

Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames Statement of Community Involvement (April 2006)

INSPECTOR'S REPORT

Introduction

- 1.1 An independent examination of the Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been carried out in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Following paragraph 3.10 of Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks, the examination has been based on the 9 tests set out (see Appendix A). The starting point for the assessment is that the SCI is sound. Accordingly changes are made in this binding report only where there is clear need in the light of tests in PPS12.
- 1.2 A total of 11 representations were received all of which have been considered. The Council proposed a number of amendments to the SCI in response to representations received, and these have been taken into account in the preparation of this report (see Appendix B).

Test 1

- 2.1 The Council has undertaken the consultation required under Regulations 25, 26 and 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 2.2 I am satisfied that this test is met.

Test 2

- 3.1 Paragraphs 10.5 and 10.6 recognise the links between the LDF, the SCI and the Community Plan. The SCI explains the role of the Community Liaison Forums, and how these existing groups will be utilised in the consultation on the DPDs. I am satisfied that the Council recognise the links between the strategies, the LDDs and the associated consultation exercises.
- 3.2 This test is met.

Test 3

- 4.1 The Council has set out in Paragraphs 6.4, 6.5 and Annex 3 of the SCI those groups which will be consulted. This list includes the statutory bodies from PPS12 Annex E. It is stated in Annex 3 at Page 33 of the SCI that the Council will hold a database of

consultees details, and that this will be updated as necessary. Furthermore, it is clear from Paragraph 6.4 that the Council will consult with additional local stakeholders where appropriate.

- 4.2 The re-organisation of certain consultation bodies, such as the Strategic Rail Authority, should be acknowledged in the SCI and I recommend an additional sentence be added to this effect.
- 4.3 This test is met subject to the following recommendation:

(R1) Recommendation

In Annex 3, add a further sentence to the first paragraph as follows:

"Please note, this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur."

Test 4

- 5.1 Paragraph 6.2 (Point 1) and Paragraphs 6.3 – 6.6 show that the Council will involve and inform people from the early stages of DPD preparation and Annex 3 sets out the range of methods the Council will employ to do this. The Council clarify in Paragraphs 6.3 – 6.11 the stages at which consultation will take place and who will be consulted at those stages. This shows that consultation will take place with the key stakeholders during the issues and options stage of DPD production which is in accordance with Regulation 25. I am satisfied that providing these stages are followed the consultation proposed will be undertaken in a timely and accessible manner.
- 5.2 This test is met.

Test 5

- 6.1 Annex 2 sets out the methods that the Council propose to use to involve the community and stakeholders. These cover a range of recognised consultation techniques that will present information via a range of different media.
- 6.2 The SCI acknowledges that the Council may have to provide extra support to facilitate consultation with certain groups or individuals, and proposes (in Paragraphs 4.1) how they will approach this. Paragraphs 5.3 – 5.8 explain how the Council will make their information accessible to all members of society.

- 6.3 Specific reference should be made in the SCI to the Race Relations Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and this may be addressed by the recommendation provided below.
- 6.4 I am satisfied that the methods of consultation proposed in the SCI are suitable for the intended audiences and for the different stages in LDD preparation.
- 6.5 This test is met subject to the following recommendation:

(R2) Recommendation

Insert an additional numbered paragraph following Paragraph 5.8:

“The Council will make every effort to meet the requirements of the Race Relations Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and other anti-discriminatory legislation.”

Test 6

- 7.1 Section 10 of the SCI explains how the Council will seek to ensure that sufficient resources are put in place to achieve the scale of consultation envisaged. I am satisfied that the Council is alert to the resource implications of the SCI.
- 7.2 This test is met.

Test 7

- 8.1 Section 8 of the SCI explains how the results of community involvement will be taken into account by the Council and used to inform decisions. The Council also propose to prepare reports at the end of the consultation period explaining how views have been considered and documents changed in light of the community involvement. The SCI states at the end of Paragraph 8.2 where these will be made publicly available.
- 8.2 This test is met.

Test 8

- 9.1 Section 11 of the SCI provides information on monitoring and review and confirms the Council’s intent to continually review the SCI. This will be reported on through the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 9.2 This test is met.

Test 9

- 10.1 The SCI at Section 9 clearly describes the Council's policy for consultation on planning applications. Paragraph 9.8 meets the minimum requirements. Section 9 also provides additional methods of consultation. This distinguishes between procedures appropriate to different types and scale of application, and includes information on how the consultation results will inform decisions.
- 10.2 This test is met.

Conclusions

- 11.1 The Council have set out in Appendix C and Appendix E of their Representations Statement a number of proposed changes to the SCI in response to representations received on the submission document. These suggested amendments do not affect the substance of the SCI but they do improve the clarity and transparency of the submission SCI. I therefore agree that they be included and they are provided as Appendix B of this Report.
- 11.2 Whilst I have attempted to identify as many consequential amendments as possible that may follow from my recommendations, it seems inevitable that issues of consistency may arise. In the event of any doubt, please note that I am content for such matters, plus any minor spelling, grammatical or factual matters to be amended by the Council, so long as this does not affect the substance of the SCI.
- 11.3 Subject to the recommendations set out in this Report, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames SCI (April 2006) is sound.

(R3) Recommendation

The Council should implement their proposed changes to the SCI as listed in Appendix B of this Report.

(R4) Recommendation

The Council should remove all references to previous stages of this document.

David Robins

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Inspector