Report to the London Borough of Lambeth Council

by Sue Turner RIBA, MRTPI, IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Date: 6 December 2010

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

SECTION 20

REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE LAMBETH CORE STRATEGY

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

Document submitted for examination on 26 March 2010

Examination hearings held between 14 and 22 September 2010

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Non-Technical Summary

This report concludes that the Lambeth Core Strategy Development Plan Document provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the Borough over the next 15 years. The Council has sufficient evidence to support the strategy and can show that it has a reasonable chance of being delivered.

A limited number of changes are needed to meet legal and statutory requirements. These can be summarised as follows:

- Adding a clear commitment to monitoring retail capacity;
- Amending terminology in references to town centres to ensure consistency with national guidance on Planning for Centres in PPS4;
- Removing detailed criteria from Policy 3(b) to ensure that the strategy for maintaining a stock of employment sites is clear;
- Setting out a commitment to address quantity, quality and access to open space in the Development Management DPD;
- Amending the infrastructure schedule to include up to date information;
- Adding measurable targets to the monitoring framework; and
- Adding reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations.

All of the changes recommended in this report are based on proposals put forward by the Council in response to points raised and suggestions discussed during the public examination. The changes do not alter the thrust of the Council’s overall strategy.
Introduction

1. This report contains my assessment of the Lambeth Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It considers whether the DPD is compliant in legal terms and whether it is sound. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 (paragraphs 4.51-4.52) makes clear that to be sound, a DPD should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

2. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The basis for the examination is the Core Strategy: Submission Version (March 2010), which is the same as the document published for consultation in November 2009. It is accompanied by a Schedule of Minor Post – Publication Changes. Although subtitled “editing” and largely covering matters of clarification and updating, this schedule includes substantial wording changes to paragraphs dealing with sustainable waste management and flood risk. These changes deal satisfactorily with concerns raised during consultation and avoid the need for these matters to be addressed in detail in this report.

3. None of the post publication changes undermine the sustainability appraisal or the participatory process previously undertaken and they do not affect or change the overall strategy or any policies in the CS. Consequently all of the changes in the schedule are endorsed and the starting point for the examination is the submitted CS as amended by the schedule.

4. This report deals with the changes that are needed to make the DPD sound and they are identified in bold. All have been proposed by the Council and are presented in Schedule A. It is important to note that the schedule includes 10 appendices which are integral to the proposed changes. None of these changes should materially alter the substance of the plan and its policies or undermine the sustainability appraisal and participatory processes undertaken.

5. In addition the Council has suggested further factual updates, corrections of minor errors or other minor amendments in the interests of clarity. These changes do not relate to soundness and so are generally not referred to in this report, but I endorse the Council’s view that they improve the plan. These are shown in Schedule B. The Council may also make any additional minor changes to page, figure, paragraph numbering and correct any typographical errors prior to adoption.

Assessment of Soundness

Overview

6. The Lambeth CS is a focussed and well organised document. It sets out the context of national and London Plan policies and identifies the main cross border issues that affect Lambeth. The spatial portrait draws together information from the evidence base to provide a focussed overview of the borough and informs the identification of the spatial planning issues affecting it. These issues are summarised under six key themes, which flow logically into the spatial vision and strategic objectives.
7. The strategic policies have been drawn from a large number of options. Half are strategic policies and half refer to places and neighbourhoods. The matrix in Annex 9 of the CS provides a simple but effective cross reference between strategic objectives, policies and performance indicators and makes it clear how the policies will address the issues facing the borough.

8. This CS is a low key, straightforward document and its use of graphics is sparing. However the focus on local issues, the clear writing style and the functional but informative diagrams make it accessible and coherent.

Main Issues

9. Taking account of all the representations, written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings I have identified seven main issues upon which the soundness of the plan depends.

Issue 1 –Does the overall strategy appropriately address the vision for the whole borough, across the entire plan period, in relation to other plans and strategies and is it consistent with national planning guidance?

Is it appropriate for the CS to set out place specific policies only for those areas where growth or change is anticipated?

10. Places and Neighbourhoods (PN) policies are set out in section 5 of the CS. The introduction explains that this section is intended not to cover every part of the borough but to focus on areas of significant growth or change. Thus it contains policies for just nine places and neighbourhoods. These include the London Plan Opportunity Areas (OA’s) of Waterloo and Vauxhall (which is linked to Battersea/ Nine Elms and is partly in Wandsworth) and other major and district centres. However Policy PN10 provides support to other centres, the important role of which is acknowledged.

11. Understandably, concerns have been raised by the local community that the PN policies and accompanying diagrams do not cover the whole of the borough. Some district centres and all local centres are without a place-specific vision or policy. However PPS12 makes it clear that the Core Strategy is the appropriate document to address the key issues and challenges facing the area. From the evidence base it is clear that the Council has taken a logical approach to determining which areas require PN policies. These place specific policies identify development opportunities and refer to Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks (OAPFs), masterplans or community masterplans which already exist or are being prepared. The fact that parts of the borough are not covered by PN policies or diagrams does not imply that they have been overlooked. On the contrary it reflects that they are more stable places where the scale of any development is such that it can be managed, together with matters such as conservation and environmental matters, through the CS strategic policies and through lower level DPDs and SPDs. In conclusion, therefore, the CS approach to selecting areas for place-specific policies is sound.

Does the CS provide a clear and complete strategy for growth for the whole of the plan period?

12. PPS12 requires core strategies to look over a long time frame, usually 15 years. This CS sets a spatial strategy for the period to 2025, which is reflected in the objectives for housing and employment growth. PN policies for Streatham and
West Norwood/ Tulse Hill refer to the retail floorspace to be delivered as part of significant redevelopment, phased over 15 years. The 2009 Masterplans for Streatham and West Norwood both include strategies for the implementation and delivery of this redevelopment. However overall growth in retail floorspace is addressed only to 2020, thus falling short of the plan period.

13. It is clear that this approach flows from the evidence base. The Council’s 2008 Retail Study (RS) takes a cautious approach to assessing retail growth beyond 2015 due to the economic downturn, credit restrictions and uncertainty about the impact of retail development proposals in neighbouring boroughs. It identifies potential for retail floorspace to 2015 with indicative levels to 2020. The RS advises that projections should not be considered as maximum or minimum limits or targets and that if town centre proposals come forward and exceed the target figure they may be acceptable if appropriate in other respects. It also suggests that, as the recommendations and projections are subject to uncertainty, they should be updated in 4 – 5 years time and floorspace projections rolled forward.

14. The CS reflects the findings of the RS, with a clear focus on figures to 2015 set out in Policy S2 and recognition of the likely potential from 2015 – 2020 in paragraph 4.18. However the RS recommendation regarding updating the study is not carried through into the CS, leaving uncertainty about retail growth in the last 5 years of the plan period. The Council has suggested amending paragraph 3.3 to explain that capacity for the last five years of the plan would be assessed as part of the CS monitoring and review process (change A4). It has also proposed change A5 to amend paragraph 4.18 to include a clear commitment to monitoring retail capacity on a 5 yearly basis. These changes will ensure soundness by providing a clear strategy for retail development for the whole of the plan period and ensuring consistency with guidance in PPS4.

Does the CS delegate appropriately to lower level DPDs and provide clear and consistent references to other documents?

15. CS paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 set out the role of the CS and its relationship to other LDF documents. Paragraph 1.21 provides a useful summary of London Plan requirements and designations that overlay the borough, including cross boundary initiatives such as the OAPFs. However many references to SPDs, masterplans and community led masterplans which will deliver the strategy are embedded within the PN policies or the accompanying text. This reflects the reality of a complex picture with the PN policies drawing together a body of work which has either already been completed or is underway. The Council has suggested additional wording to Section 5 (change A8) to explain how the PN policies draw together all of this work. This change will ensure that the CS provides a clear overview of its relationship to other documents and initiatives.

Are definitions of town centre areas consistent with PPS4?

16. A number of the PN diagrams have references to town centre terminology, such as core shopping areas rather than primary shopping areas, which are inconsistent with PPS4. The Council has suggested a number of changes to the text and diagrams in the CS to address these matters. Making these changes, A10 – A19, will ensure that the CS is internally consistent and that terminology relating to centres is consistent with that in PPS4.
17. A number of other minor changes to centre boundaries have been suggested to ensure consistency. These changes, which are set out in Schedule B, are self explanatory and there is no need to refer to them in detail in this report.

**Issue 2 – Does the CS make appropriate provision for the supply of housing for the plan period and is its approach to house conversions and affordable housing justified?**

*Is the CS approach to the delivery and location of housing supported by evidence to demonstrate that it is justified and consistent with national planning policy and the London Plan?*

18. The CS provides only the headline information about housing supply. Policy S2 simply sets out the number of dwellings to be provided during the plan period, based on London Plan and replacement London Plan targets. The housing trajectory is a single diagram with no locational or phasing information. This reflects the Council’s decision to avoid the inclusion of detailed data on housing supply, which it considers would unbalance the CS. It means that for a full understanding of the CS approach to housing supply, phasing and delivery it is necessary to refer to a range of supporting evidence.

19. The London wide Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 (SHLAA) is the basis for the Council’s document: London wide SHLAA: Lambeth Sites. This was prepared in 2010 and it sets out Lambeth’s proposed capacity from the four sources assessed in the SHLAA, together with phasing and locational summaries. It demonstrates how identified sites in the London SHLAA will contribute to the Lambeth target up to and beyond the end of the plan period.

20. In addition the annually updated Housing Development Pipeline (HDP) Reports demonstrate a five year supply and feed into the housing trajectory. The 2009/10 HDP shows a 5.4 year supply based on units under construction and sites with planning permission. The 2004 GLA Housing Capacity Study (HCS) was used to estimate the later years of the trajectory. More recent assessment of the sites used in this study, undertaken in the London SHLAA, has resulted in different conclusions on suitability, phasing and capacity of some of the sites. However further work in the 2010 Housing Implementation Study (HIS) and the Lambeth SHLAA has confirmed that there is a developable supply of housing land for the middle years of the plan period. The level of windfall provision used from year 6 of the trajectory is consistent with the HCS and the more recent London SHLAA.

21. The HIS outlines the Council’s approach to managing delivery and it includes a summary of delivery targets for the main growth areas. The Waterloo OAPF and the Draft Vauxhall Nine Elms OAPF provide cross boundary information on infrastructure related to the proposed growth. Some but not all of this information is carried through into the CS, with the PN policies providing information and timescales for significant housing development at Waterloo, Vauxhall, Streatham and West Norwood.

22. The CS would be clearer and have more impact if a greater level of detail about the location and supply of housing were included, particularly tabular data such as that which can be found in the recent HDP Report. However this information is available in other documents and it demonstrates satisfactorily that the CS approach to the delivery and location of housing is justified and consistent with
advice in PPS3 and with the London Plan. The fact that the Council has chosen not to include more of this detail within the CS does not make it unsound.

_Is the restriction on residential conversion to flats (Policy S2(e)) justified and does it risk compromising Lambeth’s ability to meet housing targets?_

23. The objective of the proposed restrictions on residential conversions is to ensure mixed and balanced communities. It is supported by the 2009 Residential Conversions Study Final Report (RCS) which examines the extent of residential conversions in the borough, its impact on housing supply and availability of family housing and its effect on the amenity and character of residential areas. The RCS identifies that a high proportion of housing in Lambeth (70%) is made up of flats which are either purpose built or in converted properties. It includes a street audit which shows clear correlations between the number of residential conversions in a street and negative amenity indicators. The RCS recognises that Lambeth’s existing policy has had some success in restricting unacceptable conversions, but identifies opportunities to strengthen the existing policy framework by adopting some of the policy approaches taken by other London boroughs.

24. The RCS is a thorough and detailed piece of evidence which supports the CS in setting a more restrictive approach to residential conversions in areas of stress, which are defined in the RCS, and through a raised size threshold. Concerns about the effect of this approach on housing supply are addressed by data from the Council’s HDP Reports. As a result of policy on house conversions being more strictly applied in recent years the number of house conversions has fallen to 20% of completions in the 2 year period to 2009/10 from 30% in the previous 2 year period. However in the same period the Council has exceeded its London Plan target of 1,100 units per year through conventional supply. Furthermore the 2009/10 HDP Report indicates that the 5 year supply of housing does not rely on any contribution from flat conversions.

25. In conclusion the more restrictive approach to house conversions in the CS is justified by robust evidence and information in the HDP Reports demonstrates that this approach will not undermine housing supply.

_Is the CS approach to securing affordable housing justified and effective?_

26. The 2007 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identified an acute shortage of affordable housing with an annual housing need figure that exceeds the projected supply of all new housing. It also identified high levels of overcrowding and households in temporary accommodation and on extremely low incomes. Consequently the CS seeks to deliver as much affordable housing as possible and it maintains the adopted London Plan tenure split rather than moving to a higher level of intermediate housing as proposed in the emerging replacement London Plan.

27. The Council’s 2009 Affordable Housing Policy Viability Study (AHPVS) tests a range of sample sites across the borough with varying characteristics against varying affordable housing percentages and tenure splits, with or without public subsidy. It demonstrates satisfactorily that both the thresholds for seeking the provision of affordable housing and the percentages of affordable housing sought in Policy S2 are viable.
28. Policy S2 (c) includes flexibility for the viability of individual sites to be taken into account. However concerns have been raised by local residents that the methodology used in viability testing is particularly sensitive to forecasts of property prices which, especially on large developments, have to be made several years in advance of the actual sales. It is argued that the methodology used to assess an individual proposal may not deliver an accurate assessment of its capacity to sustain affordable housing, with developments delivering less affordable housing than they can actually sustain.

29. It was suggested that the CS should incorporate a mechanism for a post implementation review of the assumptions that have been made in calculating affordable housing provision. The matter of review mechanisms, which could assist in maximising the delivery of affordable housing, was discussed in the AHPVS but such detailed mechanisms have not been included in the CS. After discussion at the examination hearing participants agreed that this is a matter that would be most appropriately addressed in the DMDPD or an in SPD.

30. In conclusion, the CS approach to securing affordable housing is justified by the evidence which satisfactorily addresses both need and viability.

**Issue 3 – Does the CS make sound provision for economic development, particularly in terms of the Key Industrial and Business Areas (KIBAs)?**

Does the CS provide a clear strategy for maintaining a stock of sites and premises outside the Key Industrial and Business Areas (KIBAs) in commercial use?

31. Policy S3 (b) sets out the objective of maintaining a stock of sites and premises in commercial use with a proviso that the site and location should be suitable. However this is followed by detailed requirements about uses and guidelines for levels of mixed use and affordable business space. The Council accepts that the second part of the policy strays into a level of detail that would be more appropriately located in a development management DPD. It has therefore suggested deleting the second sentence from S3 (b) and removing a sentence that refers to it from paragraph 4.16. These changes, A1 and A2, will ensure that part (b) of Policy S3 is clear and will allow detailed guidelines to be set out in full in the forthcoming DMDPD.

Is the CS removal of mixed use employment areas from the KIBAs justified by the evidence?

32. The KIBAs are the borough’s Significant Industrial Sites as defined in the London Plan and they form Lambeth’s reserve of employment land and business use. The 2007 BusinessPremises Study (BPS) demonstrates strong demand and shortage of premises across the borough and recommends continued safeguarding and consideration of extending protection for all the KIBAs. More up to date information on B1 floorspace, prepared for the recent Bondway Public Inquiry in July 2010, confirms that demand continues to be strong. The 2008 and 2010 KIBA Surveys show low vacancy rates whilst the Commercial Development Pipeline (CDP) Reports for 2007/8, 2008/9 and 2009/10 indicate continuing development to provide additional employment floorspace within the KIBAs. However for the same three year period the CDP Reports show an incremental erosion of land in KIBAs to residential use, as a result of the existing mixed use development areas within the KIBAs.
33. The above evidence paints a picture of strong demand and limited availability. Added to this is the prospect of non employment development continuing to reduce employment floorspace within the KIBAs. In addition to addressing these pressures, the CS has had to rationalise KIBA designations in areas where mixed use development is key to regeneration through masterplans or the OAPFs. This has resulted in the de designation of four KIBA’s (addressed in more detail below). Minor boundary changes to some KIBA’s are proposed to exclude existing residential or other uses.

34. The CS proposes exclusion from KIBAs of some areas where non employment uses already exist or are proposed, as part of planned redevelopment and regeneration. In conjunction with this, it provides stronger protection for the remaining KIBAs by removal of the mixed use employment areas. The evidence demonstrates that these changes to the KIBAs are necessary to provide clarity and to secure a range of employment uses that would not be appropriate or viable elsewhere. Furthermore in the context of high demand and continuing development of employment floorspace in recent years, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the flexibility of allowing mixed use is necessary to encourage development in the KIBAs. Thus, the removal of mixed use employment areas from the KIBAs is a justified and effective strategy which will support the CS strategic objective: Achieving economic prosperity and opportunity for all.

*Is the de designation of some KIBAs justified and supported by robust evidence?*

35. The Council’s Topic Paper 2 explains why four KIBAs are being de designated. It provides area specific information and cross references to detailed evidence which justifies the de designation of each area. However complex issues surrounding the de designation of the Bondway KIBA have been highlighted by the Bondway Public Inquiry which took place in August 2010. It is not appropriate to examine the detail of the Bondway appeal in this report, particularly as it was considered against the extant UDP policies. Nevertheless local community groups which participated in the Inquiry have raised important concerns about the implications of de designating this KIBA.

36. The Bondway KIBA is a complex area which is overlaid by a variety of designations, including cross boundary and London Plan policies and strategies. It lies within the Vauxhall/ Nine Elms/ Battersea Opportunity Area, where mixed use development is being promoted in the OAPF and in the London Plan Central Activity Zone (CAZ). De designation has been requested by the GLA to allow non employment development to take place in this part of the OA.

37. Community groups draw attention to the fact that whilst the area currently accommodates a range of employment uses, de designation would leave only office uses protected. They suggest that without KIBA protection many employment generating uses would be lost to redevelopment, and refer to recent examples where mixed use schemes are dominated by residential uses. It is argued that this would undermine the CS objective of tackling worklessness.

38. Whilst these are very valid concerns, the Bondway KIBA’s location within the OAPF means that it must be considered in a wider context, within an overall strategy which seeks to revitalise the area. The Vauxhall/ Nine Elms/ Battersea OAPF supports residential mixed use intensification in order to deliver a substantial increase in jobs and housing, in association with the provision of
new and improved public realm and social infrastructure. CS Policy PN2 explains the aspirations of the OA in Lambeth and notes the potential for jobs and homes in the area. The OAPF is complimented by protection for existing employment uses in CS Policy S2 (b), amended as suggested by the Council. This in turn will be supported by detailed criteria in the forthcoming DMDPD, but until this is adopted Policy 23 of the UDP will remain in place to support the CS policy.

39. The future of the Bondway KIBA is therefore linked to the broader GLA aspirations for the wider area. It is overlaid by the cross boundary initiative to ensure that the area is revitalised and allows new development opportunities to come forward. In these circumstances its de designation is justified to facilitate the OA goals, which will help to deliver the CS vision and strategic objectives.

Is the retention of the Southbank House and Newport Street KIBA justified?

40. This KIBA is situated in a highly accessible location and the surrounding area is characterised by residential buildings and recent mixed use developments. It is argued that confining KIBAs to employment use will mean that future development in this area cannot reflect the mixed use character of the wider locality. It will also restrict redevelopment of sites within the KIBA in conjunction with the listed Fire Station building on Albert Embankment.

41. Removal of the KIBA designation would clearly overcome this obstacle and allow future development to reflect that in the surrounding area. However there is no compelling evidence to demonstrate that retaining this KIBA makes the CS unsound.

Issue 4 – Is the CS approach to Metropolitan Open Land sound?

Are plans for new arts/ cultural facilities sufficiently advanced to justify the proposed change to the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) Boundary in Waterloo?

42. There is a long standing expectation that the Hungerford Car Park will in future be used to extend the adjacent Jubilee Gardens in order to provide much needed additional open space in Waterloo. This was recognised in the 2007 Lambeth UDP which protects both the car park and Jubilee Gardens as MOL. However there is also a need to extend the South Bank Arts Centre. It is proposed that the car park will eventually accommodate both additional open space and a national cultural facility and the CS recognises this by removing part of the car park from the MOL. The change to the MOL boundary is illustrated in the Core Strategy Changes to the Proposals Map which accompanied the submission version of the CS. The area to be removed is based on early indications that approximately one third of the car park will be needed for the cultural facility.

43. The local community has worked hard over a long period to develop and protect Jubilee Gardens and to secure the wider area as MOL. Understandably local groups are extremely concerned that the CS proposes de designation of MOL in advance of any clear plans or proposals for the cultural facility being available. Indeed it is argued that government cuts will make it extremely unlikely that funding will be obtained for some time. Added to this is the pressing need for open space, with increasing numbers of visitors to the South Bank.
44. However Hungerford Car Park is privately owned and in commercial use. The Council recognises that developing part of it as a cultural facility will facilitate the release of land to deliver an extension to Jubilee Gardens. This also reflects the vision and strategic objectives of the Waterloo OAPF, which recognises the need for continuous regeneration of the South Bank cultural complex to contribute towards London’s position as a world city. The OAPF’s support for development on the car park takes account of the need for open space and is conditional, amongst other things, on the provision of an extension to Jubilee Gardens on as much of the site as is feasibly possible.

45. Local groups draw attention to the 2009 Waterloo Area SPD which reflects the existing UDP stance of protecting the car park as MOL until plans for a cultural facility materialise. However in contrast, the CS takes a bolder and more proactive approach in order to support and encourage the regeneration objectives of the OAPF. Removing part of the car park from MOL now adds weight to the objective of securing a cultural facility on the car park site and provides clarity and certainty for the South Bank Centre in seeking funding. Furthermore it is appropriate for the MOL boundary change to be made through the LDF process as part of the strategic DPD. In this the CS approach is supported by the GLA. All of these factors lead me to conclude that the CS is sound in this respect.

**Issue 5 – Does the CS provide a sound basis for the scale and location of tall buildings, having in mind the need to protect strategic views and heritage assets?**

46. Policy S9 is the strategic policy for the built environment. It provides policies for design quality, heritage assets, tall buildings and strategic views. The approach to the historic heritage is consistent with national guidance and provides an appropriate level of detail for a strategic DPD such as this.

Is the approach to identifying appropriate locations for the location of tall buildings in Lambeth sound?

47. The 2007 CABE/English Heritage Guidance on Tall Buildings recommends a plan led approach to tall buildings based on an urban design study and characterisation approach. Policy S9 (d) identifies parts of the Waterloo and Vauxhall OA areas and Brixton town centre as appropriate locations for tall buildings. This locational guidance flows from the place specific (PN) policies for these areas which provide further detail on the local context for tall buildings, strategic views and the setting of heritage assets. The Council’s Topic Paper 3 summarises the evidence that has informed Policy S9 (d). It ranges from regional policies in the 2008 London Plan and regional SPG in the 2007 London View Management Framework (LVMF) and the 2009 LVMF Consultation Draft to area specific guidance in OAPFs, SPD and masterplans.

48. The 2009 Waterloo Area SPD uses analysis of the historic environment, together with study of its existing character and important views to determine areas appropriate for tall buildings. The 2008 draft Vauxhall Area SPD draws upon the 2006 Vauxhall Urban Design Study. Whilst this includes analysis of the existing form and character of the area, it lacks any serious consideration of the historic environment. However the more up to date analysis and guidance for locating tall buildings in both the 2007 Waterloo OAPF and the 2009 draft Vauxhall and Nine Elms OAPF is based on the CABE/English Heritage Guidance and flows from detailed analysis of the character and historic context. The
2009 Future Brixton Masterplan shows sensitivity to the historic environment, with a study area that includes the five adjoining conservation areas in the masterplan area.

49. The work that supports Policy S9 (d) is not uniform in nature or consistent in the level of detail provided. It is fragmented, being located in a number of documents prepared over several years and the Council recognises the urgent need to update the Vauxhall Area SPD. However proposals for each area are underpinned by appropriate analysis of urban form and the broad range of heritage assets to justify the approach taken. In this context the absence of a single borough wide urban design and characterisation study does not make the approach to tall buildings unsound.

50. In identifying appropriate locations for tall buildings Policy S9 (d) requires further urban design assessment. This is consistent with government guidance and provides a mechanism to ensure that assessment of individual tall building developments will be undertaken as they come forward. The policy therefore provides a sound strategic basis for locating tall buildings in Lambeth.

**Issue 6 –Does the CS provide a sound and effective strategy for meeting requirements for open space?**

51. Evidence in the 2004 Open Spaces Strategy and the 2007 update identifies a deficiency in open space in the borough. Members of the local community are concerned that continuing levels of development at high density will exacerbate this situation, particularly as Policy S5 does not propose securing any major new large areas of open space. These are understandable and appropriate concerns. However setting a target for the provision of new open space would be unrealistic in an inner London borough where land prices are high and land is subject to many competing demands. The CS therefore takes a pragmatic approach with objectives of protecting and maintaining existing open spaces, increasing the quantity and quality through named projects, initiatives and development of major sites and through improving the quality of and access to existing open space.

52. Local community groups remain sceptical that this strategy will deliver real improvements in the quality and quantity of open space. In response, the Council has prepared and placed on its website a detailed schedule of recent achievements (Open Space Note from Council – Day 4 Matter 3). This charts improvements to the quality of and access to existing parks and open spaces, examples where new areas of open space have been secured and areas where it is required through the masterplanning process. It also charts new provision secured through developers’ contributions. This data shows that the Council really is delivering consistent and continuous improvements and additions to Lambeth’s areas of open space.

53. The evidence demonstrates that the approach proposed in Policy S5 provides a realistic and achievable strategy for delivering open space. However delivery will rely on this matter being taken forward through the management of development. For this reason, to ensure that the CS is sound, paragraph 4.32 needs to confirm that addressing improvements to the quantity, quality and access to open space will be carried through to the DMDPD, as suggested by the Council in change A7.
Issue 7 – Does the CS provide a sound framework for infrastructure, delivery and monitoring?

Is it clear how major infrastructure in Annex 2 relates to growth and development in the CS?

54. The key elements of infrastructure required to support the planned growth in housing and jobs are identified in the CS overall spatial strategy. Further references to essential infrastructure are embedded within the CS policies. The elements of infrastructure that are most critical to delivery are summarised in the Infrastructure Programmes and Schedule, at Annex 2 of the CS and supported by more detailed information in the 2010 Infrastructure Programmes Evidence Base. The key areas for growth and regeneration, in the Waterloo and Vauxhall OA’s, depend upon increasing public transport capacity and improving public transport infrastructure. The Council’s Topic Papers 5 and 6 set out the approach to delivering these improvements. Thus evidence from a range of sources demonstrates the relationship between growth and infrastructure.

Does the CS provide adequate and up to date contingency planning for the delivery of critical infrastructure?

55. The CS acknowledges in paragraphs 6.15 and 6.16 that its successful delivery depends on a number of large infrastructure projects and recognises the need for updating through continuous engagement with delivery agencies. Annex 2 of the CS identifies those elements of infrastructure where contingency planning is required and provides information on how this will be addressed. During the CS examination the Council has engaged further with infrastructure providers to assess the potential impact of recent government announcements about funding reviews. Additional wording, suggested by the Council (change A6) will bring the infrastructure schedule up to date and clarify the intention to undertake annual updating. This will ensure that the CS approach to managing the implementation of critical infrastructure is sound.

Does the monitoring framework provide a sound basis for assessing delivery of the strategy?

56. The monitoring framework, set out in a table at paragraph 6.28 of the CS, includes performance indicators and some targets. A more rigorous approach to targets is needed to ensure that, where there is no target, there is instead a “direction of travel” that can be monitored. The Council has reviewed the monitoring framework to include additional targets, as proposed in change A3. This change will ensure that delivery of the CS can be monitored effectively.

Does the CS balance flexibility with clarity in setting out the mechanism for seeking developers’ contributions?

57. Policy S10 is clear in identifying the initiatives for contributions that will be sought through planning obligations. These include contributions to support the community based project banks, which will deliver improvement projects on an area basis across the borough. Paragraph 4.49 makes broad reference to a future SPD which will set out the detailed requirements for planning obligations but makes no reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Council has suggested additional wording to clarify the objectives of the SPD
and to confirm that account will be taken of the CIL Regulations. This change, **A9**, is necessary to provide clear direction for the proposed SPD.

**Legal Requirements**

58. My examination of the compliance of the Core Strategy with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. I conclude that the Core Strategy meets them all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEGAL REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>Compliance Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy is identified within the approved LDS dated March 2010 which sets out an expected adoption date of December 2010. The Core Strategy's content and timing are compliant with the LDS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and relevant regulations</strong></td>
<td>The SCI was adopted in April 2008 and consultation has been compliant with the requirements therein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Appraisal (SA)</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy has been subject to a process of SA and the latest SA report is dated August 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate Assessment (AA)</strong></td>
<td>The Habitats Regulations AA Screening Report (March 2009) sets out why AA is not necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Policy</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy complies with national policy except where indicated and changes are recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)</strong></td>
<td>Satisfactory regard has been paid to the revised SCS dated March 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2004 Act and Regulations (as amended)</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy complies with the Act and the Regulations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Conclusion and Recommendation**

59. I conclude that with the changes proposed by the Council, set out in Schedule A, the Lambeth Core Strategy DPD satisfies the requirements of s20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in PPS12. Therefore I recommend that the plan be changed accordingly. For the avoidance of doubt, I endorse the Council’s proposed minor changes, set out in Schedule B.

*Sue Turner*

Inspector

This report is accompanied by:

Schedule A (separate document) Council Changes that go to soundness

Schedule A: Appendices (1-10) (separate documents)

Schedule B (separate document) Council’s Minor Changes