



be concentrated on the town centres as the most sustainable locations which have a better range of community facilities and public transport links.

- 1.3 Sutton town centre in particular is identified for regeneration and growth and more detailed plans are currently being prepared through the Town Centre Area Action Plan to bring this about.
- 1.4 The Strategy also proposes the development of a new district centre at Hackbridge which will be the focus for a flagship sustainable regeneration project that secures the renewal of the area through mixed-use schemes including both eco-housing and industry. The Strategy envisages the development of a truly sustainable suburb through 'One Planet Living' principles.
- 1.5 Under the Strategy the council is also proposing some growth in Wallington Town Centre and is currently developing an Integrated Transport Package (Smarter Travel in Wallington). The 'town centres first' approach means the character of high quality residential areas in our suburbs can be protected.
- 1.6 The Council has also had ongoing meetings with other partners such as Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and other infrastructure providers in order to ensure that all necessary services are developed as part of a comprehensive programme and even with the present economic recession the Vision will be deliverable.
- 1.7 This Vision is set out in the Core Planning Strategy which was examined by the Government's Planning Inspector during this summer.
- 1.8 A report on Adoption was considered by the PAG at its meeting on 6 October and Members resolved to recommend Adoption of the Core Planning Strategy to the Executive and Full Council.

## **2. Outcome of the Examination**

- 2.1 Due to the extensive public participation throughout the process of producing the Strategy only a limited number of representations were made when it was published. Of the 39 respondents, eight considered the Strategy to be Sound and a further nine only raised minor matters. Of the remaining 22 comments Officers managed to negotiate and agree minor changes which met the majority of concerns. Consequently, the Hearings with the Inspector were limited to three and a half days and largely focused on the objections made by the Greater London Authority.
- 2.2 The Inspector's overall conclusion is that the Strategy is sound and should be adopted, subject to a number of changes. The principal change required is the need to delete all references to the de-designation and development of MOL in the Beddington, Hackbridge and Kimpton areas. The Inspector considered that these changes were required in order to ensure that the Strategy is consistent with national policy and in general conformity with the London Plan and therefore meets legal requirements and 'soundness' criteria.
- 2.3 The other key headline conclusions reached by the Inspector include:
  - Agreement over the proposed distribution of housing across the Borough in accordance with Policy PMP1 of the Strategy and that this should be capable of delivery;
  - That Sutton's approach to housing density set out in Policy BP1 is sound and is based on evidence set out in the Council's 'Characterisation Report of Studies' and the 'Proposed Character of Proposed Sustainable Residential Quality Areas';

- That subject to making explicit cross references to the policy considerations on negotiating affordable housing set out in the London Plan, the overall targets and thresholds for affordable housing are viable and satisfactory and therefore Policy BP2 is sound;
- That the Employment Policies of the Strategy are sound and the Borough's employment allocations should continue to be safeguarded against inappropriate development;
- Agreement that the Strategy sets out a framework for improving Sutton Town Centre which deals adequately with the objective of seeking to address existing problems of leakage to other centres;
- Supporting the Strategy's approach towards the hierarchy of retail centres;
- Agreement that it is appropriate and 'sensible' for the Strategy to continue to safeguard the Tramlink route;
- That the Strategy's approach towards the development of Hackbridge as a District Centre is an appropriate and achievable part of the area's regeneration package;
- That the Council's approach towards achieving environmental sustainability, as set out in Policy BP6 on 'One Planet Living' and the supporting text explaining its application are not prescriptive, is sufficiently flexible and is therefore sound; and
- Agreement that the former 'BIBRA' offices should be identified as a 'Major Developed Site' in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

2.4 A final draft of the Strategy has now been prepared, incorporating the recommendations in the Inspector's Report, and is attached as Appendix 1.

2.5 Associated 'Changes to the UDP Proposals Map' are also set out in Appendix 1. GoL has now agreed to this approach prior to adoption of the Site Development Policies DPD when the Council must produce a replacement Proposals Map. Land Charges will make the appropriate changes to procedures regarding searches following adoption.

### **3. Next Stages/Adoption Procedures**

3.1 As soon as possible after the resolution to adopt, the Council must make the Strategy and Proposals Map (Changes to the UDP Proposals Map), an Adoption Statement, and, a revised Sustainability Appraisal available for inspection at the libraries, main Council offices and on the web. A set of documents must be sent to the Secretary of State. Anyone who requested to be notified of adoption must also be sent a copy of the Adoption Statement. Finally, an advert, that contains the Adoption Statement and sets out the places and times where the Strategy is available for inspection, must be placed in a local paper.

### **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 The cost of the Inspector to conduct the Examination into the Strategy was £52,600 and there was a further cost of the Programme Officer of about £10,000.

4.2 In order to reduce printing costs the Council has looked at alternative methods of production and has reviewed the distribution of hard copies of the Strategy which has been reduced to the minimum essential to meet legislative and operational requirements. The financial implications of the adoption of the Strategy include:

- Costs of meeting the adoption procedures – £300
- Printing the Strategy – a minimum of 250 copies will be required at the cost of £2,500

- Updating and printing the UDP Proposals Map – the Government Office for London (GoL) has indicated that a hard copy of the Proposals Map is required for adoption. However, the Council can update the e-version of the Proposals Map found on the Sutton Website in house at no additional cost other than staff time. Hard copies of the Proposals Map would cost £3,500 and would have to be updated following the adoption of the Site Development Policies DPD. The Council therefore proposes to publish A4 Maps showing ‘Changes to the UDP Proposals Map’ pending adoption of the Site Development Policies DPD when a complete update of the Proposals Map can be undertaken.

4.3 The Inspection fees of £62,600 were a recognised but unknown cost as part of the Local Development Framework and as such will therefore be funded by an allocation from the Council’s central contingency. Other costs will need to be met within Planning revenue estimates.

## **5. Influence of the Council’s Core Values**

- 5.1 The preparation of the Strategy has involved significant partnership working; making services open and accessible and seeking innovative approaches to provide better, more cost effective services.
- 5.2 The Council’s goals include achieving environmental sustainability, social inclusion and economic and community well being. The provision of sufficient housing, employment, leisure and community facilities in the Borough during the plan period will help to achieve these goals.
- 5.3 The Preferred Options for the policies and the site will meet the following One Planet Living Principles: Zero Carbon, Zero Waste, Sustainable Transport, Local and Sustainable Materials, Sustainable Waste, Natural Habitats and Wildlife, Culture and Heritage, Health and Happiness. Indirectly, they may also meet the principles of Local and Sustainable Food and Equity and Fair Trade.

## **6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 The policies contained in the document, particularly in the “Creating Active and Inclusive Communities” section will help the Council to deliver sustainable development and mixed and balanced communities.