

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion

for

**Draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan
'Pre-submission' version**

Prepared by:

London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey

For consultation with:

English Heritage, Environment Agency and Natural England

July 2015

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. Neighbourhood plans are not defined as Local Plans, having their own designation and produced by qualifying bodies under the Localism Act. A neighbourhood plan may however require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comply with European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”. The European Directive is transposed into law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2. Under Article 3(3) and 3(4) of the SEA Directive, SEA is required for plans and programmes which “determine the use of small areas at a local level” or which only propose “minor modifications to plans” to plans and programmes, and which would otherwise require SEA, only where they are determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.3. The neighbourhood plan will be capable of being a material consideration in the assessment of future planning applications. It is the Council’s responsibility to identify whether an SEA should be undertaken.
- 1.4. The screening process is based upon consideration of standard criteria of Annex II of the Directive to determine whether the plan is likely to have “significant environmental effects”. The result of the local planning authorities screening process is detailed in this screening statement.
- 1.5. The draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan sent to Camden and Haringey councils in January 2015 has been screened to consider whether an SEA is required. Should policies within the plan change, the screening opinion of the boroughs could also change.
- 1.6. The screening determination also includes the views of the statutory consultation bodies Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Their correspondence can be found within the report Appendix.
- 1.7. This screening determination has been undertaken jointly by the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey. The boroughs have determined that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. The scope of the SEA will therefore need to be set and an appraisal carried out.

2. Vision, objectives & policy priorities of the plan

- 2.1. The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan is a cross-boundary plan, reflecting that the Highgate Area spans parts of the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey.

- 2.2. The purpose of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan is to provide a strategic and long-term plan for the Area that benefits the local community and Highgate as a whole, while recognising the need to facilitate sustainable development.
- 2.3. The Plan also seeks to address the challenge of the Area being split between the London boroughs of Camden and Haringey, and aims to reconcile their respective planning policies to deliver a more cohesive framework for managing development in Highgate.
- 2.4. The Plan presents a vision for Highgate. The vision is accompanied by 5 'Core Objectives', which are supported with complementary 'Sub-objectives'.
- 2.5. The full complement of objectives help to frame the Neighbourhood Plan policies, which are set out in two typologies: overarching 'plan-wide' policies intended to guide development management across Highgate and 'key area' policies, with site specific criteria for selected potential development sites.

The Vision for Highgate
Highgate should grow and prosper as a united community across the artificial boundary between the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey.
It should be a vibrant place that protects its unique character and heritage, while embracing new ideas and beneficial change
It should be home to a community that can work together to meet local needs, while respecting its differences and diversity
It should be a neighbourhood that complements and connects with neighbouring communities
All of these factors combined should make Highgate a better place to both live and work

Core Objectives	Description
1. Social and community needs	To help Highgate develop and maintain a strong, integrated community, which works to minimise social deprivation and exclusion.
2. Economic activity	To attract, maintain and enhance employment, particularly where it can enrich and enliven the public realm
3. Traffic and transport	To encourage local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being. In particular, by making the area more pedestrian friendly and improve general mobility, reduce vehicle speeds, improve access to public transport and champion walking and cycling.
4. Open spaces and public realm	To enable the whole community – residents, community organisations, agencies and businesses – to obtain the maximum benefits from Highgate's open spaces
5. Development and heritage	To conserve and enhance the essential and unique character of Highgate

2.6. The draft Neighbourhood Plan's key policy priorities include:

- Addressing local needs for housing and community facilities
- Economic activity, including managing town centre uses

- A coherent framework for managing transport, including parking
- Protecting locally significant open space
- Conserving and enhancing local character
- Sustainable design and construction guidelines, including basement development
- Requirements for development within selected key areas / sites

3. Assessment

- 3.1. The “responsible authority” must determine whether the plan or programme, in this case the draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan, is likely to have significant environmental effects with reference to the criteria specified in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.
- 3.2. These criteria are set out in the table below, along with consideration of the likely impact of the neighbourhood plan against each.

SEA Directive criteria	Comments	Likely Significant Effects?
Characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:		
1a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to National Policy and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of both boroughs.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan, if adopted, would form part of the statutory Development Plan for both boroughs and as such contribute to the framework for future projects and activities in the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>There are several policies which are considered to have likely significant effects in Haringey in respect of this criterion.</p> <p>Policy KA1 (Underground rail sidings / 460-500 Archway Road), Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station), Policy KA3 (Highgate Bowl), Policy KA4 (Summersby Road), and Policy KA5 (Goldsmith’s Court) – The policies are intended to set the framework for the future development of identified sites.</p> <p>With regards to Camden’s side, there are no policies which we regard would trigger the need for SEA under this criterion.</p>	Yes
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan must be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and in general conformity with the respective Council’s strategic policies.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan may form the context for and influence other documents for this area.</p>	No

programmes including those in a hierarchy	However, it is considered the extent of impact is unlikely to be significant in this regard.	
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	<p>Policies in Highgate Neighbourhood Plan are planned to have a positive impact on local environmental assets.</p> <p>They focus upon the protection and enhancement of green spaces, ground and surface water flooding (basement development), conservation of energy, air quality and the noise environment.</p> <p>The Plan contains policies some of which fall outside the scope of Camden's development plan and Haringey's adopted Strategic Policies Local Plan as well as Haringey's emerging Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Local Plans. These policies are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not been tested at Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>Policy DH5 (Basements) - Specifically where the policy requires that the footprint of basement developments should not exceed 35%/20% of the plot area and should be no more than one storey.</p> <p>The potential significant effects of this approach on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; • effects upon consumption of materials and energy. <p>Policy DH6 (Embodied Energy) - The policy requires the submission of embodied energy calculations and different scenarios to be tested showing carbon dioxide emissions.</p> <p>The potential significant effects of this approach on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon consumption of materials and energy; and • effects upon mitigation of climate change. <p>Policy DH7 (Backland development) – The policy seeks to restrict backland development and sets requirements for new development where this is acceptable in principle.</p>	Yes

	<p>The potential significant effects of this approach on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity. <p>Policy TR1 (Movement to and from development), Policy TR2 (Parking levels), Policy TR3 (integrated parking provision), Policy TR4 (promoting sustainable movement), Policy TR6 (areas of on-street parking stress) and Policy TR7 (dropped kerbs and crossovers) - These policies set requirements to support sustainable transport, including parking. These requirements, whilst having been considered in SEA/SA in Camden, have not been similarly tested in Haringey.</p> <p>The potential significant effects of this approach on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon mitigation of climate change. <p>Policy KA1 (Underground rail sidings / 460-500 Archway Road), Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station), Policy KA3 Highgate Bowl, Policy KA4 (Summersby Road), and Policy KA5 (Goldsmith's Court).</p> <p>The potential significant effects of these approaches on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity. 	
<p>1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme</p>	<p>Policies in Highgate Neighbourhood Development Plan are planned to have a positive impact on local environmental assets.</p> <p>They focus upon the protection and enhancement of green spaces, ground and surface water flooding (basement development), conservation of energy, air quality and the noise environment.</p> <p>The Plan contains policies some of which fall outside the scope of Camden's development plan and Haringey's adopted Strategic Policies Local Plan as well as Haringey's emerging Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Local Plans. These policies are likely to have significant effects upon existing environmental problems that have not been tested at Sustainability Appraisal.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

	<p>Policy DH5 (Basements) - Specifically where the policy requires that the footprint of basement developments should not exceed 35%/20% of the plot area and should be no more than one storey.</p> <p>Potential significant effects on environmental problems which are relevant to the plan could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; and • effects upon flood risk, drainage and water quality. <p>Policy DH6 (Embodied Energy) The policy requires the submission of embodied energy calculations and different scenarios to be tested showing carbon dioxide emissions.</p> <p>The potential effects of this policy in relation to environmental problems could include the effects upon mitigation of climate change.</p> <p>Policy KA1 (Underground railway sidings / 460-500 Archway Road), Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station), Policy KA3 (Highgate Bowl), Policy KA4 (Summersby Road), and Policy KA5 (Goldsmith's Court) – Specifically where the policies seek to protect and enhance designated Ecological Corridors and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation through site specific proposals.</p> <p>Potential significant effects on environmental problems which are relevant to the plan could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; and • effects upon air pollution (particularly where KA1 and KA2 seek site specific consideration for screening to mitigate against pollution) 	
<p>1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan is not directly relevant to the implementation of community legislation on the environment.</p>	<p>No</p>

management or water protection).		
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan sets a vision and objectives to help guide new development in Highgate until 2030.</p> <p>The Plan contains policies some of which fall outside the scope of Camden’s development plan and Haringey’s adopted Strategic Policies Local Plan as well as Haringey’s emerging Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Local Plans. These policies are likely to have significant permanent and irreversible effects that have not been tested at Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>Policy DH5 (Basements) - Specifically where the policy requires that the footprint of basement developments should not exceed 35%/20% of the plot area and should be no more than one storey.</p> <p>Potential permanent and irreversible significant effects caused by this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; and • effects upon ground water. <p>Policy DH6 (Embodied Energy). Although a presumption against demolition has been tested at sustainability appraisal, the policy requires embodied energy calculations and different scenarios to be tested showing carbon dioxide emissions. These are likely to cause long term effects which have not been tested.</p> <p>Policy DH7 (Backland development) – The policy seeks to restrict backland development and sets requirements for new development where this is acceptable in principle.</p> <p>Potential permanent significant effects caused by this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon natural environment and biodiversity. <p>Policy TR1 (Movement to and from development), Policy TR2 (Parking levels), Policy TR3 (integrated parking provision), Policy TR4 (promoting sustainable movement), Policy TR6 (areas of on-street parking stress) and Policy TR7 (dropped kerbs and crossovers) - These policies set</p>	Yes

	<p>requirements to support sustainable transport, including parking. These requirements, whilst having been considered in SEA/SA in Camden, have not been similarly tested in Haringey.</p> <p>Potential permanent and irreversible significant effects caused by this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon climate change <p>Policy KA1 (Underground rail sidings / 460-500 Archway Road), Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station), Policy KA3 Highgate Bowl, Policy KA4 (Summersby Road), and Policy KA5 (Goldsmith's Court).</p> <p>Potential permanent and irreversible significant effects caused by this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon natural environment and biodiversity 	
<p>2b) The cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>Cumulative effects occur where several policies or site allocations, when put together, have a significant combined effect.</p> <p>Policy DH5 (Basements) - Specifically where the policy requires that the footprint of basement developments should not exceed 35%/20% of the plot area and should be no more than one storey.</p> <p>As discussed within criterion 1c, the cumulative significant effects of this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; • effects upon consumption of materials and energy. <p>The policy will apply to all existing and future buildings within the whole plan area. When viewed in this context, the above effects when multiplied could cause significant changes to the built and natural environment.</p> <p>Policy DH6 (Embodied Energy) The policy requires the submission of embodied energy calculations and different scenarios to be tested showing carbon dioxide emissions.</p> <p>As discussed within criterion 1c the potential cumulative significant effects of this policy could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon consumption of materials and energy; • effects upon mitigation of climate change. • effects upon delivering sustainable development 	<p>Yes</p>

	<p>Policy TR1 (Movement to and from development), PolicyTR2 (Parking levels), Policy TR3 (Integrated parking provision), Policy TR4 (Promoting sustainable movement), Policy TR6 (Areas of on-street parking stress) and PolicyTR7 (Dropped kerbs and crossovers) - These policies set requirements to support sustainable transport, including parking. These requirements, whilst having been considered in SEA/SA in Camden, have not been similarly tested in Haringey.</p> <p>The potential cumulative significant effects of this approach could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon mitigation of climate change; • effects upon noise and air pollution; and • effects upon delivering sustainable development. <p>Policy KA1 (Underground railway sidings / 460-500 Archway Road), Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station), Policy KA3 (Highgate Bowl), Policy KA4 (Summersby Road), and Policy KA5 (Goldsmith's Court) – Specifically where the policies seek to protect and enhance designated Ecological Corridors and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation through site specific proposals.</p> <p>Potential significant cumulative effects could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity 	
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	There are no trans-boundary effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan.	No
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	There are unlikely to be risks to human health or the environment arising from the Plan in respect of this criterion.	No
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan area covers parts of the London boroughs of Camden and Haringey. The effects described within criterion 1c will apply to an area of around 5 ha, with a population of approximately 18,000). Both the size of the area and population are considered significant.</p> <p>It is also noteworthy that the Neighbourhood Plan will affect local residents, as well as those who live outside of the Area but will work in and visit it.</p>	Yes
2f) The value	The draft Neighbourhood Plan both recognises and	Yes

<p>and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p> <p>ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values</p> <p>iii) intensive land-use</p>	<p>includes policies to address special natural characteristics and cultural heritage of the Area, including identified significant local open spaces, and Highgate's conservation areas.</p> <p>Whilst the Plan aims to positively conserve and enhance these assets, effects should be considered through appraisal. There are a number of Listed Buildings within the neighbourhood area in Haringey, including Listed Buildings or structures within the following Key Area policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA2 (Former Highgate Rail Station), • KA3 (Highgate Bowl) and • KA5 (Goldsmith's Court). 	
<p>2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>There are no landscapes of national or international protection status in the Area.</p> <p>There are a number of landscapes of recognised metropolitan and local importance in the Area and which the Neighbourhood Plan may have an impact on, as follows:</p> <p>Policy OS3 (Local Open Space) –identifies and sets the intention to designate as Local Green Space Southwood Lane Wood, which is a Local Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).</p> <p>Policy OS4 (Fringes of Highgate's Reservoirs) - seeks to manage land on Aylmer Road reservoir, which is a designated Metropolitan Open Land and Borough Grade II SINC.</p> <p>Policy KA1 (Underground railway sidings / 460-500 Archway Road) - concerns land which is a designated Ecological Corridor and Metropolitan Open Land.</p> <p>Policy KA2 (Former Highgate Rail station) - concerns land which is a designated Ecological Corridor, Metropolitan Open Land and SINC of Metropolitan Importance.</p> <p>Policy KA3 (Highgate Bowl) - concerns land which is a designated Local SINC.</p> <p>Policy KA4 (Summersby Road) - concerns land which is directly adjacent to a designated SINC of Metropolitan Importance.</p> <p>Policy KA5 (Goldsmith's Court) - concerns land which is a designated Ecological Corridor, Metropolitan Open Land and adjacent to a SINC of</p>	<p>Yes</p>

	<p>Metropolitan Importance.</p> <p>The potential significant effects of this approach on the integration of environmental considerations, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effects upon the natural environment and biodiversity; and • effects upon delivering sustainable development. <p>It is considered that SEA should be carried out in order to appropriately assess potential impacts of policy proposals on the above noted sites.</p>	
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4. Screening outcome

- 4.1. Having reviewed the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan against the above criteria, it is concluded that the Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and accordingly, should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 4.2. Overall, there are policy requirements in the draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan that extend beyond the scope of the respective Council's adopted Local Plans, as well as Haringey's emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plans. These will not have been fully tested through the Council's Sustainability Appraisals, and therefore instigate a need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with criteria identified as 'Yes' in the table above. These are as follows:
- 1a
 - 1c
 - 1d
 - 2a
 - 2b
 - 2e
 - 2f
 - 2g
- 4.3. The likely significant effects noted in this screening opinion could be either positive or negative. The SEA regulations do not specify the nature of the effects that would give rise to the need for an assessment.
- 4.4. For this screening opinion, the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan 'Key Area' policies have been regarded as proposed site allocations, given that they identify specific sites along with principles for managing their future development.
- 4.5. The consultation draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan has been published at a time when Haringey Council is preparing Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plans to support the adopted Strategic Policies. These emerging

Local Plans are at the Regulation 18 stage of production, with 'preferred approaches' having recently been consulted on, to help inform production of a Regulation 19 stage 'proposed submission document'. An iterative process of Sustainability Appraisal is being carried out on these Local Plans, along with corresponding Interim Sustainability Appraisal Reports published at the Regulation 18 stage.

- 4.6. There are policies in the draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan which are complementary to and/or repeat aspects of Haringey's emerging Local Plans. These Neighbourhood Plan policies may, in due course, be sufficiently covered in terms of environmental appraisal by the Council's Site Allocations or Development Management Policies (i.e. through appraisal of future Regulation 19 'Proposed Submission Stage' documents). Furthermore, the emerging Local Plans and policies may yet be modified, and will need to be subject to further appraisal through the iterative process.
- 4.7. Haringey's emerging Local Plans have only been appraised at the Regulation 18 stage. Interim Sustainability Appraisal of Haringey's emerging policy preferred approaches, whilst providing a robust basis for consideration of environmental effects at the current plan production stage, do not at this time account for a full SEA.
- 4.8. Therefore, a cautionary approach to the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan is advised, and SEA should be undertaken to provide certainty that policies have been appropriately considered for environmental effects. This is particularly important in the situation that the Neighbourhood Plan is progressed ahead of Haringey's emerging Local Plans.

5. Next steps

- 5.1. This determination has also been subject to consultation with the statutory consultation bodies. The consultation bodies specified in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 that were consulted on this screening determination of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:
 - English Heritage;
 - Environment Agency; and
 - Natural England
- 5.2. Responses from the consultation from Natural England and Historic England were received between April and July 2015 and are set out below.

Natural England

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are likely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Historic England

We are content with the assessment made by the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey regarding the need for SEA.

Environment Agency

Based on a review of environmental constraints for which we are a statutory consultee, there are no areas of fluvial flood risk, Source Protection Zones for groundwater or watercourses affected by the neighbourhood plan area. Therefore we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to these environmental constraints.

- 5.3. Response from Natural England and Historic England agree that an SEA is necessary. It is considered that the information provided by the statutory bodies does not identify a need for SEA under any criterion not already addressed by the Boroughs. The SEA criterion set out in para 4.2 above therefore remain unchanged as a result of the consultation.
- 5.4. Whilst the Environment Agency does not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects, it has advised the local authorities to consult their respective Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP). It is noted that the Highgate neighbourhood area corresponds with two Critical Drainage Areas identified in Haringey's SWMP which merit due consideration in the environmental assessment. These are CDA: Group 04-055 (North of Hornsey High Street and west of mainline railway) and CDA: Group 04-062 (Milton Park and Causton Road). There are also a small number of properties which fall within Camden's York Rise Local Flood Risk Zone.

6. Appendix



Historic England

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20 April 2015

Dear Mr Vickers

SEA Screening - Draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation to Historic England inviting comments on the SEA Screening and the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Government through the Localism Act (2011) and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) has enabled local communities to take a more pro-active role in influencing how their neighbourhood is managed. The Regulations require Historic England, as a statutory agency, be consulted on Neighbourhood Plans where the Neighbourhood Forum or Parish Council consider our interest to be affected by the Plan. As Historic England's remit is advice on proposals affecting the historic environment our comments relate to the implications of the proposed neighbourhood plan for heritage assets. Accordingly, we have reviewed your document against the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) and its core principle that heritage assets be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Having reviewed the draft document we can offer the following observations and suggestions for consideration in respect of clarifying compliance with the NPPF and local policy and developing a robust neighbourhood plan.

General comments

We are pleased to note that the Vision for Highgate recognised the high quality of Highgate's unique character and heritage as a key quality to be protected and enhanced. We do however



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feel that the draft Plan would benefit from refinement which would strengthen and clarify its overarching objectives and policies. In summary the main aspects of the plan which require further consideration are set out below (these are explained further in our detailed comments):

- As Highgate encompasses more than one local planning authority a major benefit should be to promote greater consistency and transparency in policies and decision making across borough boundaries.
- The Policies do not appear to always fully reflect the wider aims or concerns set out in the text. Consequently a number of the policies could be revised to better reflect or secure those objectives.
- The emphasis on the heritage of Highgate and its role in defining its strong character and attractiveness is not fully reflected in the Heritage and Development section. The policies focus principally on specific aspects of design where there is a perceived lack of efficacy. It would seem beneficial to set out how new policies relate to existing guidance and policy and provide a clearer identification of concerns in respect of heritage and the erosion of character; the broader aspirations for carbon-free and sustainable development, broader design guidance, and a framework for basement and backland development.
- As both Camden and/or Haringey already produce additional heritage, energy efficiency, basement and design guidance. The Plan is therefore an opportunity to clarify best practice in respect of Highgate's unique character as well as identifying the need for additional policy.
- We would suggest that as the proposed policies relate principally to new development or alteration the Plan should introduce greater distinction between the headings of new development, alterations to existing buildings, and energy efficiency. This would relate better to existing guidance.

Historic England recommends that policies that build on the status of an area as a conservation area should be based on a thorough understanding of the area's historic and architectural character. The residents are well placed to judge this, as they have a deep knowledge of the area and its evolution. This is reflected in the proposed Plan but might benefit from more specific identification of character areas e.g. the wider suburban character and how this relates to the character and role of the economic centres.

We would also recommend a general consideration that the Forum review the existing evidence base (conservation area appraisals, local lists etc.) and consider whether these accurately identify the historic environment and its significance.



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Detailed comments on text.

Section 2: A summary of Highgate

Historic England welcomes the inclusion of this section which provides the historic context to Highgate and promotes the rich and varied heritage of the area.

Pg. 15. A neighbourhood of varying needs. Para 2 states *This disparity is placing pressure on the social mix of the neighbourhood.* This sentence would benefit from clarification and qualification of the nature of this pressure. It is assumed that this relates to the need to provide a broader range of opportunities in terms of homes and community facilities.

Pg. 16. A place of special character. This section notes the issue with extensions and basements to existing properties. It may be helpful to refer to the supplementary planning guidance produced by the local authorities which acknowledges the sensitive nature of the geology of the Hampstead Highgate Ridge in this section (Camden's basement impact assessment SPD and ARUP's geological and hydrological survey). The concerns raised do not appear to have been developed in terms of specific policy suggestions or related non statutory guidance/action within the neighbourhood plan. It may therefore be appropriate to reference local authority design guidance or conservation area management guidelines, or to refer to relevant councils design reviews.

Highgate has a rich built heritage, and a number of archaeological finds and features have also been recorded in the area. The Plan area incorporates five Archaeological Priority Areas. As such the Plan would benefit from mentioning these in the summary of the heritage of the area, particularly as these have the potential to impact on proposed developments.

Section 3: A Vision for Highgate

Any issues relevant to this section are addressed in our general comments or under the relative Core Objective sections.

Core Objective 2: Economic Activity

P.32. The assessment of the historic character at the beginning of the sections for each key area (High Street, Archway Road and Aylmer Parade area) is a welcome addition as it serves to reiterate the importance of heritage to the Neighbourhood Plan and Highgate's special character.

P. 33 Para 3. We note the intention to address inconsistent approaches to the Village public realm is identified as being outside of the remit of the plan. In our view the Plan is an opportunity to address this, and as such would benefit from a clear policy specifically aimed at consistency across the public realm ensuring high quality workmanship, appropriate materials, and appropriately qualified professionals to oversee such work.



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Core Objective 3: Traffic and transport

P.42. Policy TR3: Integrating parking provision. The requirements for off-street parking state that this must preserve the historic character of the area and preserve the setting of the buildings. This policy reflects guidance in the conservation area management plans with regards to front gardens and boundary treatments. It would be worthwhile considering best practice and referencing this policy to the management plans.

Core Objective 4: Open Spaces and Public Realm

P.48. Fringes of Highgate's open space. Highgate is particularly rich in varied open spaces which contribute greatly to its character and the high quality of life it offers. Highgate encompasses three historic landscapes of exceptional historic merit which are included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. These are Highgate Cemetery (Grade I), Waterlow Park (Grade II*) and Kenwood (Grade II*). As designated heritage assets these not only provide valuable open space, habitats etc. but are highly significant as historic assets and should be managed in a way that preserves and enhances their special character.

P.49. Policy OS1: Fringes of Highgate's Open Space. A number of the policies are design policies which do not necessarily relate to open space and public realm and as such we believe that they would benefit from being re-located within the plan. It would also be useful to number the requirements for ease of reference in planning reports etc. To some extent the policies reflect Camden's existing design policies set out in *Planning Guidance document CPG 1*, particularly that set out in *Good Design 2.10*. In our view it would be worth considering how these policies relate to the particular character areas of Highgate and can be appropriately tailored to reflect the local context and can be consistently applied across borough boundaries.

The objective states *that new development shall not project beyond the built line past ground floor level*. The exact meaning of this is not clear and should be clarified i.e. does this mean *not project forward of the existing building line*, if so, how does this relate only to ground floor level.

Core Objective 5: Development and heritage

Pg. 60. In our view the "challenges" identified need greater explanation in terms of their impact and should be reflected in the following policies and guidance. Whilst there is a stated aim of ensuring that development is contextual and sustainable we would suggest that this section would benefit from greater emphasis on the need to preserve and enhance the special character, appearance and "significance" of the historic environment. Whilst the Plan does not need to repeat the NPPF or local plan policies heritage decisions are reached on the basis of the impact of proposals on heritage values and the significance of heritage assets. Where more specific guidance exists in the form of the conservation area appraisals and associated management plans it would be beneficial to sign post these and to consider how cross borough policies are applied. It is important to consider whether the existing evidence base is sufficiently robust, e.g. does it correctly identify the significance of certain aspects of the historic environment?



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Highgate contains many heritage assets recognised as of national significance through listing and broad heritage designations in the form of its conservation areas, the variety of buildings within the areas are diverse and often of high architectural quality. If there is a concern over the loss of specific forms of building then their contribution to significance needs to be clarified. This could be done in a similar manner to open space with a brief summary of character areas and the principal elements of significance. This could also inform new design in respect of materials, appearance, and the relationship of development to topography and urban grain. Reference is specifically made to demolition of original (historic?) buildings. If the intention within the Plan is to protect those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation areas, are they appropriately identified? We would recommend that you consider the guidance on Neighbourhood Plan Policies on our website to help with this at www.HistoricEngland.org.uk (neighbourhood-planning-information).

P.6.1 Policy DH1: Demolition in Highgate's conservation areas. We are concerned that the phrase “make a significant contribution to the setting and character” potentially fails to achieve the stated aim and offers a position less strong than that set out in the NPPF. The NPPF requires heritage assets to make a positive (rather than significant) contribution to significance and as such applies the tests set out in paragraphs 132 or 133 in respect of the extent of harm. We would suggest consideration of amending the proposed policy to “buildings and structures which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting” to better reflect the wording in the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act and NPPF. The exceptional circumstances referred to could then be related to the public benefits which may contribute to a justification for harm as set out in the NPPF.

The Policy does not address where works which do not comprise demolition but cause harm are proposed or the standards expected in respect of replacement buildings which detract from the local character. It may therefore be useful to consider the aspirations for domestic and retail design guidance and to clarify terms such as “overdevelopment”.

The policy mentions the demolition of unlisted buildings, but does not reference locally listed buildings, which whilst not statutorily protected are afforded a higher level of protection by the Borough's than a building not on the local list. Local Lists are maintained by both Haringey and Camden Councils. We would also suggest exploring the possibility of updating local authority local lists to identify those buildings of historic character outside of the existing conservation areas.

Pg.65. Policy DH3: The environmental health of future residents. The wording of this policy requires further thought. We assume that the intention is to ensure that new development seeks to mitigate the environmental impact of the busy road corridors. It may be unreasonable to expect collation of such reports for simple internal sub-division as such works may not require planning permission. This may be therefore be better approached through broader guidance on high quality sustainable design and broader measures to mitigate traffic impacts such as planting.



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Pg.67-8. Policy DH5: Basements. This policy needs to take into consideration the context of the building within which a basement is being proposed and we would value the inclusion of a statement to that effect. Historic England is of the view that basements within listed buildings should not have a harmful impact on the significance of the building, and where this is the case the proposals will need to be assessed against the criteria for harm set out in NPPF policies 132 to 134 and on a case by case basis.

Pg.71. Policy DH7: Backland development. This policy should include a statement on the preservation of the historic character of the area and how green spaces can contribute to this. This is mentioned in the text before the policies but would benefit from further inclusion in the policy itself.

Related non-statutory 'Development and Heritage' actions

CA 35: Encourage local initiatives to spread the message about environmental changes that can "green" our lives. Historic England produces extensive guidance on micro-renewable energy, buildings regulations and the historic environment accessible through the Climate Change and your Home website (www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk). Camden Council also produces guidance for energy efficiency in conservation areas and area specific guidance for Dartmouth Park which would prove a useful reference point.

CA36: Discourage external shop shutters. The issue associated with this action is not addressed in the text. The perceived problems with external shutters should be address and a link to shopfront design guidelines could be made. Camden Council currently have a detailed shopfront design guide available at <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-applications/before-you-apply/residential-and-business-projects/shop-front-alterations/> and Haringey has area specific design guidance. There are numerous forms of shutters available, both internal and external, as such it may be worth considering in what circumstances and locations would shutters be acceptable and whether there is an acceptable form.

Pg. 72. Key Area Policies. In our view these might be more accurately identified as key sites. We do not wish to comment in detail on the included sites, and we would do so in response to any consultation on the local authorities' site allocation documents. However, this section could usefully highlight the advantages of consulting neighbourhood groups as part of the pre-application process for development so that concerns and aspirations can be raised prior to any formal application.

SEA Screening Opinion

We are content with the assessment made by the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey regarding the need for an SEA.

Our comments are intended to encourage a more beneficial Plan and we would hope that you find the comments and observations useful. We would of course be happy to provide further advice in respect of any of the above, or other, issues, if this is helpful.



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Finally, it must be noted that this advice is based on the information provided by you and for the avoidance of doubt does not reflect our obligation to advise you on, and potentially object to, any specific development proposal which may subsequently relate to this or later versions of the Guidance, Appraisals and Management Plans, and which may have adverse effects on the environment.

Yours sincerely



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Date: 29 April 2015
Our ref: 150143



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Dear Mr Vickers

Planning consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening - Draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 02 April 2015 which was received by Natural England on 02 April 2015.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are likely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance¹. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the allocations contained within the plan will have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect. As we have no evidence of these effects having been assessed within a Local Plan, we consider that there should now be an assessment in order to



determine the potential impact on these sensitive sites and what possibilities exist for the avoidance/mitigation of the effects.

The following sites have been identified as being potentially significantly affected by the plan policies/allocations/proposals:

- Hampstead Heath Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

We would like to draw your attention to Impact Risk Zones for SSSIs, as follows:

Natural England has published a set of mapped Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for SSSIs. This helpful GIS tool can be used by LPAs to help consider whether a proposed development is likely to affect a SSSI and determine whether they need to consult Natural England to seek advice on the nature of any potential SSSI impacts, their avoidance or mitigation. The dataset and user guidance can be accessed from the [gov.uk website](http://gov.uk).

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

Queens Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

We would like to point out that we have received a call from a concerned resident about proposals to fell a number of trees at the edge of this wood, as part of the development of a site at 40 Muswell Hill Road, London N6 5UN by Buildbase. We confirm our support for the protection and management of Queens Wood and surrounding nearby trees as an important local resource in the area and an area of ancient woodland.

Information about ancient woodland can be found in Natural England's standing advice:

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/standing-advice-ancient-woodland_tcm6-32633.pdf

Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource of great importance for its wildlife, its history and the contribution it makes to our diverse landscapes. Local authorities have a vital role in ensuring its conservation, in particular through the planning system. Regard should be had to the requirements under the NPPF (Para. 118)² which states:

'Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.'

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Gillian Fensome on 07879 800855. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Fensome
Sustainable Development and Regulation
Thames Valley

Vickers, Ben

From: Vickers, Ben
Sent: 23 July 2015 16:02
To: Vickers, Ben
Subject: FW: SEA Screening - Draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

From: planning, North London [mailto:northlondonplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 July 2015 09:22
To: Nilsen Erik
Subject: RE: SEA Screening - Draft Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

Dear Erik

Apologies it has taken me so long to get back to you. As discussed on the phone the area of this neighbourhood plan is relatively low risk for us and as such we have no detailed comments to make.

Based on a review of environmental constraints for which we are a statutory consultee, there are no areas of fluvial flood risk, Source Protection Zones for groundwater or watercourses affected by the neighbourhood plan area. Therefore we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to these environmental constraints.

Your Surface Water Management Plan will indicate if there are any critical drainage areas from local sources of flood risk (e.g. surface water, groundwater and sewerage) which coincide with the neighbourhood plan area.

For your information we have published joint advice with Natural England, English Heritage and the Forestry Commission on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans.

This is available at: <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/PDF/GEHO0212BWAZ-E-E.pdf>

Should you have any further queries please contact us at northlondonplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Kind regards

Jane Wilkin

Planning Advisor - North London Sustainable Places

Environment Agency | Hertfordshire and North London

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