workstages are included (see note to figure 6).

The onwards passage of a project through gateways is dependant upon the project team gaining necessary “approval certificates” (see 6 below).

4. Design quality control documents

These documents (control documents) are produced at different points during the development of project proposals. There are five different types in all, broadly separated into “assessment reports” and “plans” (see figure 7). “Assessment reports” consider the quality of either the existing streetscape within a project area or the proposed or built design changes to these. “Plans” sets out the agreed objectives and targets against which the assessment of quality will be made and are to be included as part of project brief packages.

The first of the control documents (the “baseline quality assessment report”) establishes the existing issues, opportunities and (through assessment against our design indictor set – see chapter 1) quality in the area of a proposed project. The next (the “quality plan”) agrees a plan to improve this to agreed objectives and design indicator set improvement target scores - so establishing the vision for the project. See chapter 6 for further information on each of these control documents. This is followed by further assessments of the developing design proposals against this plan at key stages (“performance assessment reports”) to see that these are delivering the agreed improvements. Other “control documents” set out proposals for monitoring of outcomes from the scheme in the longer term and reporting back on the results (the “monitoring plan” and “monitoring assessment report”).

Agreement of “plans” is a joint endeavour between council design quality officers (see 1 below) and project team members. “Assessment reports” are prepared by DQOs following “design reviews” with project team members and others and incorporated into broader “quality audit reports” (see 5 below).

5. Design reviews

These will be carried out for all projects and have two formats as appropriate.

“Design checks’ will be carried out to see that information is complete and in the correct format prior to issue. This includes checking for unauthorised departures from SSDM requirements (see 2 above) and that the information required by check-lists has been produced (see 7 below).

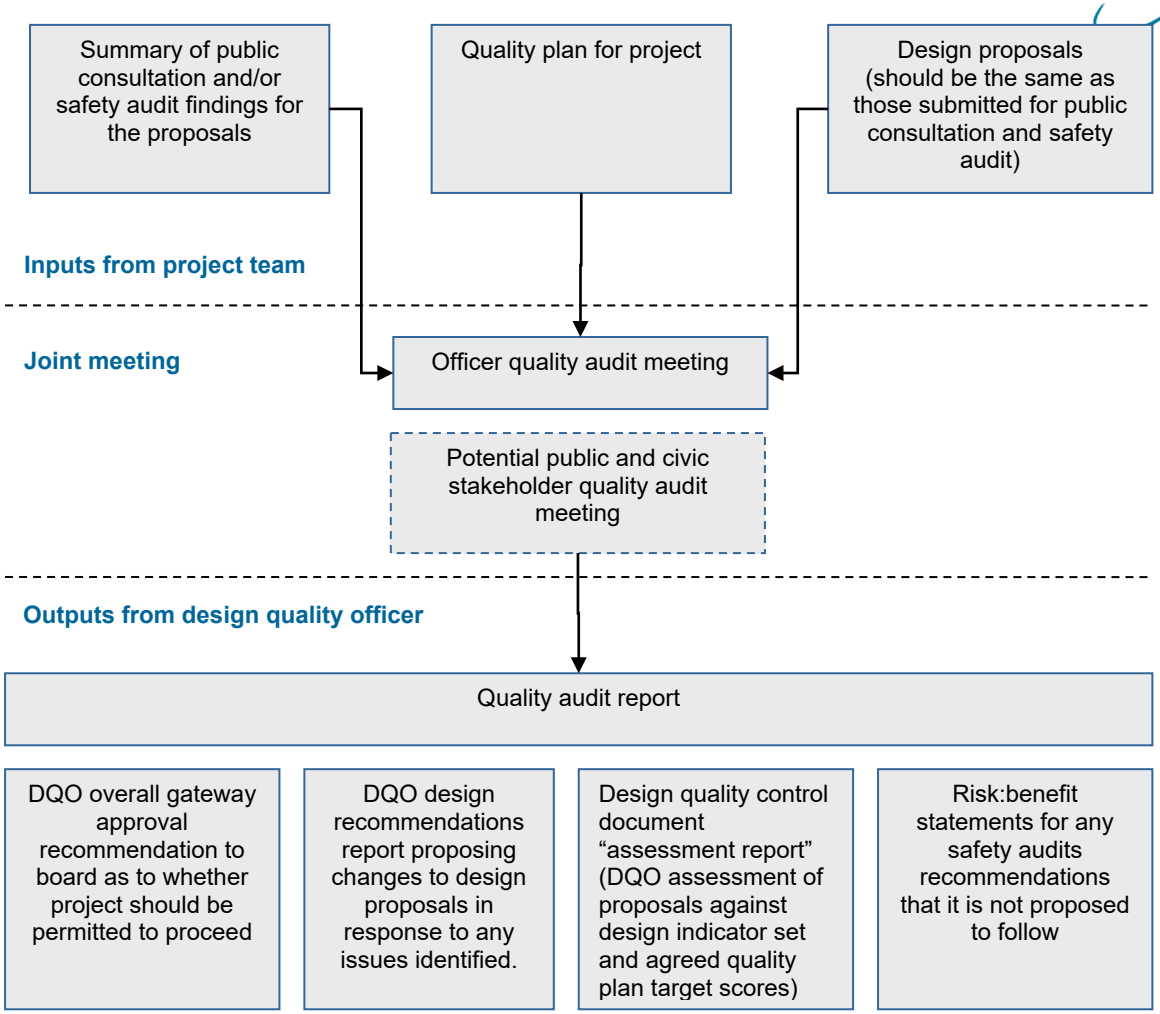


Figure 8 – Over-view of quality audit report inputs and outputs

"Quality audits" will be used to shape the design proposals during their development. They will consist of a multi-officer review led by DQOs (see 1 above). In some instances, representatives of local stakeholder groups or the public may be invited to attend parts of this. Quality audits will normally take place following public consultations and/or safety audits of project design proposals so that the findings or recommendations from these can be considered in view of how they would impact on the agreed "quality plan" for the project.

The output of the audit will be a "quality audit report" to the board (see 1 above). This has various components (see figure 8). In addition to assessing how the quality plan is being met through a control document assessment report (see 4 above), they also include recommendations for changes that should be made to the design proposals (which may be accepted or contested by the project team) and an overall recommendation on whether a gateway approval certificate should be granted by the board to allow the project to proceed. Where the recommendations of road safety audits are not accepted, they will also include risk:benefit statements setting out why on balance (based on impact across the council's strategic design objectives and aims) it is considered that following these is inappropriate.

Figure 9 sets out the process that follows up to a decision by the board as to whether a subsequent gateway approval certificate is issued so that the project can proceed to the next workstage.

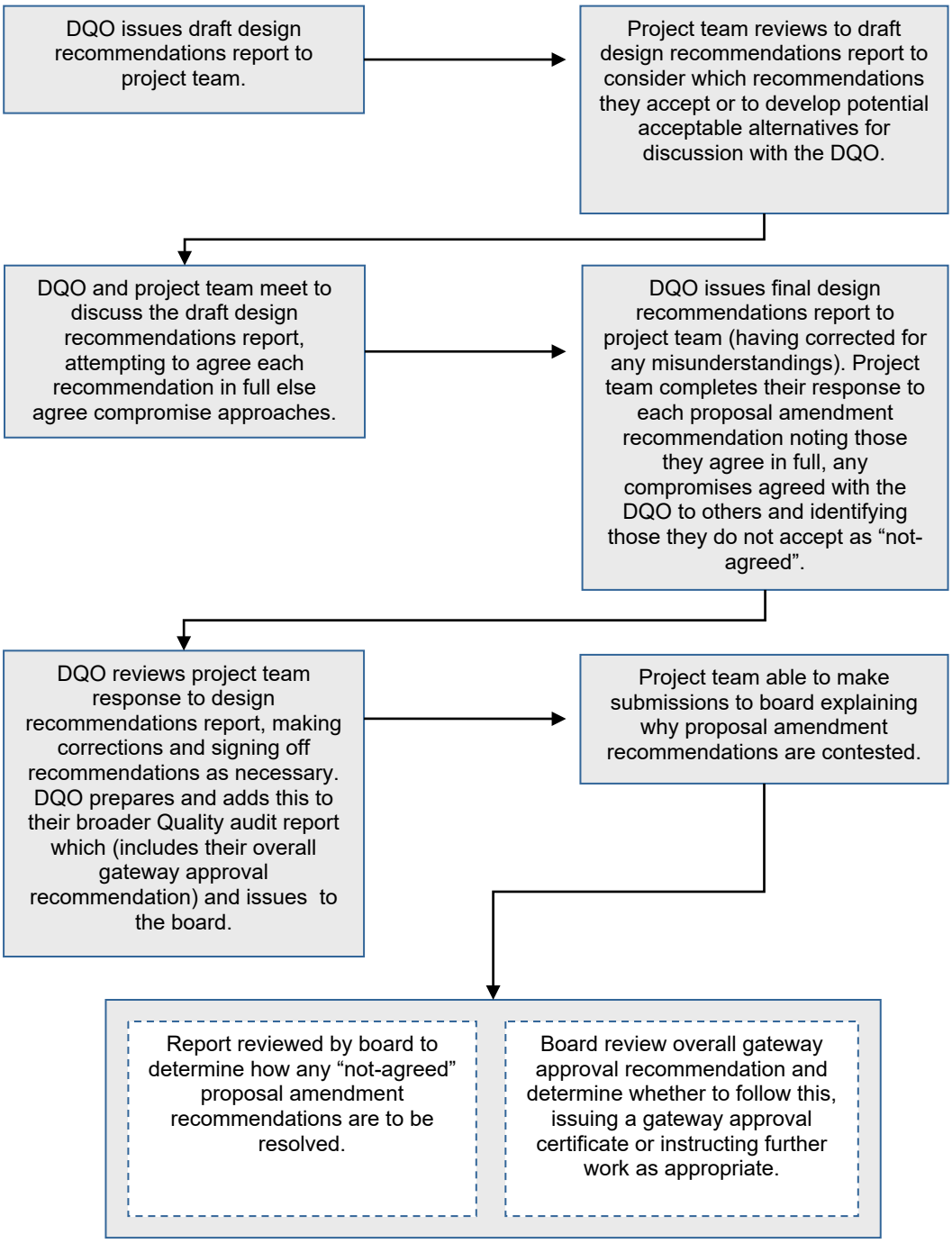


Figure 9 – Process leading up to gateway approval decision

More information about "design reviews" and "quality audit reports" can be found in the procedures register.

6. Approval certificates

Approval certificates are used to control the progress of projects and provide certainty for all involved as to what has and has not been agreed.

Broadly there are two types.

- "Gateway approval certificates" provide agreement for a scheme to proceed to the next workstage (see 2 above). They represent agreement in principal to the proposals as they stand at that stage (though they may include requirements that certain changes be made in the next development stage). Until these are gained, a project cannot progress. Issue of these usually follows a report providing a recommendation produced by "design quality officers".

  The majority of these certificates are issued by DQOs (see 1 above).

- "Item approval certificates" provide agreement on specific design issues from officers responsible for these (for instance, the Traffic Managers agreement to proposals for changes to traffic management or parking arrangements related to a scheme) or confirming that certain other requirements have been met (for instance, that a health and safety plan has been created for the project). Broadly, certain detailed approval certificates are required before a given "gateway" approval certificate will be issued. However, when those detailed certificates are gained is largely down to the project team.

  The majority of these certificates are issued by DQOs (see 1 above) in association with other council officers responsible for the issue in question.

7. Check-lists

Check-lists clarify the information that must be produced at given workstages (e.g. design drawings). They can be found in our forms and check-lists schedule. They are used by DQOs and other council officers to confirm that information is complete when conducting "design reviews" and will therefore influence whether related approval certificates are issued. Of particular note should be our requirement that specific plans identifying "signage and road markings" and "pedestrian clear widths" on footways are produced from the earliest stages of projects in order to address street clutter and improve accessibility.

CHAPTER 5: BALANCING OUR PRIORITIES

The challenge

Chapter 2 of this document explained the increasing complexity of the policy and legislative context for street design. In addition to our *traditional* statutory duties as Highway Authority around traffic, safety and maintenance, the council is now tasked with contributing to the delivery of a wide range of other issues which the design of streets and public spaces can have an important influence on. Some of these can conflict, and this can lead to competing demands from members of the public and concerns about potential liability should something go wrong. Government has left the development of design standards and other requirements largely to local authorities, having advised that they should develop positions that suit their local needs and that balance all their concerns. Recent legislation means that the public can now rightly expect to be more closely involved in shaping our decisions.

All of this raises a number of far-reaching questions:

- Which are the concerns that should be prioritised?
- What should be done when these conflict?
- How can the Highway Authority fulfil these whilst still maintaining its traditional duties?
- How can we protect the public and tax payer in respect to risk and liability when it makes design decisions to prioritise one need over another?
- How can we best include local people and other stakeholders in shaping our approach without slowing down the delivery of vital improvements?
- How can we make sure that the views of equalities target groups are heard?

Our solution

The SSDM establishes a framework that we will use to address these questions. There are a number of inter-related components to this:

1. Risk:benefit approach to design

Design responses to risk and safety issues often impact inadvertently on other concerns such as the visual appearance of streetscapes or the extent to which they are likely to be conducive to walking or cycling.

We believe that it is in the public interest to consider the positive and negative impacts of risk in relation to a range of factors and to balance these with one another to form a judgment of whether that risk is acceptable. This helps avoid the adoption of risk mitigation measures in design proposals that could be more damaging than retention of a hazard itself when impact across all concerns is weighed. The council will continue to design out foreseeable sources of potential frequent serious injury and any other safety risks that we consider offer no benefit in other respects. However, where lesser safety risks exist and the view is taken that designing these out would (when impact on balance across all considerations is born in mind) have a greater negative impact than retention, we may chose to retain and manage these. We will only do so though where risks are low and manageable.

2. Linking decisions to our strategic design objectives and policies

Our strategic design objectives and policies have been developed to comply with key policy and strategy documents like the Southwark Sustainable Community Strategy whilst bearing in mind our statutory responsibilities. They set out the issues that we will prioritise in order to support and facilitate delivery of these strategies. More information on them can be found in chapter 2.

The objectives and policies will inform a design indicator set that we will use to assess how proposals are performing (see chapter 2). The policies will also serve as the *other considerations* that we will balance against safety when forming the risk: benefit judgments described in 1. Lastly, we will refer to the policies when developing future part 2 technical information documents. When doing so in respect to position statements we will follow set procedures (see 3 below).

3. Position statement development procedures

Full details of our position statement development procedures can be found in our procedures register. We will use these to develop position statements on complex or controversial issues where we feel this is merited, so that we can implement improvements with reduced delay and with greater protection from potential liability claims.

Information box 12 below explains how position statements differ from our design standards.

Information box 12: How does our position statements register differ from our design standards register?

Our design standards register sets out the standards that should be used by designers when shaping public spaces. As with other registers, these must always be followed unless departure authorisation is sought and approved.

Circumstances may arise where designers repeatedly have difficulty or feel uncomfortable implementing a particular standard. As a result a large number of departure authorisations may be made which there might not currently be sufficient grounds to decline. Where it is considered that the concern is justified or the standard at fault, the council may revise a standard. However, there may be circumstances where it is felt that the concerns are potentially unjustified or that the positive impact on other objectives and aims justifies retaining and strengthening the standard so that it can be implemented with confidence. In these instances we will look to prepare a robust position statement, developed by following set procedures to provide a clear evidence base and audit trail. The resulting position statement will be added to the position statements register whilst related design standards will be reviewed to match with this.

In the first instance design standards will normally be introduced to address issues. However, where difficulty is being experiencing implementing a standard, we may decide to create a position statement to allow a more robust line to be taken on the matter. Circumstances in which developing a position statement may be considered include where:

- Designers are not following the standards set out in the design standards register due to what are considered potentially unjustified safety or liability

concerns but for which we do not currently have sufficiently robust evidence to dismiss.

- Implementing the standard involves considering a significant number of complex and potentially competing issues (including those in respect to safety and liability) that it is repeatedly taking designers and officers a disproportionate amount of time to resolve.

- There is a strong public interest in the standard with many conflicting views from stakeholders, meaning that we are constantly being asked to revisit it.

When creating position statements we will follow fixed development procedures that will provide a robust and defensible audit trail detailing how we reached our decision. We will set out what these are in our procedures register once the full detail of important changes to our equalities duties are clarified by central government.

In principal it is intended that we will always undertake an initial screening process to identify whether there are critical risk or equalities concerns related to an issue and the proposed position. This is to meet our key statutory duties. If none have been identified we may proceed immediately to recommend a position.

Where there are concerns but we still see a potential case for pursuing the proposed position, we will carry out a full assessment. We may also do this when we think that the public have a strong interest in an issue.

At the heart of this assessment will be the proposed position's impact on our various strategic design policies. The balance of the risk and benefits between these will inform our judgment of whether to progress or modify the proposal (see 1 above). We will also consider functional concerns not covered by our strategic policies whilst sifting mandatory statutory requirements and duties from advisory guidance. Key stakeholders may be invited to make representations which will be taken into consideration. All this information will be considered at a review meeting where we will determine whether to progress the position as proposed or modify it on account of concerns identified. The result will be a position recommendation.

The means of agreeing the recommended position will be based on the perceived residual risk associated with it. Once agreed, the contents of the other registers will be reviewed to ensure that they fit with the new position.

Though developing these position statements will take longer than producing the standards found in our design standards register, this will save us time in the long-run and help achieve better quality results on difficult matters.

4. Design quality control documents

We require five design quality control documents (control documents) to be produced over the course of a project. These are used to:

- Establish existing public realm quality in an area whilst identifying and prioritising potential issues and opportunities.

- Agree a plan to deliver improvements to quality to meet agreed targets and objectives, including those of funders.

- Assess how the developing and (and later built) design proposals are meeting the objectives and targets agreed in this plan.

- Monitor whether the intended outcomes were achieved after construction.

See chapter 4 and figure 7 for further information.

The most important of the control documents is the quality plan. This sets out targets for improvement (against our design indicator set) and general scheme specific design objectives against which the success of proposals is subsequently assessed. This serves as an important reference point and justification during later "design reviews" (see 5 in chapter 4 and 5 below). It assists in developing judgements as to whether to amend design proposals to follow findings from public consultations and safety audits. This helps provide a robust audit trail.

Overall, the control documents are a fundamental part of the quality system and critical to the overall monitoring of investment of public money. Information gained on a project by project basis will help with tracking whether the strategic design objectives and policies we have set are being implemented and allow for timely corrective action to be taken when this is not the case.

5. Design review "quality audits"

Quality Audits are one of two types of design reviews that will be undertaken on projects. See 5 in chapter 4 for full information.

The potential involvement of local stakeholders in these audits will help us better appreciate their needs.

In addition, these will incorporate many of the other measures described in this chapter including:

The design quality control documents described in 4 above. These will be used to assess whether proposals are delivering their agreed quality plan and will so inform any recommendations for potential changes to the proposals in response to issues identified. This will include those on account of findings from public consultations and safety audits.

The risk:benefit approach described in 1 above. This will be used to justify decisions not to follow the recommendations of safety audits (where appropriate) by reference to impact on balance across all the strategic design policies described in 2 above.

6. Consultation with equalities targets groups

The demographic of the people who respond to consultations is sometimes narrow. Equalities target groups (including black and ethnic minority groups, children and young people, those with disabilities and older people) are often under represented. This can be a problem when aspects of designs proposed or required for their benefit (like seating to provide rest opportunities) are opposed by those who do respond. To address this we will take special steps to consult these groups.

7. Road safety audit requirements

We are updating our road safety audit procedures consistent with the latest guidance from national professional institutes and agencies to compliment our quality audit procedures.

Safety audits of design proposals will take place prior to quality audits so that their recommendations can be considered in these.

From now on we will be requiring auditors to provide evidence to substantiate any hazards they identify and clarify the frequency and severity of the potential risks associated with these. This will help us better understand the nature of potential risks and to weigh these against other considerations when taking risk:benefit judgements (see 1 above) within the quality audit process. When we do not propose to follow audit recommendations we will prepare a risk benefit statement setting out why we think this is appropriate on balance. This will be included in the quality audit report.

The new procedures will also clarify for auditors that we do not expect their reports to repeat advisory or mandatory design requirements – be those from the SSDM or any other document – only to identify potential hazards and the risks associated with these irrespective of any guidance or standards.

CHAPTER 6: FIRST STEPS FOR YOUR PROJECT

Quality system steps prior to the development of design proposals

This chapter gives an initial overview for project teams (whether employed by the council or private developers) of the steps they'll need to go through to initiate their scheme proposal , complete the first development phase and the various workstages within it (see figure 6).

This first phase covers understanding the issues, opportunities and priorities in the location that the proposal is for and agreeing with the Highway Authority a plan to address these - effectively forming the design brief for the scheme. The future design proposals will be judged and assessed against this plan when determining whether to issue approval certificates later in the design process.

This first phase takes place before any development of design proposals begins.

Those planning to undertake works to the existing adopted public highway (or to have streets or spaces adopted as such) are reminded that until these and following workstages are completed, the Highway Authority will not be able to consent to proposals. This is of particular importance to proposals which are related to developments seeking planning permission from the Local Planning Authority section of the council. Developers and their agents are therefore strongly advised against starting out with developing any design proposals for works to the existing or proposed adopted public highway until they have engaged with the Highway Authority to meet its requirements.

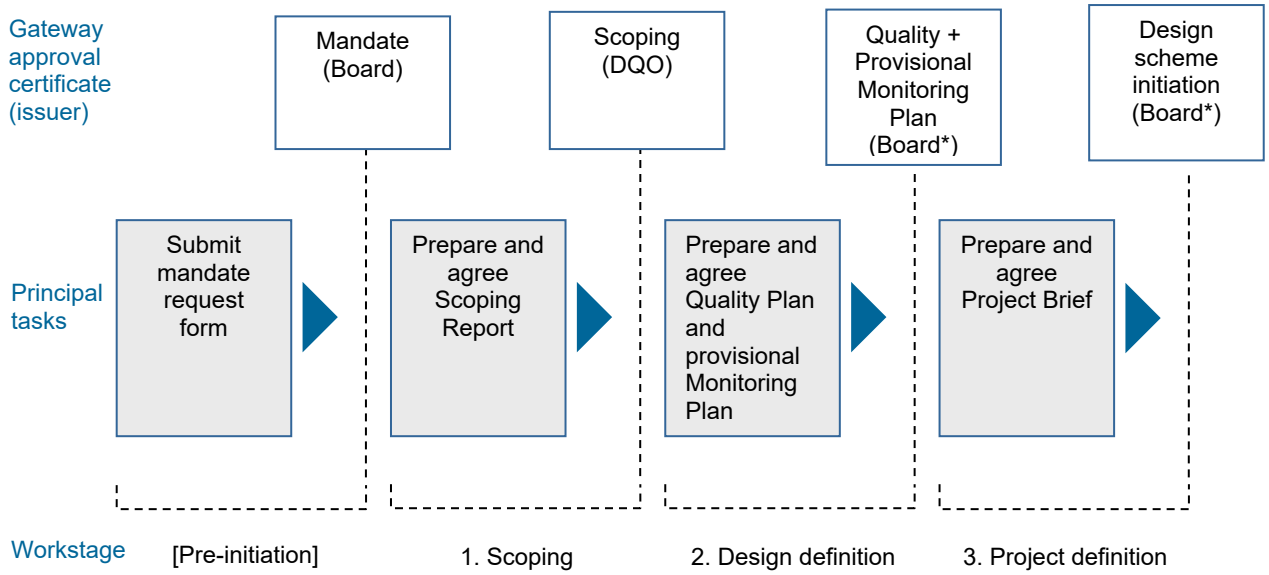
Initiation into the quality system: Obtaining a mandate certificate

The first step for any proposed scheme is for the project team to complete a mandate request form and submit it .

Only basic information about the improvements that the team have in mind is required at this stage. No design drawings beyond the most basic conceptual ideas should be included as these are likely to be quickly superseded by tasks in the following workstages.

Once the mandate request is received, the board will add the proposal to the 'projects database' (see information box 2). This will help us identify any immediate potential opportunities to coordinate other planned works with the proposal (should it proceed) for mutual benefit. It will then issue a 'proposal mandate' gateway approval certificate to the project team. The certificate will include details of the DQO assigned to work with them on the scheme.

The DQO will contact the team to arrange an initial meeting to take them through the basics of our quality system and respond to any queries they might have. Where the project relates to proposed works under section 278 or 38 of the Highways Act 1980 a member of the council's network development control team will also attend. They will be dealing with related highways consents later in the design process.



Note
*Board approval will be informed by DQO gateway recommendation

Figure 10 – Overview of steps within first development phase

Workstage 1: Producing a scoping report

The next workstage involves scoping out the issues, opportunities and priorities in the part of the borough in which the improvements are proposed. Doing this requires the project team to compile a series of plans and the DQO to produce a first 'control document' – the 'baseline quality assessment report'. These will be informed by a first quality audit and compiled together in a 'scoping report'.

The project team will need to develop a set of draft plans recording the status quo on a number of themes. In addition they need to request and (where received) add to these any initial comments from relevant council officers on existing issues and opportunities related to each theme. This helps begin the process of capturing important professional knowledge from council staff on the ground.

The themes covered by the plans range from land ownership, vehicle movements and accessibility, to underground utilities, conservation assets and the street furniture and paving materials used in the area. Sometimes initial ground investigation works may also be required to help all parties better understand what is likely to be feasible in construction terms. A full list of issues and the information required on each plan can be found in the forms and checklists schedule whilst further advice can be obtained from DQOs.

Once the draft plan has been prepared and approved by the DQO, they will arrange a quality audit 'review meeting' on site. This quality audit takes a different format to those that will occur in later development phases (see chapter 4) for the design review of improvement proposals.

Relevant council officers will be invited to attend the review meeting. It provides an opportunity for all involved to look at the site in greater detail and identify any further issues or opportunities to record on the draft plans. For some larger projects a separate 'community' quality audit meeting may be arranged with residents and other stakeholders to obtain their input, get the benefit of their local knowledge and understand what their

priorities might be. Any additional information obtained in these audit meetings is added to relevant plans by the project team before re-submitting the set to the DQO for final approval.

After the audit meeting, the DQO will prepare the 'baseline quality assessment report'. This involves assessing the existing performance of the scheme area against each indicator within the SSDM design indicator set. This will help establish the extent to which it is currently meeting the SSDM strategic design objectives and policies for streets and spaces.

Once the DQO is happy that all the plans received from the project team are complete (showing all necessary information and representing the various comments received from council officers and others during the site audit meetings) they will compile these with their baseline quality assessment report and issue them to concerned parties as a 'scoping report' along with a related gateway approval certificate.

In addition to providing a record of the various issues and opportunities in the scheme area that the proposed scheme (and others in the future) might address, the scoping report will also form an easy reference source for all parties in later workstages when they need to understand constraints and influences on proposals.

Workstage 2: Agreeing a quality plan and provisional monitoring plan

Having scoped out the issues and opportunities in the area, the next workstage involves agreeing those that the proposed improvements will address. These are recorded in the next control document – the 'quality plan'.

The vision contained in the quality plan is expressed in three ways:

i. Scheme specific design objectives. These allow the project team and funders to express the objectives that they wish to achieve.

ii. SSDM design indicator set improvement targets. These are targets for improvement upon the existing performance of the scheme area (as recorded in the scoping report) against indicators within the SSDM design indicator set. For instance – increasing the frequency of crossing opportunities from low to high. This helps express how the scheme will contribute towards meeting the SSDM strategic design objectives and policies set out in this document.

iii. Major physical changes. A list of the major physical changes that it is proposed to implement to achieve the above (for instance, introducing a new controlled crossing, widening footways and creating planted verges). Note that these may not contradict any SSDM design requirements.

Once agreed, the quality plan will be subject to change control. For instance, it may be found following consultation with the public in latter workstages that one of the proposed major physical changes (iii above - e.g. to create a planted verge) is no longer supported. As such, the quality plan may be updated to remove or vary this, with the reasons for doing so set out each time. This helps retain a record for stakeholders as to why any changes to the original plan were made.

In addition to the quality plan, a 'provisional monitoring plan' (a further design control document) must be agreed at this stage. This sets out any performance measures (in addition to the SSDM design indicator set) that it is proposed to obtain information on to help judge whether the scheme has been a success once it has been implemented. Some of these may be related to the project team or their funder's objectives. Others may relate to

SSDM strategic design objectives in order to check whether works to full fill these have the intended outcome. This is provisional only at this stage and subject to final confirmation before the construction of proposals begins since the appropriate monitoring measures may change in subsequent development phases as design proposals are shaped. However, the existence of this plan helps ensures that the need to obtain pre and post implementation data for comparison and the resources for these are clearly planned for.

The process of agreeing both the quality plan and the monitoring plan will be one of negotiation between the project team and the Highway Authority. This will need to obtain the best balance between the objectives of both, bearing in mind the issues, opportunities and priorities recorded in the scoping report, the available funding and other constraints

Within any gateway approval certificate the board will assign the scheme a ‘project designation’ based on information that must be provided in the gateway submission form (see information box 13).

Workstage 3: Confirming the project brief

With the quality plan agreed the final step in the first phase is to agree the project brief for delivery of the scheme. The agreed quality plan and provisional monitoring plan are appended to this.

The bulk of the project brief specifies programme and delivery dates for various required outputs in terms of what will be produced and when (e.g. production of outline design proposals, number of design iterations, safety audits, design reviews, public consultations etc....), project personnel and other important project management outcomes. This helps both the project team, the DQO and any other council officers who may need to be involved in the scheme to programme effectively. Programme dates for works undertaken by developers in relation to section 38 and 278 of the Highways Act 1980 can be expected to be more loosely defined than those funded by the council or other partners.

Much of the project brief output content will be informed by the project designation assigned to the scheme in the last gateway approval certificate (see information box 13). Where the project team propose to vary from any ‘model requirements’ for the respective assigned project designation, it is advisable to discuss this first within the DQO to see if this is likely to be supported.

Once the project team are happy with the project brief they submit this to the DQO. The DQO will review it and prepare a gateway report to the board (providing their recommendation as to whether it should be approved in its current form) and forward both documents on. The board will then issue a ‘design scheme initiation’ gateway approval certificate to the project team, if approved.

Once the above gateway approval certificate is obtained, the scheme can proceed to the ‘design scheme’ phase where the development of design proposals in accordance with the project brief (and the quality plan within this) can begin.

Information box 13: What is the relevance of a "project designation"?

Project designations are assigned to proposals by our board in the 'quality/monitoring plan' gateway approval certificate they issue at the end of the 'design definition' workstage. One of three designations might be made:

- *Small*
- *Medium*
- *Major*

For each designation there is a schedule of '"model requirements" (see procedure PR.004 for further information). These explain the extent of various types and levels of 'control documents', design reviews, consultations with the public, safety audits, design iterations and other information that a subsequent project brief for the scheme (which the board must agree in a later workstage) will be expected to include. Where applicants can make a case for varying from these model requirements, leaving out or downgrading some of these may be considered by the board. However, conversely the board may sometimes specify through the gateway certificate that certain aspects of model requirements must be provided. The project designation also informs the fee that the project team will need to provide for the involvement of design quality officers in supervising their project.

The designation the board assigns is based on the level from 1-4 that the project proposal is considered to achieve against a series of criteria. These include:

- *Construction complexity (including consents)*
- *Public Interest*
- *Programme*
- *Cost*
- *Potential level of departures*

Some of this is based on information that must be included in the gateway approval submission form. Other information is obtained from the quality plan and scoping report.

Rather than responding to strict thresholds (such that if a project surpasses a level for one criteria, it is judged to have done so for all), the designation for each project is assigned by the board on a case by case basis following consultation with various council officers and with sympathy to the particulars of the proposal.

Works not subject to our quality system

Almost all works to the public highway (or to streets or spaces intended for adoption as such) are subject to our quality system procedures and requirements (though the level of demands may vary – see information box 10). The only normal exceptions to this are:

- Emergency or planned maintenance works by statutory undertakers
- Minor reactive maintenance works by the council
- Schemes involving the placement of items of street furniture in small numbers
- Applications to create private accesses or footway crossovers to existing properties.

In the case of the latter two of these, applicants will first need to apply for an exemption certificate. If granted, proposals will not be required to follow the majority of steps within our quality system (e.g. creation of design quality control documents, quality audits and gaining many approval certificates). However, design standards and street element palettes shall still apply and departure approval procedures will need to be followed as standard.

Exceptionally we may provide exemption certificates for other projects that would otherwise be subject to the whole of our quality system procedures.

Glossary

Approval certificate	A gateway or item approval certificate issued by the board or DQOs.
Board	The design quality board of Southwark Council's public realm division. Has overall responsibility for the quality system. Issues the majority of gateway certificates and arbitrates on *not-agreed* recommendations from QARs and departure requests.
Baseline quality assessment report (BQAR)	A control document *assessment report.* Establishes the existing performance of an area against the SSDM design indicator set. This is included as part of a scoping report.
Control document	Design Quality Control Document. Five types of are normally produced over the course of a project. These may either be *plans* or an *assessment reports*.
Design indicator set	A series of indicators developed by the Highway Authority to assess the performance of schemes in delivering on strategic design policies. They general assess aspects of physical provision (e.g. frequency of dropped kerbs). Used to establish the baseline performance of a project area in a BQAR, targets for improvements to this in a QP and to assess progress against these in subsequent control document assessment reports.
Design check	A form of design review. An assessment of submitted information against standard check-lists to see that it is in the correct format, that pertinent issues have been addressed and that this includes no unauthorised departures from SSDM requirements. Often closely informs decisions as to whether to issue approval certificates to allow information to be issued.
Design review	One of two types of appraisals of project proposals by DQOs within the Highway Authorities quality system. These occur at various stages throughout the development and approval of projects. Often closely inform decisions as to whether to issue approval certificates.
Quality system	The Highway Authorities procedures and requirements for the assessment and approval of design aspects of improvement proposals and later works to the public highway. This must be followed in full to gain the authorities consent to undertake works.
Design indicator set	A series of indicators stating levels of performance in respect to aspects of physical provision (e.g. frequency of dropped kerbs along streets or spacing of trees).

	Typically based on quantitative evidence. Related to SDPs and used to monitor implementation of these. Existing performance of scheme areas (before works are commenced) against the set are recorded in BQARs, improvement targets against these are set in QPs, whilst the subsequent success of design proposals in delivering these are assessed in PARs and MARs.
Design standard	A document setting out the Highway Authorities requirements on a particular issue. These are grouped together into a register with themed sub-registers.
Departure approval	An authorisation that is required in order to depart from SSDM requirements. There are two types.
Design quality officer (DQO)	A council officer. One DQO is allocated to every project to advice project team members of following our quality system, produce control documents and quality audit reports and assess departure requests.
Full departure approval	One of two forms of departure authorisation. Required in all instances in order to depart from SSDM requirements. More complex than the alternative *written approval*.
Gateway certificate	An approval certificate issued by the board or DQOs giving approval for a project to proceed to the next workstage. Relevant item certificates must be obtained before this will be issued. Some such certificates are also informed by QARs produced by DQOs.
Highway Authority	Southwark Council in its capacity as Highway Authority, Street Authority, Traffic Authority (and several other related Authorities) for most roads in the borough. These statutory roles are performed by the public realm division of the council.
Item certificate	An approval certificate issued by the board or DQOs providing some other approval other than at a gateway.
Local strategic partnership (LSP)	A group of local agencies, authorities and voluntary sector groups responsible for delivering improvements under the local Sustainable Community Strategy. In Southwark the LSP is the Southwark Alliance.
MP	Monitoring Plan. A control document “plan”. Establishes the before and after changes that a scheme will be monitored on. Performance against this is then reported back at the end of the project in a control document “assessment report”
Mandate request form	A form that must be submitted to the Board providing initial details about a proposed project before it can be initiated into the Highway Authorities quality system.

Monitoring assessment report (MAR)	Monitoring Assessment Report. A control document “assessment report”. Undertaken in the final workstage after the project has been operational for some time. Reports back on performance against issues identified in the MP and provides a final assessment of progress against the QP
Monitoring indicator	An indicator used to measure the success of design proposals in delivering outcomes against SDOs. May be evidenced by either qualitative or quantitative information.
Performance assessment report (PAR)	A control document *assessment report*. Assesses the performance of design proposals or built proposals against their QP.
Phase	One of the Highway Authorities standard development work phases (larger groupings of workstages – see above).
Project brief	A brief agreeing programme, standards and information that will be delivered as part of works developing and implementing a project. Responds to the requirements for the project designation set for that project through its proposal mandate certificate. QP and MP control document *plans* form a part of this.
Project designation	A designation for a project to one of four levels that is set by the board through a proposal mandate certificate” based on information submitted in a “mandate request form”. Establishes the project management, information and design quality oversight requirements for the project that subsequent project briefs will be expected to meet.
Proposal mandate certificate	An instance of a gateway certificate. Provides approval from the board for a proposal to be initiated into the quality system and proceed to the next workstage. It also sets out a project designation.
Quality audit	A type of design review. Undertaken to allow DQOs and the board to assess the quality of an existing area in which improvements are proposed, or to consider the acceptability of subsequent design proposals. Production of a QAR is one component of this.
Quality audit report (QAR)	An output on a Quality Audit. A report produced by a DQO that either provides an assessment of existing design quality in a scheme area or assesses that of design proposals. This has various components including a control document *assessment report*, recommendations for issues to be prioritised in a QP (before a QP is agreed) or changes to design proposals

	to respond to the QP (once a QP has been agreed) and an overall approval recommendation to the board as to whether a gateway certificate should be issued.
Quality plan (QP)	A control document *plan*. Establishes the agreed vision for a scheme that design proposals must then be developed to deliver, their progress being assessed against this through subsequent other control document "assessment reports"
Register	An informal grouping of adopted SSDM part 2 (Technical Information). Registers contain documents of the same type (e.g. design standards, typical detaill drawings, street element palettes)
Road safety audit (RSA)	An non-mandatory audit of built or proposed works in respect to road safety, often (but not necessarily) conducted to a methodology developed by the Highways Agency. Undertaken as a means of demonstrating compliance with statutory duties in respect to the promotion of road safety.
Scoping report	A report produced in the scoping workstage that includes a set of plans showing the status quo for an area in relation to a number of themes, and the comments of council officers on issues, opportunities and priorities related to each theme. Also includes the BQAR establishing the existing performance of the area in relation to the SSDM design indicator set. All this information provides a basis for agreeing the improvements that should be undertaken that are recorded in the QP, as well as providing a future reference source for baseline information.
Southwark streetscape design Manual (SSDM)	A portfolio of documents setting out major parts of the council's adoptable standards for the design and construction of the public realm.
Strategic design objective (SDO)	A guiding objective for something we aim to achieve in carrying out improvement works and that we will monitor outcomes against.
Strategic design policy (SDP)	A guiding policy establishing the general design approach or procedures we will follow in order to achieve our strategic design objectives. All other SSDM requirements should align to these.
Special amenity location	A designation that might be assigned to a part or all of a scheme area in a QP where agreed by the board or DQOs. When granted, departures from street element palettes, technical drawings and design standards will be considered for reasons other than safety or cost and construction feasibility. However, this is only granted where it is accepted by officers that proposals could

	potentially realise some exceptional benefit to the public and where targets and objectives to deliver these are set in the QP.
Special items palette	A palette of items or materials that are pre-approved for use in the borough and do not require separate departure approval in themselves. Permission to use them however remains subject to departure approval. May only be used for non safety or construction and cost feasibility purposes where a special amenity location has been designated.
Street element palettes	Tables setting out specifications for surfacing and foundation materials, trees and other planting and items of street furniture. Surface materials and street furniture are specific to specification areas. Foundation materials, trees and other vegetation tend to be borough wide. Similarly, whilst a schedule is held of street furniture and surface material products meeting specifications none is generally held for foundation materials, trees or other vegetation owing to their method of production. Where an approved products schedule exists, only products on the schedule may be used without requiring seperate departure approval. Where a schedule does not exist, council officers will never the less need to be satisfied that proposed materials meet element specification requirements.
Sub-register	A further sub-grouping of a register gathering together documents related to a similar topic or area.
Typical detail drawing	A construction and landscaping drawings illustrating how the requirements of design standards and street element palettes can be met. Surfacing and foundation materials and items of street furniture are referenced to relevant street element palettes. Road markings are not generally shown, details for arrangement of these being provided in appropriate design standards. Designing to these details is not mandatory, and providing the requirements of design standards and street elements palettes are otherwise met, use of alternative details is acceptable.
Workstage	One of the Highway Authorities standard development workstages. Projects may not proceed to the next workstage until a gateway certificate is gained.
Written approval	One of two forms of departure authorisation. Required in all instances in order to depart from SSDM requirements. More straight forward than the alternative *full departure approval*.

Appendix 3

Southwark Streetscape Design Manual

Introductory guide for members of the public

Consultation Draft Version 1 (16.12.10) **www.southwark.gov.uk**

Introduction

The Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (SSDM) sets out the council's standards and procedures for the design of the majority of council controlled streets and highway spaces in the borough. It is of great importance to everyone living and working in or visiting the borough as it helps determine the physical shape and appearance of these spaces and the standards that the council can be expected to deliver. This guide provides a brief summary of its key content.

Why are streets and spaces important?

Streets and spaces are amongst the most important assets that the council manages on behalf of residents. They are the public face of the borough and its villages where many of our daily experiences take place. They provide opportunities for memorable social interaction and convenient movement. Their appearance affects community pride. Their design influences local climatic conditions and the construction materials and management regimes that go into creating and maintaining them impact upon our carbon footprint. However, the usage demands placed upon them are frequently intense and often competing. All this makes their design and management more complex than may be initially apparent.

Where can I expect the SSDM to be applied?

The SSDM applies to all streets and spaces that are part of the highway which is adopted by the council and maintained at public expense. This does not include roads for which Transport for London is responsible, usually identifiable as "red routes". In order to promote a joined up approach to design, we will look in the future to extend this to other areas of council land. We will also work with developers to extend the principles into new "private streets" wherever possible.

What guides it?

Of great importance to the SSDM are our strategic design objectives and policies. The objectives are the things we want to achieve by carrying out improvements to street and spaces. The policies are the approaches we think will help deliver these. All of these have been selected because they support the aims and policies of the Southwark Sustainable Community Strategy and other important strategic documents. We recognise that streets are about more than just traffic, and this is reflected in the objectives and policies.

We will monitor projects to see that the objectives are met and policies implemented. This will also help the public to hold us to account in terms of fulfilling the things we've said we'll do.

In addition, we'll use the policies to inform our decision making, both when developing new content for the SSDM (it's a living document and we'll update it and add to it regularly) or taking decisions within individual projects about what the best balance is between competing concerns – including those raised when we consult the public on schemes. See "balancing our decisions…." below for further information.

Our strategic design objectives for streets (what we want to achieve)

- SDO1: More inclusive and accessible streets
- SDO2: Greater levels of active travel in streets and healthier lifestyles for residents
- SDO3: Improved road safety and reduced road danger
- SDO4: Greater permeability for all street users and enhanced journey experience
- SDO5: Visually simplified street layouts
- SDO6: More sociable streets and spaces
- SDO7: Economic improvements in our communities
- SDO8: Greener streets that are better adapted to climate change
- SDO9: Improved security and community confidence
- SDO10: Greater sustainability in our use of resources

What does it contain?

The SSDM is made up of a portfolio of documents, as shown in figure 1. All of these are held on-line for viewing and download through the SSDM web pages at www.southwark.gov.uk.

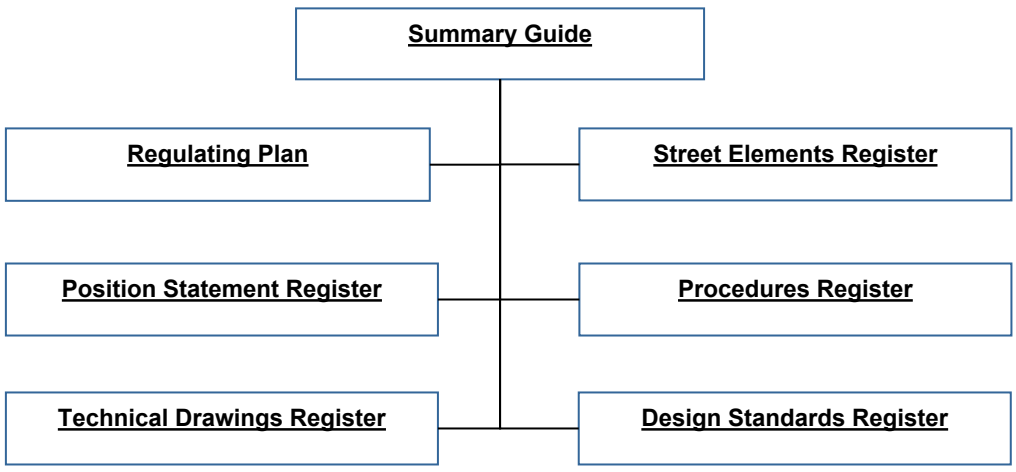


Figure 1: SSDM – Main portfolio structure

At the top of the SSDM sits the “summary guide”. This is aimed jointly at both design and engineering professionals and the wider public. It establishes the strategic design objectives and policies discussed above and explains how the various other parts of the SSDM are be

used together. If you are looking for a fuller summary of our approach to that given in this introductory guide it is a good place to start.

Beneath the summary guide sits several “registers” grouping together our requirements on a particular area. Whilst relatively technical (having been written for professional engineers and designers), all of these are important references if you are looking to understand the quality you can expect us to deliver or our individual position on a given issue. The most important of these registers include:

- Our standards on individual detailed design issues – from the colour of bus lanes and how we will position individual items of street furniture, to the width of footways and the approaches we’ll use when sourcing materials. Unless a departure is agreed with council design officers, we will always require these to be followed, whether this is within street improvements we carry out ourselves, or works by others associated with new developments on the public highway.

- Palettes establishing the types of paving materials and items of street furniture that are to be used in different parts of the borough identified through a “regulating plan”. These aim to strike a balance between responding to local character, meeting the needs of different users, making effective use of limited resources and reducing our carbon footprint. Again, unless a departure is agreed with council design officers we will always require that these be followed. See “character and specification areas” below for further information about how we’ll apply these palettes.

- Technical drawings showing how common elements of streets are to be constructed and landscaped – for instance footways, tree pits and traffic calming features. Materials are cross-referenced to the palettes above whilst some aspects also cross-reference our design standards where designers will find further information.

- Procedures for how we’ll manage the process of developing, approving and constructing projects. This includes those explaining how we will take decisions about the changes that should be made to proposals on account of public consultation or formal safety audit findings, as well as other explaining how we will involve the public in shaping proposals.

- Position statements, providing a very detailed justification and evidence base for the stance we have taken on contentious or high profile issues. We will only produce these where required.

The SSDM is principally a design document and does not cover the council’s policies or approaches to allocating street space between different uses or users (including different types of parking or modes of transport) or approach to traffic management. However it does explain how provision for different users is to be designed when it is required and may establish which of a number of options is to be used when there are alternative ways of meeting identified needs.

How does it take account of local character?

Innovative, bespoke and context driven design can produce inspiring places. However, this takes time and money and carries a substantial risk of potentially costly failure (what looks good on day one does not always endure in the longer term). Because of this we want to target our use of ‘bespoke’ approaches to design at projects where the additional time, effort and risk can be justified. As such, we will only consider this for parts of projects that would create areas of particular community value - such as new public squares, “homezone” style residential spaces or places for children and young people. We’ll determine where this is the case at the outset of projects.

For the majority of the time we will apply a standardised approach to design. Introducing standardisation helps us work more efficiently and to realise cost and carbon savings on materials. It will also simplify the process of managing maintenance and reinstatement works to streets and quality issues related to these.

However, we recognise the need to continue to respond to local character. We've therefore introduced the concept of "specification areas". We've split the borough up into 4 of these that are shown on a "regulating plan". You can find this at www.southwark.gov.uk if you want to see which of these a location falls into. Within each specification area we will apply a different palette of paving materials and street furniture whilst landscaping details will also vary. In addition the "regulating plan" establishes a small number of "minor variant areas". Within these, we'll allow alternative designs to be used for some (but not all) items within a palette on account of strong local precedent (for instance, white picket bollards in Dulwich rather than black metal ones). Some of our design standards also vary in relation to "specification areas".

We feel this approach strikes the best balance between responding to local character, and fairness in the level of investment we make in different areas. It is important that we reduce inequalities in the perceived level of attractiveness between different areas and promote their integration by designing each to a similar standard.

How does it help the council balance its decisions about the design of public spaces?

With so many competing demands for the use of public space, it is hard to keep everyone happy all the time. However, we recognise the need to be clear about our decisions and transparent about what has informed them. The SSDM introduces a number of steps to achieve this.

We will agree a "quality plan" for projects at their outset. This will establish what we intend to achieve through any works, related back to our strategic design policies and objectives and any further unique objectives for that site.

We will audit proposals regularly during their development to see that they are staying on track against this 'quality plan'.

Public consultations on design proposals often throw up strong conflicting views about proposals whilst technical "safety audits" may also identify concerns. When considering how to respond to these we'll refer back to our strategic design policies and take the decision that we feel is most beneficial on balance considering impact across all of these. We'll also use the strategic design policies to inform any new or revised design standards we develop as the SSDM grows and evolves.

How will it help involve me in shaping spaces?

We recognise that the public have a right to help shape decisions about the public realm and that we have a duty to involve them. Because of this we'll continue to undertake consultations on all our schemes - often via community councils. However, whilst council officers have a great deal of technical knowledge on what works and doesn't in design, it is residents who understand the intricacies of how a space functions on a daily basis. Involving local people early on in the design process helps us create spaces that meet everyone's needs and is an investment that is likely to bring savings in the longer run.

- We will aim to involve a wider range and greater number of local people in the design process, including equalities target groups.

- We are establishing a “design quality board” of senior council officers to oversee all the projects we undertake and the on-going development of our standards. Representatives of local civic amenity groups may be invited to make representations to this in an advisory capacity so that we can benefit from their local experience.

- We will continue to grow and expand our “projects database” which can be found at www.southwark.gov.uk. This provides information for the public (including consultation material) and regular bi-monthly updates about the progress of all our projects, all accessible via a simple point and click map.

- Lastly the SSDM as a whole establishes for the first time the standards and procedures that we will follow and apply in shaping spaces. Whilst we will do our best to get these right by following the balanced decision making framework described above, it is unlikely that everyone will agree with all of these. Whilst recognising this we think it’s never the less important to set these out as only once established can they be challenged, revised and improved. We’ll review them periodically to provide this opportunity, consulting the public when we do so where there is public interest. We’ll advertise at www.southwark.gov.uk when we are reviewing an existing standard or procedure or proposing to develop a new one so that people can get in touch to let us know if this is the case. You are welcome to contact us to suggest which SSDM requirements you think we should look at and we will take this into account when deciding which to review each year. Unfortunately we are unable to give detailed responses to individual concerns raised over existing requirements outside of reviews.

Who should I contact if I want to know more?

The SSDM is viewable in full on the SSDM web pages at www.southwark.gov.uk. However, If you can’t find what you are looking for or would like to know more then either:

- Contact the council’s design quality manager. This is currently:

  David Farnham
  david.farnham@southwark.gov.uk
  tel: 0207 525 2982

- Contact one of your local councillors. Details can be found at www.southwark.gov.uk.

Appendix 4

Regulating Plan

16.12.2010
Rev A

This document defines the proposed boundaries of “specification areas” that will be mapped in the “regulating plan” contained within the Draft SSDM Part 1 (General Interest).

The “regulating plan” will allocate to each part of the borough one or more of four potential “specification area” designations. Palettes of permitted surface materials and street furniture, construction details and some design standards and procedures will vary for each of these. As such the regulating plan will be an important component of the overall SSDM framework. The four potential proposed specification area designations and their proposed limits are as follows:

Standard	Any area without one of the other designations.
Heritage	To map directly to the boundaries of “conservation areas” established under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 by the council acting as Local Planning Authority.
Town Centre	To map directly to “major town centre”, “district town centre” and “local centre” policy designation boundaries defined within the adopted Local Development Framework Proposals Map.
Strategic Cultural Area	To map directly to the “strategic cultural area” policy designation boundaries defined within the adopted Local Development Proposals Map, save for the omission of the small separate designation around St Mary’s Church Rotherhithe.

Where the boundaries change to designations in other documents that the specification areas in the regulating plan are linked to, those in the regulating plan will change automatically with these.

Appendix 5

Equalities, diversity, rights and cohesion impact assessment: Southwark Streetscape Design Manual

Draft Stage 1 Scoping Assessment (for discussion with Equalities Panel) – version 1 (09.11.2010)

N.B. this document is presented for discussion with the Equalities and Diversity Panel in a stage 1 review. Further to this, it will be refined where relevant then finalised.

1. Summary of document

The Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (SSDM) will set out the boroughs standards, procedures and priorities for the design of streets and spaces within the public highway. In future this may be expanded to cover parks and housing land off the public highway.

The SSDM will be a key reference for all those designing or wishing to influence the shape of public spaces, be these engineers or landscape architects undertaking improvements to existing streets or developing proposals for new ones as part of planning schemes, or local people looking to understand the level of provision or standards they can expect from the Council. Its primary concern is with issues relating to:

- visual quality;
- the accommodation of social activities within public spaces;
- landscaping and ecological design;
- road and community safety; and
- meeting movement needs.

The standards and procedures in the document will explain the Council's requirements for the design of a wide range of features, from footways and traffic tables to the provision, location and configuration of street furniture, planting and signage. Procedures will require that standards are followed unless approved otherwise by Council officers. Other procedures will be introduced for:

- Shaping project briefs in relation to priorities and outcomes (including involvement from the community in this);
- Reviewing auditing and consulting on proposals throughout their development to see that they keep to their briefs and standards; and
- Ultimately assessing built schemes to see that intended outcomes were delivered.

The SSDM is intended to be a living document that can grow and evolve over time, with standards and procedures being added or revised in response to changes in strategic priorities, design regulations, research, products and need.

It is proposed that procedures be added to the SSDM in future establishing how local persons would be involved in shaping new or revised content. This would include elements associated with the assessment of that content in respect to equalities issues, risk and other concerns. Given uncertainties regarding new statutes (including the Equalities Act) and the priorities of the new Coalition government in respect to assessment, it is proposed that these procedures be developed later in 2011 when clarity is gained, after adoption of this initial SSDM content. Once in place, future or revised content would be adopted in line with these.

Please note that the document will not cover issues related to prioritisation between different modes of transport or allocation of parking space - except where these would have a significant impact on one of the above (e.g. if particular ways of controlling traffic would have a positive or negative impact on aesthetic quality or user needs, then standards may be included permitting or prohibiting them). These issues of network prioritisation will be covered separately in other strategies. As such, whilst the SSDM will not establish standards in relation to when a parking space or bus lane will be provided, it will explain how they shall be designed in the event that they are considered to be necessary.

2. Is this a new or an existing policy/strategy

The Council has no existing comprehensive set of standards for streetscape design or related procedures for design development (though individual requirements may exist for a small number of issues in existing other documents). As such this is mainly a new set of standards and requirements.

The public was consulted on a previous draft 'streetscape design guide' in 2007. However, this was not subject to an EQIA. This document was never formally adopted as its scope was considered to have been superseded by revisions to national design guidance and legislation. After an internal review by officers it was decided to develop a new 'design manual' to a radically different scope, the main change being a switch to a more technical and prescriptive document that would provide greater clarity for designers and the public.

3. Status of document in relation to previous EQIAs.

This is a new strategy which is therefore being reviewed under an EQIA for the first time.

4. Potential impact of this document and related issues to investigate in Stage 2 work

4.1. Discussion

Public spaces are forums for planned or informal social interaction and conduits for movement allowing access to services and opportunities (as well as providing potential space for such opportunities themselves). Their design can also have a substantial impact on a wide range of concerns that may not at first be obvious – from local climate and air quality, to property values and community confidence.

All members of the public gain from public spaces in at least one of these respects. As such their design can have a limiting or enabling effect on equality, diversity, rights and social cohesion. This is particularly so in a comparatively densely populated borough like Southwark where:

- ***residents and visitors may lack sufficient private space of their own or other convenient off highway public space to meet their needs; and***
- ***existing public space within the highway can consequently be under intensive pressure to meet a wide variety of often competing demands (for instance, parking places for businesses vs. space for children's street play or urban greenery).***

Southwark's status as major destinations for international visitors adds further complexity, in that the needs of those from outside the borough must also be considered in some respects.

4.2. Issues for further investigation

The main areas of relevance to equalities diversity and social cohesion that the

SSDM may impact upon include:

Accessibility

- ***Provision of rest opportunities and comfort facilities (e.g. public toilets and water fountains) for pedestrians who are vulnerable or have special needs (eg older pedestrians, those with disabilities, pregnant women).***

- ***Tactile way-finding provision and visual cues on footways as a navigation aid for visually impaired pedestrians and the potential impact of this on other users (e.g. stability for elderly pedestrians).***

- ***The need for appropriate delineation of traffic free space for certain user groups (e.g. the visually impaired, those with learning difficulties, young children) as a navigation and comfort aid and potential impacts on other users and uses (e.g. wheel chair users attempting to negotiate those delineators).***

- ***Impact of guard-railing on certain target groups, particularly visually impaired pedestrians.***

- ***Impact of vertical traffic calming features and changes in levels on certain user groups (e.g. disabled or elderly users of buses, wheelchair users in negotiating footway crossover ramps providing access to private driveways).***

- ***Preferences between different types of controlled crossings (e.g. zebras, puffin, toucans, staggered reservations and guard-rail pens) and how these impact on users.***

Community and personal safety and confidence to use streets

- ***Potential impact of street lighting levels on actual or perceived comfort and safety for those using streets.***

- ***How design can contribute to avoidance of anti-social behaviour in public space at hot spots like bus stops and seating installations.***

- ***Shared surfaces (kerb free spaces shared by pedestrians and vehicles) and vulnerable pedestrians confidence and comfort in safely navigating these without segregation – particularly in unfamiliar environments.***

- ***Providing for children and young people's needs within public spaces and impact on other user groups (e.g. objection of some residents to youths 'hanging out' by their property).***

- ***Impact of visual sight-lines (blind corners etc...) on confidence using the public realm for some target groups.***

- ***Impact of 'gangs' and territorial issues in young people's use of the public realm.***

- ***Impact of both traffic and vehicle speeds and measures introduced to address these (e.g. road humps) on certain groups using the public realm, including children, those with mobility impairments and those with learning difficulties.***

- ***Impact of evidence of anti-social behaviour (graffiti, litter, needles) on perceptions of safety and confidence using the public realm***

Cohesion

- ***Provision for children's play, particularly in areas with limited public or private green space and impact on community cohesion.***

- ***Potential role of public spaces in providing opportunities for planned or informal social interaction to address social isolation and promote cohesion. Potential focus on cultural attitudes to public space from ethnic minority groups and its importance.***

- ***Potential impact of street greenery, public art and overall quality of design on public perceptions of an area and economic investment/property values.***

- ***Potential impact of street greenery, public art and overall quality of design on perceived quality of life, particularly to groups with limited private outside hard or green space.***

Health

- ***Potential impact of street greenery on health (e.g. pollen and fruit on allergies, shading and air quality mitigation on asthma, general impact on stress and well-being etc...).***

- ***Potential impact of good public realm design on supporting active lifestyles and addressing health inequalities (e.g. walking, cycling, play).***

Rights

- ***Duties under various acts to consult various target groups specifically (children, people with disabilities) and others more generally and how this will be met within procedures.***

5. Proposed Outline Consultation Strategy

5.1. Principal Strategy

It is proposed that consultation with the public on equalities, diversity, rights and social cohesion issues related to the SSDM take place via a number of channels – some of which would integrate with the wider public consultation on the document. The following proposed strategy is subject to further development and confirmation of resources:

Stage 2 impact assessment

- ***Undertake a qualitative study via focus groups with relevant target groups to gain primary data on attitudes to the issues raised in section 4 above. Initial proposed groups and invitees are as below, though this may change subject to resources and availability of groups to meet within the consultation time frame:***

Disabilities

- ***Southwark Disability Forum***

Invites from the following national organisations:

- ***Joint Mobility Unit access partnership***

Older residents

- ***Age Concern Lewisham and Southwark***
- ***Southwark Pensioner's Action Group***
- ***Southwark Pensioner's Forum***

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

- ***Muslim Forum***

- ***Black Parents Group***
- ***Southwark Refuge Forum***
- ***Other local groups to be identified.***

Children and Young People

- ***Southwark Youth Council***
- ***Delegates from local primary schools***

Women's Groups

- ***Women's Design Service (national design service for the built environment)***
- ***Southwark Muslim Women's Forum***
- ***Various local groups, to be indentified***

LGBT groups

- ***Southwark LGBT forum***

Gypsy/Roma Travelling Community

- ***Southwark Travellers Action Group***

- ***Undertake research into secondary data sources (research studies etc...) related to the issues raised in section 4 above.***

- ***Undertake further qualitative study (potentially via street surveys or focus groups) with a sample of people living, working in or visiting Southwark to gain primary data to support the formal public consultation on the SSDM manual. This would not necessarily include those from equalities target groups. However, as part of this it is proposed to investigate attitudes to a small number of high profile equalities related issues to gain further primary data to compare with the views of the target groups themselves (see appendix 1 for proposed suggestions regarding potential issues that this might focus on). This component will be subject to further direction from cabinet on the form of public consultation preferred for the wider SSDM.***

- ***Prepare stage 2 'assessment of impact' report drawing on primary and secondary data, for presentation to EDP.***

5.2. Proposed outline programme

The following outline programme is proposed. This may be subject to revision due to committee or cabinet meeting dates or other issues.

- ***Mid November 2010: Meet with Southwark EDP to review stage 1 scoping proposals (included proposed public consultation questions below).***

- ***End November 2010: Finalise stage 1 scoping and consultation strategy in response to comments from EDP and others. Commence stage 2 impact assessment research activities (outreach focus groups and research into secondary evidence).***

- ***Mid December 2010: Submit stage 1 scoping and consultation strategy alongside draft SSDM for cabinet approval to go out to public consultation.***

- ***Mid-January 2011- Mid-March 2011: 8 week consultation on draft SSDM.***

- ***March 2011: Produce SSDM consultation summary, including stage 2 impact assessment report. Present stage 2 impact assessment report to EDP and outline proposed action plan measures for inclusion in final SSDM plus any proposed relevant changes in response to findings of consultation/assessment. Undertake revisions to SSDM.***

- ***May 2012: Submit final SSDM for adoption via IDM.***

Appendix A – Proposed priority issues for inclusion in public attitudes research as part of the wider public consultation on the SSDM

See section 5.1 above for further information.

A number of potential equalities related issues for inclusion in this proposed exercise are suggested below for further discussion. Note however that this exercise remains subject to further guidance from cabinet as to the preferred format of the wider public consultation on the SSDM:

- ***Shared surfaces: Increasingly, the Council is being asked to consider proposals that would allow pedestrians and moving vehicles to share the entire width of streets and spaces with one another, without any kerbs or surface changes for guidance or informal segregation. Some vulnerable people (including those with disabilities and older people) have expressed concern about this.***

  How do you feel about such proposals from an equalities, diversity, rights and social cohesion perspective?

- ***Cycling on footways: Cycling is increasing in popularity. Some cyclists report feeling uncomfortable using the road with vehicle traffic and, formally or otherwise, may decide to cycle on footways instead from time to time. However, some vulnerable people (including those with disabilities and older people) have expressed concern about this, whether it is formally permitted or not.***

  How do you feel about this from an equalities, diversity, rights and social cohesion perspective and do you think the Council should be providing space for cyclists on footways or on the carriageway?

- ***Seating in public spaces: Seating can be a valuable rest aid for less mobile pedestrians such as the elderly, pregnant mothers or those with movement difficulties. Where well located it can also provide opportunities for informal social interaction for isolated residents. However, residents sometimes express concern about provision of seating related to potential anti-social behavioural issues such as rough sleeping or rowdy street drinking.***

  How do you feel about this from an equalities, diversity, rights and social cohesion perspective and do you think the Council should be providing more seating?

Those participating would be asked to declare their typical means of travel, and whether they consider themselves to belong to a number of target groups related to equalities, diversity, rights and social cohesion.

Appendix B – Potential sources of secondary information

The following provides a non-exhaustive list of known sources of potential secondary data on equality, diversity, rights and cohesion issues. The majority of these are drawn from research studies or surveys. It is proposed that evidence gained from these could be used within the stage 2 impact assessment.

National sources

- ***Sight line (Cabe, 2010) - review document regarding the needs of people with different kinds of impaired visibility in the public realm.***

  Potential relevance: evidences and explains the needs of visually impaired people within public spaces in relationship to way finding aids and the impact of poor provision of health and quality of life.

- ***Annual 'PlayDay' survey (PlayDay, annual) - research into children and parents views about play related issues***

  Potential relevance: frequently addresses issues regarding the wider built environment (e.g. street play) and so thus helps evidence children's needs as expressed by them. This has potential implications for everything from physical design (e.g. ability to play out more in the street) to management of spaces (issues about bullying or intimidation by older children or intolerance by adults).

- ***Play for a Change (DCFS, 2007) – research report that provided the evidence base for the national play strategy***

  Relevance: A substantive literature review into the impact of play on children's development. Looks extensively at how the design of the wider public realm effects this (for instance, decreasing opportunities for independent travel, outdoor play and exploration on health, risk management skills, and opportunities for social cohesion. Also consider the importance of contact and integration with natural features).

- ***Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors – various papers (IDGO, various years) – research programme into the needs of older people in the built environment***

  Potential relevance: evidences and explains the concerns and priorities of older pedestrians regarding the design of particular aspects of public spaces based on interviews and research.

- ***No trees no future (TDAG, 2008) – research summary regarding the value of trees in urban environments***

  Potential relevance: includes summaries of research exploring the impact of trees on physical and mental health and property values all of which can have an impact on equalities. For instance – if trees are shown to have a positive benefit on well-being, children's development and property values, how does the absence of their provision impact on certain communities?

- ***Various research papers on shared surfaces and tactile delineators (Guide dogs for the Blind/UCL/Rambol Nyvig/TNS-BMRB 2007-2010) – research programme looking at the attitudes of visually impaired people to shared surface environments and evaluating potential alternative delineators to up stand kerbs as navigation aids in streets.***

  Potential relevance: Provides evidence as to the effectiveness and appropriateness for certain disability groups of shared surface designs and

tactile delineators.

- ***Promoting or Creating Built and Natural Environments that encourage and support physical activity (National Centre for Clinical Excellence, 2008).***

  Potential relevance: Provides evidence as to the impact of public realm design on physical health which is likely to effect many target groups – particularly those which otherwise lack mitigating private outdoor space.

- ***The wider costs of transport in English Urban areas in 2009 (Cabinet Office, 2009) – evidence paper looking at the impact of transport of issues wider than congestion, including health and environmental quality.***

  Potential relevance: Provides evidence as to the impact of traffic on health, well-being and property values, all of which could have implications for target groups. For instance, what is the impact of busy roads on vulnerable pedestrians and how does related air quality or discouragement of using these environments effect their health?

- ***Paved with Gold: The real value of Street Design (Cabe, 2007) - summary of a research programme looking at the impact of good design on property values and business rates.***

  Potential relevance: Demonstrates a positive relationship between high quality design and business rates/property values and attractiveness of shopping areas to users. This suggests that provision of such outcomes may have equalities and social cohesion issues (e.g. should high quality materials be focused only in Conservation Areas where they may compound existing comparative wealth, or utilised more widely to increase attractiveness and investment in deprived areas?

- Breaking Point: 20 mph Speed Limits in London (GLA 2009) – report looking into the potential basis for wider use of 20mph limits to address health and safety issues which effect a number of target groups for this EQIA.

  Potential relevance: Summarises research demonstrating the significant positive impact of 20mph restrictions on children – particularly those living in the most deprived areas and thus identifies this measure as amongst the most importance tools for addressing inequalities between communities.

- What's it like to live there: the views of residents on the design of new housing (Cabe, 2005) – report summarising research in the views of residents about various new housing developments, including the public realm within these.

  Potential relevance: Unknown.

Local sources

- Potential surveys or other information commissioned to evidence Southwark Alliance strategy and policy documents (e.g. draft Core Strategy, Southwark's Plan for Older People).

- Local Mori Polls

Appendix 6

Proposed consultation plan for phase 1 Part I (General Interest) Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (SSDM) content

16.12.2010
REV A

Pre-consultation (to be completed by 24.01.2011)

- List consultation on Southwark web-site consultations page.
- Web-site page to include simple feedback form asking for:
    i. Respondent's general positive and negative comments on the SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents.
    ii. Respondent's views on 2-3 priority issues (tbc with cabinet member for environment transport and recycling).
    iii. Respondent's general comments about the quality of streets and spaces in the borough.
- Paper copy of feedback form to be prepared and made available through one-stop shops and libraries.
- Arrange focus group meetings with EQIA target groups as part of stage 2 EQIA impact assessment report.
- Email various identified stakeholders to make them aware of the consultation on the draft SSDM Part 1 document and invite a response. Groups to be contacted to include:
    - Neighbouring Highway and Traffic Authorities
    - Other agencies
    - Developers
    - Civic amenity groups
    - Transport groups (including local and national groups representing vulnerable residents)
    - Community Council's
- Place adverts in local press, one stop shops and libraries providing details of the consultation.

During the consultation-period (6 weeks from 24.01.2011 – 07.03.2011)

- Hold consultation meetings with local civic amenity stakeholder groups, preparing summary notes of each (groups to be offered meetings tbc with cabinet member for environment, transport and recycling)
- Conduct street user surveys (on-street or door to door opinion surveys) to obtain responses to 'i' and 'ii' above (subject to availability of resources).
- Conduct EQIA stage 2 impact assessment with related focus group consultation meetings with target groups.

Post-consultation period

- Prepare stage 2 EQIA impact assessment report.

- Prepare consultation summary document drawing together response submissions, views expressed in consultation meetings and street-user survey findings, referencing findings from the EQIA stage 2 impact assessment report as relevant. Document to provide summary of recommended changes to the draft SSDM Part I (General Interest) documents for approval.

- Prepare separate review of comments made in relation to draft SSDM Part II (Technical Information) documents made available as background information to the public consultation on Part I documents. To be used to inform a view as to whether any Part II documents should be treated as key decisions.

- Submit both the above for approval by cabinet member for transport, environment and recycling (by 31.03.2011)

- Undertake approved revisions to documents.

- Submit revised Part I (General Interest) documents to cabinet for approval at June 2011 cabinet meeting.

- Agree Part II (Technical Information) documents under delegated powers by appropriate chief officer or head of service decision as key decision or otherwise. By end July 2011.