

Wembley West End South Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Non-technical summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This is a non-technical summary of the Wembley West End South Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Sustainability Appraisal Report. It sets out the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process that was followed and what changes it has brought about. It also provides contact details and how to comment on the document during the public consultation period. For further details reference should be made to the main SA Report. Note that the main SA Report incorporates an Environmental Report under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 No. 1633.

Background

- 1.2 The Wembley West End South SPD, will set out the requirements of the Council for the regeneration of the western end of the town centre and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications on Wembley West End South.(Curtis Lane car park, High Road and Ealing Road Wembley are together referred to as Wembley West End South).
- 1.3 The objective of the SPD will be to ensure long term physical, social and environmental regeneration of western end of the town centre. Therefore, the purpose of the SPD is to establish the principles and parameters to guide and control future development and enable the overall vision for Wembley town centre to be realised, and against which future proposals can be assessed.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of the Wembley West End South SPD. The SA considers the SPD's implications, from a social, economic and environmental perspective, by assessing options and the draft SPD against available baseline data and sustainability objectives.
- 1.5 SA is mandatory for SPDs under the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). SAs of SPDs should also fully incorporate the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC, known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. This Directive is transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 – the SEA Regulations.

The appraisal methodology

- 1.6 The approach adopted to undertake the SA was based on the process set out in the Government guidance on SA of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (November 2005).
- 1.7 The level of detail and the scope that the SA covered was agreed at an early stage by key stakeholders involved in the SA process as part of consultation on

an SA Scoping Report. This report was produced to set out the initial context and findings of the SA and the proposed approach to the appraisal process.

- 1.8 The purpose of reviewing other plans and programmes and sustainability objectives is to ensure that the relationship with these other documents and requirements are explored to enable the London Borough of Brent to take advantage of any potential synergies and to deal with any inconsistencies and constraints. The plans, programmes and sustainability objectives that need to be considered include those at an international, national and regional and local scale.
- 1.9 Preparatory work for the SPD had already considered a number of planning policies and guidance documents, however to meet the SA's requirements a broader range were considered, in particular those with environmental protection and / or sustainability objectives.
- 1.10 In general no major inconsistencies between policies were identified, although several plans were the source of policies, conditions, etc that provided the context within which the SPD had to be framed. The key links identified were with the adopted Brent Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, the Sustainable Development Framework for London, Brent's Regeneration Strategy, Supplementary Planning Guidance 17: Brent Design Guide for New Development and Supplementary Planning Guidance 19: Brent Sustainable Design, Construction and Pollution Controls amongst others.

Baseline

- 1.11 The collection and assessment of information and data about the current and likely future state of the Wembley West End South area was used within the SA to help identify sustainability problems and predict the SPD's effects. Baseline topics and subtopics, covering the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability, focused on the key issues facing the Wembley West End South area and the potentially significant effects the SPD could have. Where available key trends and targets were identified, along with any difficulties and limitations in the data.
- 1.12 Where historic data was available, the socio-economic data shows a general trend of decline in Wembley, in particular the vitality of the town centre. Although Ealing Road has grown in strength as a specialist, Asian-led shopping centre. Environmental data is less comprehensively collected at the Wembley West End South level and more reliance had to be made of borough wide data.

The sustainability framework

- 1.13 The establishment of SA objectives and criteria is central to the SA process and provide a way in which sustainability effects can be described, assessed and compared. The sustainability objectives used for the SA of the SPD were based on those already developed and agreed following consultation for the appraisal of the adopted Brent UDP, although they were modified slightly to reflect the particular needs and issues identified in Wembley West End South. There were 23 objectives used in total organised under the three dimensions of sustainability: social; environmental; and economic. They covered a broad range of topics such as: to promote prosperity and social inclusion; to minimise

the production of waste and use of non-renewable materials; and to offer everybody the opportunity for rewarding and satisfying employment.

Key sustainability issues and problems

- 1.14 Many of the sustainability issues of Wembley West End South have previously been identified within existing documents and strategies. Further issues have emerged through the SA process, which has also sought to identify the evidence to support the selection of key issues from the baseline data.
- 1.15 Some of the key sustainability issues and problems facing Wembley West End South's community include: above average levels of unemployment; low incomes; poor health; high incidence and fear of crime; poor condition of the housing stock and overcrowding; the lack of green space, trees and wildlife habitats; the poor quality of the townscape and public realm; poor air quality; poor energy efficiency (causing fuel poverty); and water efficiency of the current housing stock.

Appraisal of strategic options

- 1.16 A key requirement of the SA is to consider reasonable alternatives as part of the assessment process. The options that were assessed were formulated based upon adopted UDP (2004) policies and the perceived need to comprehensively redevelop the site in a way that could improve traffic flow, improve the environment and maintain and enhance the competitiveness of the town centre compared with other London boroughs. These were:
- Redevelopment of the Curtis Lane car park as outlined in UDP policy WEM 28 (b)
 - Redevelopment of the Wembley West End site to include properties on Ealing Road & High Road
 - Refurbishment and rebuilding of individual units and infill development as appropriate
- 1.17 The key changes and the sustainability strengths and weaknesses of each option were identified. This concluded that the preferred option was redevelopment of the Wembley West End site to include properties on Ealing Road & High Road.

Appraisal of draft development principles

- 1.18 The SA provides a record of the prediction and assessment of the potential effects of the draft SPD, and in particular the development principles (i.e. land use principles and design and development principles) which are especially relevant at the strategic level. The principles were scored on a five point scale (major positive, minor positive, neutral, minor negative and major negative and an uncertain category) against each of the sustainability objectives. Details of proposed mitigation measures and recommendations as to how principles could be improved and criteria/conditions added to the planning requirements and implementation of any planning permission. The appraisal of the principles was an iterative process and the proposed mitigation measures and recommendations were incorporated as far as possible in to revisions of the draft SPD.

1.19 Generally the draft SPD performed very well against the sustainability objectives and the majority of effects identified were very positive. There were some potential negative effects identified under certain objectives, mainly under the environmental dimension of sustainability. However, these tended to be limited to certain criteria and measures have been identified in the draft SPD to either manage or mitigate many of these potential negative effects via planning requirements.

Implementation and monitoring

1.20 A key part of the SA process is establishing how the significant sustainability effects of implementing SPD will be monitored. Some potential indicators with targets where they exist have been proposed as a starting point for developing the SPD and sustainability monitoring programme. The majority of the indicators proposed are from readily available data sources. It is envisaged that the monitoring would be on an annual basis, although updates of some indicators will not be available that frequently.

1.21 Details are provided in the SA Report of the process that will be following after the public consultation alongside the draft SPD

Difference the process has made

1.22 The SA process and the development of the SPD has been initiated to promote the regeneration of the western end of the town centre. Following the appraisal of strategic options some negative effects were identified as were also opportunities for mitigation and further enhancement. By incorporating suggested social, environmental and economic mitigation measures the SA has generally found that implementing the draft SPD would have major positive benefits on sustainability.

1.23 It has not been possible or appropriate to undertake detailed appraisal of the individual sites included in the draft SPD and therefore it has been necessary to include recommendations in the 'Planning Requirements' section of the draft SPD for these to be undertaken at the outline planning application stage as part of its accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or other assessments.