



Planning Committee
26th January 2016

Report from Head of Planning

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL

Planning Policy Work Programme 16-17

1 Summary

- 1.1 The paper sets out potential projects for the coming year with indicative timescales of work. It is intended to allow an opportunity for the Planning Committee to understand the context and to provide an input to forming Planning's work programme for areas covering the policy review and development function. This will feed into the wider service planning process and, in particular, the Peer Review process for Planning programmed for March 2016.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Planning Committee provides feedback on areas of the work programme indicated for 16-17 service planning purposes.

3 Detail

- 3.1 The Planning Division underwent a significant re-organisation in 14-15, including a reduction in posts. After initial delays in successful recruitment, all posts within Planning Policy & Projects are now filled with experienced staff. This, after a period of relative instability, provides a level of certainty about resources available to follow through on a work programme for the coming year.
- 3.2 Brent is one of the fastest growing London Boroughs in London. Its population has increased by 18% in 10 years (2001-2011), whilst in 2014/15 it had the 2nd highest number of housing completions. The recovery following the recession means that the pace of development has picked up and in the short term at least shows no signs of abating. This is undoubtedly positive in the opportunities it brings particularly through the regeneration of the Borough's Growth Areas. However, there is a need for clarity in terms of planning policy and guidance to ensure that new development is of high quality, providing benefits to the population and businesses of Brent.

- 3.3 There is also a need to ensure that existing high quality building assets that the Borough has are protected or enhanced. In terms of the work programme, the following seeks to identify significant individual pieces of policy/supplementary policy guidance that can be taken forward. It does not detail the day to day input of team members into determination of development applications, pre-application discussions or internal or external project teams. The need to engage in these processes and provide internal and external support nevertheless does require resource from the Policy and Projects Team which impacts on the work programme set out in the report.

Main Work Programme Key Priorities

Planning Policy

Local Development Plan

- 3.4 In terms of planning policy the main priority for 15/16 has been working through to the adoption of the Development Management Policies Development Plan to replace all remaining policies in the 'saved' Unitary Development Plan. This will be subject to Examination in Spring 16 and depending on the outcomes of this process is likely to be adopted in Summer/Autumn 16.
- 3.5 Once the Plan has been adopted it essentially creates a full Local Plan for Brent consistent with Government requirements of an adopted Plan by 2017. However, given the variance between the adopted Brent Core Strategy's Housing Target and the London Plan Housing Target for Brent (which increased by approximately 50% per annum) there is a logic in starting a formal review of the development plan. The current 5 year housing land supply assessment identifies sufficient sites to meet the London Plan housing target in the short term. However, to ensure that the Council and community have greater input and control over the amount, type and location of development in Brent there will be a need to pro-actively plan for the future.
- 3.6 In terms of process a number of options exist. A wholesale review of all documents and their amalgamation into a single document, such as formerly existed in the UDP, would probably provide a more coherent picture of the future development of Brent and be more 'user friendly'. Nevertheless, this would be a significant resource requirement associated with the supporting evidence base and staffing over a sustained period. Given likely resource constraints, smaller elements, e.g. full or partial reviews of individual documents such as the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plans are likely to provide a more realistic alternative. A timetable for review is somewhat complicated by the likelihood that the London Plan will commence review in the autumn. In its extent this review is likely to be fairly full following the election of a new Mayor and probably will tackle housing targets given increased need identified to meet London's need. In terms of decision with regards to Brent's local plan review, there is probably merit in waiting to see what happens following the Mayoral election before committing to a particular route. However, work associated with a review of the Plan is likely to need to be prioritised in the Winter 2016/Spring 2017.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.7 In terms of Growth Areas, the designation of Alperton as a Mayor Housing Zone has provided an extra impetus to bringing forward development in this area. Whilst an **Alperton Supplementary Planning Document** exists, it was adopted in 2011. It may need amendment to better reflect ambitions associated with Growth Area designation, developer aspirations related to the upturn in the economy and clarity to

assist land assembly to enable a more comprehensive approach to take place. This process in terms of evidence base is likely to be led by the Growth Area regeneration team, with planning policy delivering the revised Supplementary Planning Document. If a revised SPD is considered necessary, consultation on a revised document would be likely to occur in autumn 2016 with adoption spring 2017.

- 3.8 Similarly in the South Kilburn Growth Area, the area has an adopted **South Kilburn Supplementary Planning Guidance** from 2005. This guidance is in many respects very dated given the changes that have happened in National, London and Brent planning policy and progress that has occurred to date. In terms of the South Kilburn estate, the Council as landowner has had a far greater control over development that has occurred than was assumed to be the case when the Guidance was adopted. This has and will undoubtedly continue to improve the quality of development achieved and could be better reflected in new advice. A review of the South Kilburn estate masterplan will take place to take account of the opportunities that exist on the remaining sites currently identified as having the potential for development, or for the provision of necessary social infrastructure and open space. This process in terms of evidence base is likely to be led by the South Kilburn Estate regeneration team, with the planning policy and projects team delivering the revised Supplementary Planning Document. Consultation on a revised document would be likely to occur in autumn 2016 with adoption spring 2017.

Urban Design

- 3.9 **SPG17 Design Guide for New Developments** was adopted in 2001 and is subject to another paper on this agenda. The intention is to consult on the document in Spring 2016.
- 3.10 **SPG5 Altering and Extending Your Home** was adopted in 2002 and is subject to another paper on this agenda. The intention is to consult on the document in summer 2016.
- 3.11 **Other Area Work Areas – subject to confirmation**
- 3.12 **The Shopfront and Signs SPG 7** was adopted in 2003. Again its age means that it could do with a refresh. This is regarded as less of a priority project. Whilst work has commenced, time allocated to it is on very much an ‘as and when’ basis related to when workloads allow. As such if it is issued for consultation, it is likely to be Winter 2016/Spring 2017.
- 3.13 **Commenting on a planning application (SPG 2)** also includes the guidance used to decide consultations on planning applications and a revised version of this is planned to be reported in April 2016;
- 3.14 **Heritage Assets**
- 3.15 The draft **Mapesbury Design Guide** was subject to consultation a couple of years ago prior to the restructure. As has occurred with the Sudbury Design Guide, the intention is to amend the document following consultation responses received, re-consult and then adopt the document. Consultation is planned for summer 2016.
- 3.16 The **Roe Green Conservation Area** in terms of its current quality/cohesiveness and development activity or advice sought about potential development is one that is considered to be a priority for additional advice provided through a Design Guide. Without the clarity on what are identified to be the key elements that contribute to the character of the area and guidance on what is acceptable development there is

considered to be an increased risk of a diminution in the quality of the area. Work is planned to start on this Autumn 2016, with adoption Spring 2017.

- 3.17 **Potential further Conservation Areas:** there have been resident led queries in a part of the north of the Borough and, in areas of the **south of the Borough**, it is considered that some of the Victorian terraced areas merit investigation of their potential for conservation area status. These streets are essentially residential in character, so such designations are unlikely to fetter regeneration aims and could well channel investment in the dwelling stock that is occurring in ways that is sympathetic or could enhance the character of the area.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The majority of the work will be undertaken using existing identified resource within the Planning Policy and Projects budget envelope. For the review of the Local Plan, a business plan is likely to be required to obtain the additional funds for background studies and depending on which option pursued possibly additional staff too. For the Growth Area documents, budgets associated with the delivery of the respective areas will cover the costs of any relevant studies.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Regulations cover the adoption processes for both Development Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents. If adopted in accordance with the regulations substantial weight must be given to the Development Plan, which is set out in statute the starting point for deciding the acceptability of development. Less weight can be applied to Supplementary Planning Documents, but nevertheless they are usually a significant material consideration.

6 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a new public sector equality duty under section 149. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Council must, in exercising its functions, have “due regard” to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.2 Equality analysis assessment has been carried out on the Development Management Policies document. This identified positive implications of policies for younger people and ethnic minority groups. No equality analysis assessment has been undertaken currently on the other proposed work items but will be incorporated into the process prior to consultation.

7 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 None

8 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The potential work programme will address the management of development proposals within the Borough with a view to have a positive effect on impacts on the environment.

Background Papers

SPG5 and SPG17 Papers on this agenda.

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Paul Lewin, Planning Policy & Projects 0208 937 6710

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