

<b>MAYOR &amp; CABINET</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	Local Development Framework – Lewisham Town Centre Area Action Plan Further Options Report	
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	Item No. 6
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Head of Planning & Head of Law	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 19 January 2011

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The Lewisham Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) is one of the documents that, when adopted, will make up the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF refers to the group of documents setting out the Council's planning strategy and policies. The LDF documents will eventually replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which was adopted in July 2004 and sets out our current planning policies. The LDF preparation is a requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2 The purpose of the AAP is to identify and deliver the vision and strategic objectives identified for the town centre (taking account of those in the Council's Core Strategy) by managing development and guiding interventions by the private, public and third sectors.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to undertake statutory public consultation on the:
- AAP Further Options Report (included as Annex 1) and
  - Sustainability Appraisal of the AAP Further Options Report (included as Annex 2).
- 2.2 This report provides a summary of how the AAP has been prepared, the key options contained in the document and the key issues identified in the Sustainability Appraisal. The full documents are annexed as 1 and 2.

## **3. Policy context**

- 3.1 The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. The AAP Further Options Report contributes to the implementation of each of the Council's ten priorities as follows:

- community leadership and empowerment
- young people's achievement and involvement
- clean, green and liveable
- safety, security and a visible presence
- strengthening the local economy
- decent homes for all
- protection of children
- caring for adults and older people
- active, healthy citizens
- inspiring efficiency, effectiveness and equity

3.2 The AAP Further Options Report will help give spatial expression to the Sustainable Community Strategy (Shaping Our Future) (SCS), which was prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership and adopted by the Council in May 2008. The AAP also plays a central role in the implementation of the SCS vision *'Together we will make Lewisham the best place to live, work and learn'* and all of the six strategic priorities, which are:

- Ambitious and achieving – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential
- Safer – where people feel safe and live free from crime, antisocial behaviour and abuse
- Empowered and responsible – where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities
- Clean, green and liveable – where people live in high quality housing and can care for their environment
- Healthy, active and enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being
- Dynamic and prosperous – where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond

3.3 The AAP will help implement a range of other Council policies and strategies including, but not limited to the following:

- People Prosperity Place; Lewisham's Regeneration Strategy 2008 - 2020
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Local Implementation Plan (Transport)
- Lewisham Physical Activity Plan (2010-2013)

3.4 The AAP will also contribute to the achievement of the strategic aims of the Regeneration directorate which are:

- Enabling and supporting the regeneration of Lewisham and helping to strengthen the local economy
- Supporting the creation of a safe, attractive, healthy and sustainable environment for the benefit of local people and
- Connecting people to economic, leisure and learning opportunities

3.5 The AAP is part of the LDF and as such it is part of the Council's policy framework as set out in the Council's constitution and will require the approval of the full Council.

#### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 The Mayor is recommended to approve the Lewisham Town Centre AAP Further Options Report and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal, for statutory public consultation in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, and recommend that the full Council do the same.

4.2 The Mayor is recommended to delegate power to make any minor changes to the text and format of the documents prior to consideration by the full Council, to the Executive Director, Regeneration.

#### **5. Introduction and background**

5.1 The Lewisham Town Centre AAP, when adopted, will be part of Lewisham's Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF refers to the group of documents setting out the Council's planning strategy and policies and will collectively replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The LDF was introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5.2 The emerging AAP has already been the subject of two rounds of public consultation.

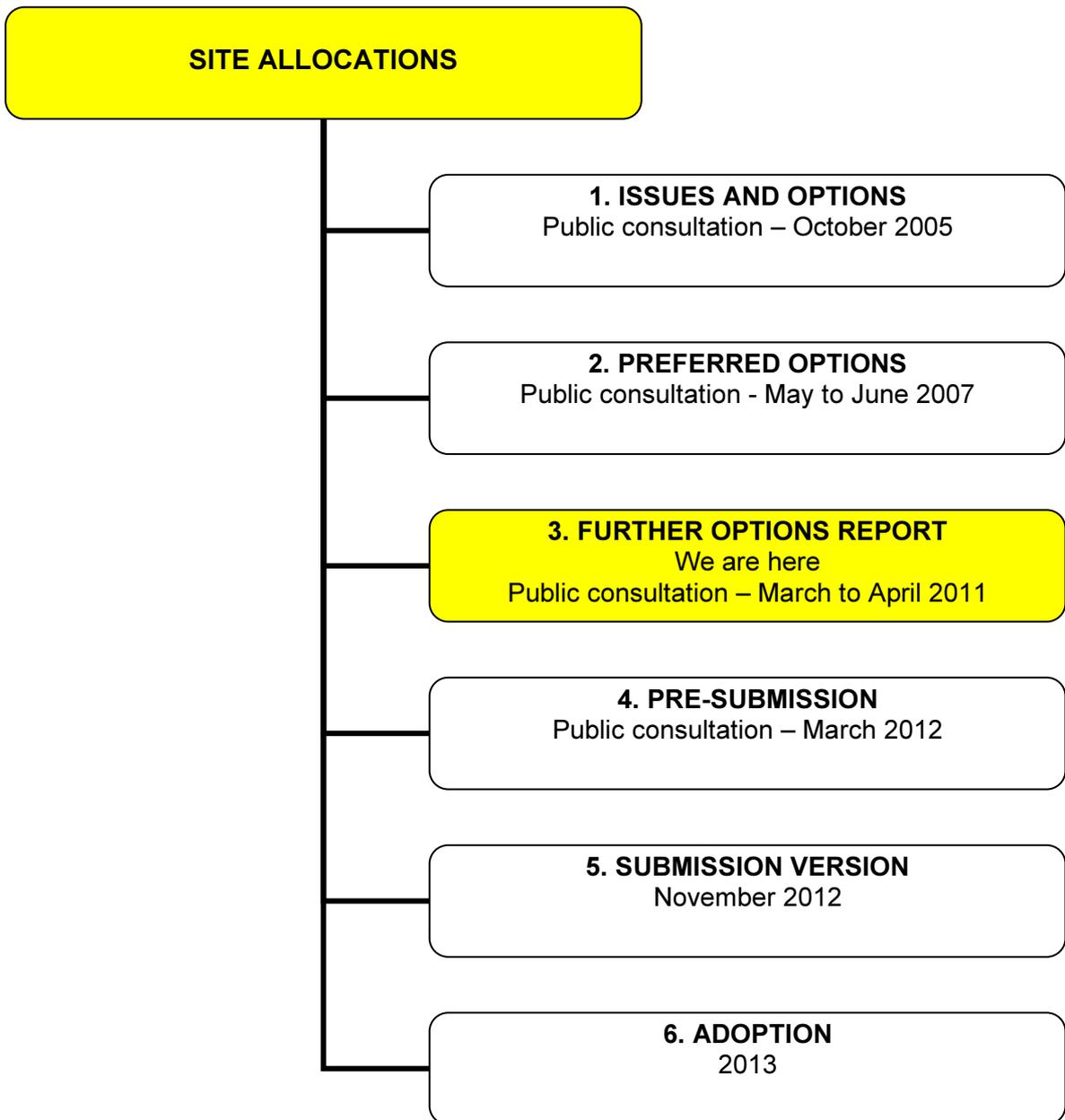
- Issues and Options (October 2005) and
- Preferred Options (May to June 2007).

5.3 Following advice from the Government Office for London (GOL), priority was given to the production of the Core Strategy (the principal LDF document) hence there has been some delay in progressing the AAP. The Government also released further guidance on the appropriate content and level of detail expected within LDF documents, necessitating a review of our approach to the preparation of such documents.

5.4 Lewisham Core Strategy was submitted for examination by the Secretary of State at the end of October and work on the AAP has subsequently resumed. Given that over three years have elapsed since the last public consultation it is considered necessary to take stock of changes and present further options for consultation.

5.5 The AAP Further Options Report has been prepared so as to be consistent with national planning policies and to be in general conformity with the Core Strategy and the London Plan.

5.6 The steps in preparing the AAP are outlined in the following diagram. We are at stage 3.



## 6. Context

- 6.1 There has been a significant change in circumstances since the preferred Options Report was prepared in 2007. The key changes are outlined below.
- 6.2 Responses from the Preferred Options Report Consultation. Comments received in response to public consultation on the Preferred Options Report (May to June 2007) have been reviewed and have influenced the development of an amended vision and objectives and identification of further issues, options and policy options
- 6.3 LDF Evidence Base. The LDF evidence base has been significantly updated and expanded since 2007. The documents used to support preparation of the AAP Further Options Report includes but is not limited to:
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
  - Lewisham Town Centre Transport Study
  - Employment Land Study
  - Retail Capacity Study (plus addendum)
  - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test
  - Assessment of Open Space, Sport and Recreation
  - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
  - Tall Buildings Study
  - Renewable Energy Study
  - Lewisham borough-wide Character Study
  - Planning Obligations Study
- 6.4 Engagement with Developers and Landowners. Officers have had discussions with a number of landowners and prospective developers, including Tesco, Network Rail, Land Securities and LBL Property in order to understand their current intentions and make sure that a future AAP is deliverable.
- 6.5 Legislation, Policy and Guidance. There have been a number of significant changes in legislation, policy, guidance and economic climate that have been taken into account in preparing the Further Options Report. These include:
- Planning Act 2008 and Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010;
  - New national planning guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statements 5 (Economic), 5 (Heritage), 12 (LDF) and 25 (Flood Risk). In addition, Lewisham Bridge Primary School has been added to the statutory list of buildings;
  - The London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2004) was re-published in 2008 and the Mayor of London has published a Draft Replacement London Plan (October 2009);
  - An updated Sustainable Community Strategy for Lewisham (2008);
  - Submission version of Lewisham's Core Strategy (October 2010), including the identification of Lewisham Gateway as one of five 'strategic sites'; and

- The “credit crunch”, economic recession and public sector spending review.

6.6 Development Activity. There have been a number of significant changes since 2007, including:

- The granting of a number of planning permissions in the Thurston Road area for housing and retail/business space;
- The development of 73-78 Connington Road for housing (near completion);
- The development of the adjacent Venson site on Connington Road for housing (on-site);
- The development of Loampit Vale South for housing, retail and business space a replacement City Mission and leisure centre to replace the existing Ladywell Leisure Centre (on-site);
- The granting of permission for the development of an all-through school on the site of Lewisham Bridge Primary School; and
- The development of a new supermarket and housing above at 104-120 Lee High Road (on-site).

6.7 Sustainability Appraisal. An initial appraisal has been undertaken in parallel with preparing the Further Options Report and this is discussed in some detail in section 10 below.

## **7. Purpose of Further Options Report**

7.1 The AAP Further Options Report aims to provide a bridge between the 2007 Preferred Options Report and a draft AAP by taking account of the significant changes detailed in the previous section. It establishes options that relate to issues and provides alternative approaches before selecting the Council’s ‘preferred approach. Additionally, the report enables the re-engagement of local residents, businesses and other stakeholders over the future of the area.

7.2 Following public consultation on the AAP Further Options Report, the Council will produce a draft AAP that will:

- Set out a vision for the Town Centre that is consistent with Spatial Policy 2 in the Core Strategy;
- Provide a focused implementation and delivery plan for achieving this vision and for monitoring progress;
- Effectively manage growth in retail, leisure, employment uses and new homes;
- Ensure that physical, social and green infrastructure provision keeps pace with the envisaged change; and
- Provide clear policies and guidance for land owners and prospective developers, so that they bring forward high quality development.

## 8. Scope of Further Options Report

8.1 The scope of the Further Options Report can be summarised as follows:

8.2 Amended vision and objectives. The Report updates the vision that was identified in 2007 by taking and developing the vision for the town centre that is included in the Core Strategy. The nine objectives that sit under the vision have been re-written to reflect the vision and the change in context (outlined in Section 6).

8.3 Identification of revised and additional options. The options for delivering the vision and objectives have been reviewed, with new options being identified and existing options being revised to take account of the following:

- Advances in the understanding of flood risk and climate change adaptation, including the London Plan and Core Strategy policy requirement to maximise opportunities for decentralised energy – with the identification of four possible decentralised energy clusters.
- The planned closure of Ladywell Leisure Centre, following the opening of the replacement centre currently being built at Loampit Vale, which opens up options for the development of the Ladywell site
- Current issues relating to the provision of social infrastructure, taking account of education and health developments that have happened or are planned since 2007 ; and
- The implementation and monitoring mechanisms that have developed since 2007, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Planning Obligations SPD and Local Implementation Plan.
- Representations from landowners over the previously proposed option of developing a multi-storey car park in the Engate Street area; with the Further Options Report favouring a more pragmatic and deliverable option of retaining and improving existing public car parks and securing public use of any new non-residential car parking that is proposed as part of new development.

8.4 Area-wide Policies. The Further Options Report identifies a smaller number of proposed town-centre-wide spatial planning policies than was previously proposed. This is not to say that those policy areas that are proposed for exclusion are no longer important. The reason is to take account of government guidance and not to duplicate policies across Development Plan Documents and the London Plan. The approach should result in a more focused AAP that includes only policies that relate directly to the town centre, with general applicable policies remaining in other 'sister' documents and the London Plan.

8.5 New Sub-areas and Site-specific Policies. It is still proposed to divide the town centre into sub-areas for policy purposes. However, the boundaries of these sub-areas have been amended and they are now called 'Character Areas' to avoid possible confusion with London Plan 'opportunity areas'. A new

Ladywell Road Character Area has been included in order to respond to the development possibilities offered by the planned closure of Ladywell Leisure Centre and other sites. The previously proposed site-specific policies have been reviewed to take account of the change in context (outlined in Section 6) and new draft policies have been proposed.

- 8.6 Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements. The Further Options Report sets out revised implementation and monitoring proposals, again taking account of the change in context (outlined in Section 6).
- 8.7 Audit of Issues, Options and Policies. Finally, the Report includes an audit (Appendix 3 of the Further Options Report) of how issues, options, preferred options and draft policies have changed since 2007, to assist in understanding the complexities of the process.

## **9. Sustainability Appraisal**

- 9.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Site Allocations Further Options Report is included as Annex 2. The main purpose of the SA is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the plan's strategies and policies. The SA also incorporates the statutory Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment requirements.
- 9.2 Each stage of the plan making process is accompanied by a sustainability appraisal, so that any potential negative impacts of policy decisions are taken into account at the decision making stage, and decisions can be seen to have been made in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- 9.3 The potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the AAP Further Options Report has been appraised and identified. The SA details that "the AAP is likely to result in a number of social, economic and environmental benefits". In particular, the proposals to provide housing and retail growth will contribute positively to the economic sustainability objectives, while public realm improvements will support both social, environmental and economic objectives.
- 9.4 The town is affected by medium and high levels of flood risk creating some conflict with the wide scale of planned development. However, the proposals will provide significant regenerative benefits and help fulfil Lewisham's wider economic and social objectives. The Sequential Test has found that there are no alternate sites for this scale and type of development, while exception testing and mitigation measures will ensure that all sites are acceptable in terms of flood risk.
- 9.5 Another potential conflict identified was the policies seeking to retain/increase the amount of parking for shoppers in the town centre. This conflicts with the

sustainability objectives to encourage sustainable modes of transport. However, easy access to parking is a key advantage to Lewisham town centre which differentiates its offer with other nearby competing retail centres, therefore it is considered essential to **retain** parking where possible.

- 9.6 Two of the key developments proposed in the AAP involve the loss of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). However the quality and function of this MOL is limited, and the loss of the land is mitigated through the re-provision of open space. The loss of MOL at these sites has been considered and appraised in detail as a separate process to this work.
- 9.7 It is a legal requirement that the council consult on the Sustainability Appraisal alongside the AAP Further Options Report. In accordance with the SEA Directive, the government has designated that the Sustainability Appraisal report must be consulted with the Environment Agency; the Countryside Agency; and English Nature.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1 The key stages and requirements in progressing the emerging AAP to adoption and the main legal implications are described in the body of this report.
- 10.2 The procedures which the Council is required to follow when producing a Development Plan Document (DPD) derive from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) and Planning Policy Statement 12.
- 10.3 The function of approving DPDs is shared by Mayor and Cabinet and Full Council. The AAP Further Options Report together with the Sustainability Appraisal of the AAP Further Options Report must therefore be referred to Full Council for approval to undertake statutory public consultation.
- 10.4 The Council has adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out the minimum consultation that will take place and it is a requirement of a 'sound' plan that the standards in the SCI are met. This will include statutory consultees, land owners, community groups and other interested individuals and groups.

## **11. Crime and disorder implications**

- 11.1 The AAP Further Options Report proposes specific objectives and policies to help ensure that new development does not give rise to crime, fear of crime or public disorder and to ensure that the town centre is a safe, attractive and

inclusive place. Planning applications for development will need to demonstrate how proposals meet these objectives and policies.

## **12. Equalities implications**

- 12.1 The Core Strategy, to which the AAP DPD must conform, was the subject of a comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in February 2009. This can ensure, as far as is possible, any negative consequences for a particular group or sector within the community are eliminated, minimised or counter balanced by other measures. This is considered to meet and address the strategic equality issues. The AAP Further Options Report proposes specific objectives and policies to help ensure that new development complies with inclusive design principles to ensure that the town centre is a safe, attractive and inclusive place. Planning applications for development will need to demonstrate how proposals meet these objectives and policies.

## **13. Environmental implications**

- 13.1 Environmental issues are at the heart of the planning process and all aspects are reflected in the emerging AAP DPD. The AAP Further Options Report proposes specific objectives and policies to promote environmental sustainability, protect and improve publicly accessible open space, protect and enhance the Rivers Quaggy and Ravensbourne and ensure that the town centre can mitigate and adapt to the risks arising from climate change. The Sustainability Appraisal process also ensures that an explicit identification of the environmental impact of the proposed site allocations has been considered.
- 13.2 The specific environmental implications of the emerging AAP are in accordance with national and regional policy and have been evidenced through local studies assessing (but not limited to) open space provision, biodiversity, flood risk, and transport assessments.

## **14. Financial Implications**

- 14.1 The costs associated with the printing, publishing and consulting on the AAP Further Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal will be met from the existing Planning Services budget.

## **15. Conclusion**

- 15.1 The AAP Further Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal is put forward for statutory public consultation. The delivery of the AAP will contribute to the implementation of the Lewisham Core Strategy. Following public consultation a Pre-Submission Version will be prepared and reported to the Mayor and Cabinet and Council for further consideration.

## **Background Documents**

Short Title Document	Date	File Location	File Reference	Contact Officer	Exempt
Planning & Compulsory Purchases Act 2004	2004	Laurence House	Planning Policy	Brian Regan	No
PPS 12	2008	Laurence House	Planning Policy	Brian Regan	No
LDF Regulations	2004 & 2008	Laurence House	Planning Policy	Brian Regan	No

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Brian Regan, Planning Policy, 5<sup>th</sup> floor Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, Catford SE6 4RU – telephone 020 8314 8774.