



**ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY**

**Our Ref :** NE/2005/013492-2/1

**Your Ref :-**

**Date :** 09 February 2006

Chief Planning & Regulatory Officer  
London Borough of Ealing  
Perceval House  
14/16 Uxbridge Road  
Ealing  
London  
W5 2HL



**FAO: Ian Weake**

Dear Sir

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL/STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
FINAL REPORT (SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS)**

Thank you for your letter dated 5 January 2006, which was received on 11 January 2006. You are asked to quote our reference in any correspondence. The Environment Agency has the following comments:

**4: SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES**

We acknowledge that you are in a difficult situation through the use of 'saved' policies carried over from the old UDP process, and that the old UDP SA objectives have been refined in light of current SA and ODPM guidance. However, we still feel it is imperative that environmental implications are considered adequately, and we are disappointed that our comments regarding these have not been taken on board.

We refer to page 16, which justifies why you felt unable to undertake our suggestions. We would like to make the point that combining more than one environmental issue within one SA objective will reduce the effectiveness of the appraisal process. This is because the LDF policies may affect the issues differently, but being together in one objective the effect can only be considered cumulatively. It will be difficult to assess the LDF's sustainability accurately because it will be possible for the policies to meet part of an objective but not all of it, and this may ultimately disadvantage the environment.

We feel it is very important that objective 17 is split into 3 separate objectives to consider water quality, water conservation and flood risk separately. Flood risk is an important issue in Ealing, as areas within London Borough of Ealing fall within the fluvial floodplain of the River Brent, and the fluvial and tidal floodplain of the River Thames. The importance of this issue should be reflected in this Sustainability Appraisal.

Our response to the West London Tram Route SPD states that we are concerned that flood

**Environment Agency**

Apollo Court, 2 Bishops Square Business Park, St Albans Road West, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL10 9EX, Tel no:08708 506506, Fax no:01707 632515

risk issues have not been given due consideration in this document. At present, we do not feel the process of sustainability appraisal has been satisfactorily undertaken, due to the lack of emphasis placed on this issue in particular.

## **6: OPTIONS**

Although the process of Option Identification and Option Appraisal for the SPDs covered by this SA is not ideal, we acknowledge that it is difficult for you to consider alternative policy options due to the use of policies which supplement fixed UDP policies and you are constrained by this.

## **APPENDIX 1: SPD OBJECTIVE APPRAISALS**

The shortened format of the SA objective 17 means that flood risk is effectively given very limited consideration in the appraisal. As stated earlier, it is imperative that this is changed.

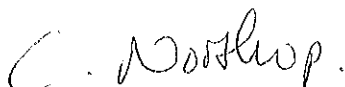
Where the matrices which assess the plan objectives against the SA objectives give a 'neutral' or 'no impact' score, we feel this would benefit from some explanation to justify why this is the case.

## **APPENDIX 3: REFINED SA FRAMEWORK**

You should refer to our comments made on the SA/SEA Scoping Report for the DPDs for more specific comments on our views on the criteria and indicators used in this section.

I trust this is satisfactory but if you have any queries, please contact me.

Yours faithfully



**CLAIRE NORTHROP**

**Planning Liaison Officer**

Tel: 01707 632491

Fax: 01707 632515

Email: [claire.northrop@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:claire.northrop@environment-agency.gov.uk)



**ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY**

**Our Ref :** NE/2006/013991-1/1

**Your Ref :-**

**Date :** 08 February 2006

Chief Planning & Regulatory Officer  
London Borough of Ealing  
Perceval House  
14/16 Uxbridge Road  
Ealing  
London  
W5 2HL

**FAO: Ian Weake**

Dear Sir

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT: CORE STRATEGY, SITE  
SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS DPD & PROPOSALS MAP**

Thank you for your email dated 4 January 2006, and letter dated 3 January 2006, which was received on 6 January 2006. You are asked to quote our reference in any correspondence. The Environment Agency has the following comments:

**TASK A1: REVIEW OF PLANS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

Table 2 needs to be updated to include the correct titles for new Planning Policy Statements (PPS's) and also draft PPS's:

PPS 1: *Delivering Sustainable Development*

PPG 3: *Housing and draft PPS 3*

PPS 9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*

PPG 25: *Development and Flood Risk and draft PPS 25 Development and Flood Risk*

The following policies and plans should also be included in your review:

**EU Water Framework Directive** - This directive places an emphasis on the identification of Heavily Modified Water Bodies, enabling reaches of river which are in need of enhancement to be identified and prioritised as part of a catchment wide approach to river management and enhancement (Article 4: ii).

**DEFRA - Making space for water: developing a new government strategy for flood and coastal defence erosion risk management in England** - DEFRA's consultation document is a further political driver behind river restoration/enhancement, emphasising the creation of wetlands, washlands, river corridor widening and restoration as potential mechanisms for reducing flood risk in a sustainable manner.

**The Environment Act 1995** - This Act imposes a duty to promote sustainable development and promote the conservation and enhancement of inland waters. When this is applied to surface water drainage this requires the development and promotion of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

**Environment Agency Policy: Sustainable Drainage Systems (2001)** - Driven primarily by The Environment Act 1995, this policy's primary objective is to establish Sustainable Drainage Systems as normal drainage practice where appropriate for all new developments in England and Wales.

**Environment Agency Strategy for restoring rivers in North London (2006)** - This strategy promotes the restoration and enhancement of the rivers of North London, including river catchment maps upon which stretches of river are prioritised for different types of river restoration activity. This should be made available to you shortly.

## **TASK A2: REVIEW OF BASELINE DATA**

Whilst we support the inclusion of the emphasis on the need for enhancement and protection of biodiversity, we feel this environment section is poor in terms of the environmental issues of concern to us. You state that gaps have been identified in your baseline data, particularly in respect of environmental data, and we would agree with this. Water resources, water quality, groundwater and contaminated land and flood risk are all issues that should be discussed in this section, with the current situation identified. Whilst these issues are mentioned later in the report, we note that you have no baseline information or indicators on rivers, floodplains or sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). It is imperative that this section is expanded to include the fact that areas within London Borough of Ealing fall within the fluvial floodplain of the River Brent, and the fluvial and tidal floodplain of the River Thames, and refers to our flood zone maps.

In July 2004, we started using Flood Zone maps in accordance with PPG25 when responding to planning applications and development allocations. The Flood Zone map have replaced the old Indicative Floodplain Map (IFM) as the main constraint map underpinning the new Standing Advice on Development and Flood Risk (see <http://www.pipernetworking.com/>). Copies of the new Flood Zone maps have been distributed by us to Local Authorities, you should contact us urgently if you do not have these.

Flood Zones are divided areas of natural floodplain represented in map format. They divide the floodplain into 3 zones referred to as 1, 2 and 3 in Table 1 of PPG25:

- Flood Zone 1 - lowest probability of flooding from rivers and the sea, where the chance of flooding in any one year is less than 0.1% (a 1000 to 1 chance).
- Flood Zone 2 - chance of flooding in any one year is between 0.1% and 1% fluvial or 0.5% tidal (between a 1000 to 1 and a 100 to 1 fluvial or 200 to 1 tidal chance).
- Flood Zone 3 - highest probability of flooding. The chance of flooding in any one year is greater than or equal to 1% (100 to 1 chance) for river flooding and greater or equal to 0.5% (200 to 1 chance) for tidal flooding.

These maps should be used in this section to help estimate the percentage of the area of the borough at risk of fluvial flooding from watercourses. The susceptibility of land to flooding should be a material planning consideration. In accordance with PPG25: Development and Flood Risk, you should resist any development which has the potential to contribute to flood risk and have an adverse impact on river channel stability or damage to wildlife habitats.

We would strongly encourage you to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), in accordance with PPG 25, to zone development areas within the whole borough, as part of the baseline data gathering exercise of the LDF SA Scoping stage. The conclusions drawn should be used to inform the SA. SFRAs are a useful tool which can be used to prioritise and plan development and growth of a large area. We believe that SFRAs should be undertaken by the LPA as early as possible in the planning process to avoid misplaced efforts and raising landowner expectations where land is not suitable for development from a flood risk perspective. This assessment should be undertaken in discussion with ourselves.

The number of and lengths of rivers which cross through LB Ealing should also be quantified here, and should include all main rivers and ordinary watercourses. It should also identify distinct reaches of river which could benefit from enhancement by use of the North London River Restoration strategy maps, as the potential to enhance stretches of watercourse should be encouraged in this report.

This section should also refer to the number of new developments including sustainable urban drainage systems and greywater reuse systems, and the need for this to increase.

### **TASK A3: IDENTIFICATION OF KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

A general concern regarding the SA objectives listed is that more than one issue is often covered by a single objective. This will reduce the effectiveness of the appraisal process because the LDF policies may affect the issues differently, but because they are together in one objective the effect can only be considered cumulatively. It will be difficult to assess the LDF's sustainability accurately because it will be possible for the policies to meet part of an objective but not all of it.

Our specific comments on the LDF SA objectives are as follows:

**Protect and enhance open space, the natural environment and biodiversity (p18):** whilst we support this objective, we would like to see this objective separated to make the protection and enhancement of open space separate from that of the natural environment and biodiversity. This would place a stronger emphasis on each issue.

**Reduce contributions to and vulnerability to climate change (p 19):** we support this objective.

**Improve water quality, conserve water resources, and minimise the impact of flooding (p20):** This objective should be separated into 3 objectives to cover the 3 issues here separately. We believe this to be very important as these issues are of major concern to us. Additionally, any objective relating to flooding should seek to reduce the number of people and properties at risk from flooding, not simply minimise any impact. This objective should be re-worded to read '*Reduce fluvial and surface water flood risk*' or '*Reduce the number of*

*people and properties at risk from fluvial and surface water flooding'.*

**Enhance existing buildings and facilities, and encourage the reuse/remediation of vacant land and under-utilised buildings (p21):** This objective should be separated into 2 objectives, as 'encourage the reuse/remediation of vacant land and under-utilised buildings' is a separate issue to the first part of this objective.

**Reduce waste generation and increase waste recycling (p21):** we support this objective.

#### **TASK A4: DEVELOPING THE SA FRAMEWORK - TABLE 4**

##### **8. Protect and enhance open space, the natural environment and biodiversity (p30)**

We support the criteria and indicators associated with this objective, but believe a new criteria should be added here, to read 'Will it create new habitats (therefore increasing biodiversity)?', and an appropriate indicator could be the number or area of habitats created, or the number of developments providing ecological enhancements. We also feel that the number of priority species and habitats is not a very good indicator as it does not provide any quantification of the populations of these species.

It is assumed that by the inclusion of the criterion which reads 'Will rivers, canals and waterways be protected?' in this section, you wish to refer to the biodiversity associated with watercourses. If this is the case the indicator used is not a good one as it relates to the LDF SA objective 11, and relates to water quality rather than biodiversity. A better indicator might be the length of naturalised, green buffer zones for wildlife next to watercourses created or the number of developments providing buffer zones along watercourses. The potential to enhance stretches of watercourse should be encouraged in this sustainability appraisal. The distinct reaches of river which could benefit from enhancement should be identified by using the North London River Restoration strategy maps. We suggest this criterion is reworded to read 'Will the biodiversity value of watercourses and their associated corridors be protected and enhanced?'

##### **10. Reduce contributions to and vulnerability to climate change (p32)**

We would suggest another indicator for the criterion 'Will it reduce energy demand?', as the number of developments incorporating energy efficient techniques such as green roofs, as this should be encouraged as a way of reducing energy demand and helping to achieve this SA objective.

##### **11. Improve water quality, conserve water resources and minimise the impact of flooding (p33)**

The criterion 'Will it reduce water consumption', needs another indicator which includes water consumption in non-domestic developments, as these could have a substantial impact on water consumption in the borough. A better indicator may be the overall water consumption in the borough per capita. The use of water conservation techniques such as greywater reuse/rainwater harvesting should be promoted as should the development of greenroofs, and the number of developments incorporating these could be used as another indicator for this criterion.

The indicator for the criterion 'Will it reduce flood risk?' should be changed to use High Level Target 12 as an indicator of how many planning applications are granted in the floodplain despite Environment Agency objections. The following web links relate to High Level Target 12 and provide a report which monitors the impact of the technical advice on flood risk provided by us on planning decisions made by English local planning authorities:

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/flood/571633/952531/?version=1&lang=\\_e](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/flood/571633/952531/?version=1&lang=_e)

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/flood/571633/?version=1&lang=\\_e](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/flood/571633/?version=1&lang=_e)

The High Level Target 12 report concentrates on plans, planning applications and appeals where the Environment Agency sustained its objections through to a known decision. It also contains summary data on the total number of applications objected to by the Agency on flood risk grounds.

Another indicator which should also be used is the number of properties or the area of developed land at risk from flooding, which could be defined using our floodzone maps.

Regarding surface water flood risk, we support the inclusion of an indicator for the number of planning applications incorporating SUDS, as the increase of their use should be strongly encouraged. It should be possible to quantify the number of planning applications where our drainage criteria have been adopted, and this could be used as an indicator of a reduction in surface water flood risk. The indicator should look at the number or percentage of new developments which have met the following criteria:

- a) Control the quantity of surface water runoff from new development (discharge rates restricted to greenfield including 1 in 100 year on-site attenuation)
- b) Improve the quality of runoff
- c) Enhance nature conservation, landscape and amenity value of site

These techniques not only cater for flood peak attenuation, but may also improve water quality and enhance the environment, and may thus also help achieve the part of this objective concerned with water quality. Such systems include conventional attenuation storage (tanks or excavated areas), permeable pavements, grassed swales, infiltration trenches, and ponds.

We would argue that the fourth criterion for objective 11, 'Will it encourage sustainable water supply and consumption' is effectively the same as the first criterion and therefore a separate indicator would not be required for this.

## **12. Enhance existing buildings and facilities, and encourage the reuse/remediation of vacant land and under-utilised buildings (p33)**

We support the criteria and indicators identified for this objective. The indicator 'percentage of new homes built on previously developed land (BVPI)' could also be used for the criterion 'Will it enhance soil quality/address contamination issues?', because any new development on contaminated land should do this as a matter of course. The development of any brownfield site should be carried out in line with PPS 23 and the Environment Agency Contaminated Land Report 11 - Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination.

### **13. Reduce waste generation and increase waste recycling (p34)**

We support the criteria and indicators included in this section.

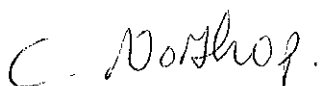
### **APPENDIX 2: BASELINE INFORMATION**

**No. 95 - Flooding (indicator to be specified) (p183):** The column headed 'Action/Issues for Plan/SA' should include 'Flood risk/ the number people and properties at risk from flooding needs to be reduced, and the use of SUDS promoted'.

**No. 75 - Energy Efficiency - the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings (p169):** The use of Green Roofs and renewables should be promoted under the 'Action/Issues for Plan/SA' column.

I trust this is satisfactory but if you have any queries, please contact me.

Yours faithfully



**CLAIRE NORTHROP**

**Planning Liaison Officer**

Tel: 01707 632491

Fax: 01707 632515

Email: [claire.northrop@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:claire.northrop@environment-agency.gov.uk)