

Camden Local Strategic Partnership

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| Meeting | 9 October 2008 |
| Report Title | Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF) - Update on progress |
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| Purpose | This report is to update the LSP on progress with Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF), the group of documents setting out the Council's planning strategy and policies, and to request Partners' support in the preparation and implementation of the LDF Core Strategy. |
| Recommendations | The LSP is asked to endorse Camden's Core Strategy Preferred Approach ¹ and agree to co-operate in the collection of supporting evidence and the delivery of the Strategy. |

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is preparing Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF), the group of documents setting out its planning vision, strategy and policies for the future of the borough. It will set out the Council's strategy for where homes, jobs and infrastructure will be located and how Camden will become more sustainable. The LDF will help to deliver Camden's Community Strategy and will reflect the strategies and investment plans of the Council and its partners. Once adopted the Local Development Framework documents will replace the Council's existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
- 1.2 The LDF goes beyond traditional land use planning to also consider other factors that make places attractive, sustainable and successful, such as social and economic matters ('spatial planning'). The LDF system emphasises delivery, local distinctiveness and the need for credible evidence to show that plans are appropriate and deliverable. London borough LDF documents are required to be in general conformity with the Mayor of London's London Plan.
- 1.3 The Council preparing the following Local Development Framework documents:

¹ Available to download from www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/plans-and-policies/local-strategic-partnership--lsp-/lsp-agendas--minutes-and-reports.

- **Core Strategy** - which will set out the key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough. All other documents in the Local Development Framework must be consistent with the Core Strategy;
- **Development Policies** - which will support the Core Strategy by setting out the additional planning policies the Council will use when determining applications for planning permission;
- **Site Allocations** - which will set out the Council's proposals for major development sites;
- **North London Waste Plan** - which will identify sites for major recycling and other waste handling facilities and set out policies relating to waste. It will be prepared jointly by Camden and its six partner boroughs in the North London Waste Authority area. It complements, but is different in scope to, the Joint Waste Strategy drawn up by the seven boroughs and the North London Waste Authority.

1.4 The Core Strategy and Development Policies are the first two LDF documents being produced. This report focuses on the Core Strategy as the primary LDF document.

2 Key issues and options

2.1 The first stage of the production of the Core Strategy involved the consideration of key issues for Camden's future and the options to tackle them, and the gathering of information and evidence to provide the basis of the Council's approach. Consultation on issues and options for the Core Strategy took place at the end of last year and included:

- Member-led discussions at the first round of area forums (September 2007 - January 2008);
- production of a consultation document and an awareness campaign (e.g. press releases, press notices, Camden website, Your Camden magazine);
- workshops for specialist and professional organisations;
- presentations to a range of bodies including the Local Strategic Partnership, the Camden Economic Development Partnership and several local neighbourhood partnerships.

2.2 113 organisations and individuals submitted written representations on the Core Strategy issues and options, making over 1000 individual comments. A good range of responses were received from across various sectors. Some of the main messages from the consultation are summarised below:

- Comments from the Government Office for London were positive in terms of the Council's consideration of the key issues and options, the link with Camden's Community Strategy, local distinctiveness, the emerging evidence base and the spatial nature of the approach.
- There was no consensus on whether growth should be concentrated or spread around the borough. Some questioned the desirability of growth in Camden but most respondents did not.
- There was strong support for the provision of affordable housing.
- Many respondents felt that a secondary school is needed in the south of the borough.

- Most respondents on the issue felt that we should continue to balance the London-wide role of Central London with the needs of local residents. Residents' groups felt we should do more to protect amenity, the historic environment and local distinctiveness, while private sector respondents generally felt that priority should be given to commercial uses.
- The importance of the concentration of medical, research and higher and further education sectors in Central London, to the area, London and the UK, was raised by a significant number of respondents, who felt more weight should be given to supporting such institutions.
- There was support for stricter controls to protect and enhance the built environment, with local distinctiveness highlighted as a key area.
- There was generally strong support for the protecting and enhancing open space and biodiversity.
- There was support for protecting small businesses and local shops.
- There was no consensus on whether employment land should be protected.
- There was general support for measures to reduce the opportunity for crime and disorder, and promote safety, health and well-being and equality of opportunity.

2.3 In addition, officers have held a series of meetings with external organisations and Council colleagues to provide input into the emerging Core Strategy and Development Policies. These included meetings with:

- strategic partners, infrastructure and service providers (e.g. Camden PCT, Thames Water, Fire Brigade, Police) - to ensure that LDF documents reflect their programmes and priorities and consider their role in the delivery of Camden's LDF;
- other Council departments - to ensure that the LDF reflects and is consistent with the full range of Council strategies and programmes, and to obtain specialist input on detailed matters;
- neighbouring boroughs - to ensure an appropriate level of consistency and co-ordination across the borough boundary. The subregional partnerships Central London Forward and the North London Strategic Alliance are important forums for this.

2.4 An Executive LDF Steering Group was set up to guide the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework documents, with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader/ Executive Member for Equalities and Community Development, and the Executive Members for the Environment and Housing as members.

3 Preferred Approach to Core Strategy and Development Policies

3.1 The comments received during consultation on key issues and options, the information and evidence collected in studies and meetings, the policies of the government and the Mayor of London, and Camden's Community Strategy, Sustainability Delivery Plan and other Council plans and strategies were used to formulate the preferred approach to the Core Strategy. An appraisal of the sustainability of potential options also helped to inform the preferred approach. The Core Strategy must be consistent with national and London-wide policies unless there is strong evidence that a different approach is more appropriate in

Camden. It should not duplicate them, rather they should set out a local approach to relevant matters, responding to Camden's unique circumstances.

- 3.2 The Core Strategy is the central part of Camden's LDF, as it sets out the Council's overall approach and all other planning documents must be consistent with it. It includes a number of strategic objectives which build on the vision and themes of the Community Strategy and form the basis for the strategy and policies in the Core Strategy and other LDF documents. The primary objective is to sustainably manage growth in Camden so that it takes place in the most appropriate locations, meets our needs for homes, jobs and services and properly takes into account Camden's character as a highly developed inner London borough with many valued and high quality places.
- 3.3 The main body of the Core Strategy Preferred Approach sets out the Council's preferred way forward on the key issues for Camden's future, responding to the challenges we face. The issues covered are grouped into six sections:
- 3.4 *Managing Camden's growth* - which covers the location of future growth in the borough; infrastructure; the use of planning obligations; making better use of Camden's limited land through our approach to mixed use and density; and Central London, with its unique character and challenges.
- 3.5 *Providing housing and affordable housing* - which sets out the Council's approach to maximising the supply of housing to meet Camden's housing targets; securing affordable housing, including our affordable housing target and split between social and intermediate housing; promoting quality housing; and meeting the housing needs of different groups. Housing is regarded as the priority land-use of the Local Development Framework.
- 3.6 *Promoting a sustainable Camden and tackling climate change* - which concentrates on the environmental performance of buildings; providing decentralised energy and heating networks; achieving sustainable transport, such as promoting walking and cycling; and reducing and managing our waste and water use. However, how we make Camden more sustainable is an overarching issue that runs throughout the Core Strategy. The social elements of sustainability are covered in the section on *Improving the Quality of Life of Camden's Communities* and the economic aspects in the section on *Securing a strong economy that includes everybody*.
- 3.7 *Improving Camden's environment* - which focuses on making sure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use; promoting high standard of design that respects local context and character and preserves and enhances Camden's rich heritage; and seeking to improve and protect Camden's parks, open spaces and biodiversity.
- 3.8 *Improving the quality of life of Camden's communities* - which covers some of the key things that contribute to the quality of life in the borough, including community and recreational facilities; improving health and well-being; promoting measures to make Camden a safer place while retaining its vibrancy; making sure buildings, streets and transport systems are as accessible; and protecting and improving amenity. A range of measures set out in other parts

of the Core Strategy also contribute to improving the quality of life in Camden and encouraging opportunities for all (e.g. on housing, open space and improving access for local people to job and training opportunities).

- 3.9 *Securing a strong economy that includes everybody* - which focuses on supporting a diverse Camden economy, providing suitable sites for businesses; supporting local enterprise and training schemes; tourism uses; and promoting successful centres and shopping facilities to serve the needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- 3.10 The Core Strategy also includes an infrastructure table which identifies the transport, social and utility infrastructure required to meet the needs of the borough (although this is not exhaustive).
- 3.11 Camden's Core Strategy Preferred Approach is set out in an annex to this report. It may be downloaded from www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/plans-and-policies/local-strategic-partnership--lsp-/lsp-agendas--minutes-and-reports.

4. Evidence

- 4.1 To provide evidence to support the Council's preferred approach to its Core Strategy and other LDF documents, the Council commissioned consultants to carry out a number of studies:
- Camden Housing Needs Study Update 2008;
 - Camden Retail Study 2008;
 - Camden Employment Land Review 2008;
 - Camden Open Spaces, Sport and Recreational Study 2008.

Other reports used to provide supporting information include:

- Delivering a Low Carbon Camden - Carbon Reduction Scenarios to 2050, SEA-Renue, 2007;
 - North London Waste Plan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Mouchel, 2008;
- 4.2 However, in recent months it has become clear that it will be necessary to carry out further work to provide the information and evidence needed to support the Core Strategy to ensure that it is found "sound" by the government-appointed inspector who will hold a public examination into the plan. This will involve:
- viability work to support the approach to affordable housing;
 - a Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - further work on community infrastructure needs.

5 Timetable

- 5.1 Consultation on the Council's preferred options for the Core Strategy and Development Policies will take place in October - November 2008. Following this, a final draft will be prepared, which will be made available for consultation and then submitted to the Secretary of State. The government will appoint an independent Inspector to hold public examination into the Core Strategy to

consider whether it is considered “sound”. The recommendations made by the Inspector will be binding on the Council.

5.2 The indicative timetable for the production of the Core Strategy is set out below:

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| Initial preparation | July - Sept 2007 |
| Consultation on key issues & options and gathering evidence | Aug 2007 - Nov 2008 |
| Consultation on preferred options | Oct - Nov 2008 |
| Consultation on final draft | October / November 2009 |
| Submission to the government | December 2009 |
| Public examination | April 2010 |
| Inspector's Report | June/July 2010 |
| Adoption by the Council | November 2010 |

6 Role of the Local Strategic Partnership

6.1 The Local Strategic Partnership has an important role in the preparation and delivery of the Core Strategy.

6.2 Partners can contribute to the preparation of the LDF by:

- endorsing the approach taken in the Core Strategy and commenting in detail as part of the consultation;
- assisting the consultants carrying out work on infrastructure needs in Camden by identifying future requirements and gaps in provision;
- providing any relevant information about how they are intending to plan for the projected growth in the borough's population to 2025.

6.3 Partners will be able to contribute to the implementation of the LDF by aligning their investment plans to achieve its strategic aims and objectives.

6.4 The LSP will return to the LDF at its December business meeting when it will receive a report on the “Working together to manage a growing population” theme of the Camden Together.