



ISLINGTON

Sustainability Assessments

ISLINGTON COUNCIL
Planning Service

Approved February 2002
(Updated Aug 2002)

ISLINGTON'S UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

supplementaryplanning**guidance**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document, which is a non-statutory supplement to Islington's Unitary Development Plan 2002 (UDP), provides guidance on sustainability assessments. In particular it focuses on the instances when the Council will request the submission of a sustainability assessment and the information that should be included.
- 1.2 The guidance was the subject of a public consultation during August and September 2001 and the responses were fed into this final document. As Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The document was approved in February 2002, and republished in August 2002 following the adoption of Islington's revised UDP in June.

2. Purpose of Sustainability Assessments

- 2.1 Sustainability Assessments will be requested for development proposals, which do not trigger an EIA, but which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment, to demonstrate that they contribute to the goals of sustainable development. These goals are to:
- (i) Protect the environment effectively
 - (ii) Use resources efficiently
 - (iii) Minimise waste and pollution
 - (iv) Promote the reuse and recycling of resources
 - (v) Contribute to equity and social inclusion
 - (vi) Contribute to the quality of life for people who live in, work in, or visit Islington.

3. Background

- 3.1 Sustainable development is one of the main goals of the planning system and is therefore a main focus of the UDP. This focus has evolved from global, national and local concern about the limited ability of our environment to sustain all our activities both now and in the future.
- 3.2 Local concerns are reflected in the UDP issues paper 'Planning for the 21st Century', based on consultation carried out in 1997, in which 87% of the respondents indicated

that the Council should be operating firm planning policies to protect the environment. The respondents also placed a high value on environmental and sustainability issues, especially the need to reduce pollution.

- 3.3 The law requires that Councils seek formal environmental impact statements for development proposals which fall within schedules 1 and 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. However, examination of these schedules demonstrates that due to the built up, inner city location of Islington, very few applications here will be of a sufficient scale to require a formal EIA.
- 3.4 However, within the context of the general concern about the quality of the local environment, there is expected to be a number of development proposals that will not trigger an EIA, but may nevertheless have significant impacts on the local environment that will need to be addressed when a planning application is made.
- 3.5 In these cases, the Council may request that the applicant provides adequate information on the sustainability aspects of the proposals. This could usefully take the form of a 'sustainability assessment'.

4. UDP Policy Context

- 4.1 Part One of Islington's UDP sets out the strategic context for planning policies and includes a 10 point vision for the Borough that puts the goals of sustainable development at the heart of the Plan. Strategic Policy ST3 endorses the themes of sustainability set down by the Local Government Management Board and recognises the importance of sustainability goals in all of the Council's planning decisions. Strategic Policy ST4 encourages sustainable forms of development that respects and enhances the environment.
- 4.2 Policy Env 2 lays the foundation for sustainability assessments stating that all applications for development will be examined with a view to securing the objectives of sustainable development:

Env 2 The Council will examine all applications for development with a view to securing the objectives of sustainable development and will produce supplementary guidance to assist developers and others to assess all relevant design elements necessary to achieve sustainability.

- 4.2 Policy Env 3 expands on the previous policy, to re-enforce the relevant government guidance and regulations which require the production of environmental impact statements for major transport and development projects:

Env 3 The Council will require environmental impact statements for major transport and development projects in accordance with relevant government guidance and regulations.

- 4.3 UDP supporting text 3.1.6 introduces Sustainability Assessment of proposals which do not require an EIA, but may have a significant impact on the local environment:

“The Council will also encourage all applicants to consider sustainability issues at an early stage and where appropriate to prepare their own sustainability assessments.”

- 4.4 The Council cannot require the production of a sustainability assessment, but their preparation should assist developers in preparing schemes and will assist the Council in determining planning applications.
- 4.5 A development application may be considered deficient if a sustainability assessment is not submitted where appropriate.

5. Selection Criteria to Identify Development Requiring a Sustainability Assessment

- 5.1 A sustainability assessment will be requested when the proposed development does not require an EIA, but may have a significant adverse impact on the existing environment, by virtue of **two or more of the following criteria:**

(i) SIZE:

Proposed activities which provide 10 or more dwellings, or 1000m² floorspace or larger, or 1 hectare or more.

(ii) LOCATION:

Proposed activities which are:

- a) located in or close to an area of special environmental sensitivity or importance with one of the following UDP designations - Metropolitan Open Land, Site of Nature Conservation Importance, Conservation Area, Archaeological Priority Area, Area of Special Character or Central London Area; and/or
- b) in or close to locations where the characteristics of proposed developments would be likely to have significant effects on the population, including development that is in or adjacent to a school, community use, open space, or a listed building.

(iii) EFFECTS:

Proposed activities with potentially complex and potentially adverse effects, including those giving rise to serious effects on humans or on valued species or organisms, those which threaten the existing or potential use of an effected area (including social and economic considerations) and those causing harm to the natural environment. Adverse effects include the impact of the development proposal on the environmental, social and economic factors listed in the Sustainability Assessment Form in Appendix A.

6. Information for Inclusion in a Sustainability Assessment

- 6.1 A sustainability assessment must document how the development proposal will meet the goals of sustainable development, which are set out in paragraph 2.1 above. The information required for the assessment should include a description of the proposal, a site analysis, detail of the significant effects and any appropriate solutions or mitigation measures to offset adverse impacts. Appendix A contains a Sustainability Assessment Form that sets out the format for the document. The information supplied should demonstrate that the relevant issues have been considered.
- 6.2 It is expected that the scope, detail and content of a sustainability assessment will vary from case to case depending upon the size of the proposed development and the extent of the expected impacts. For a small development with limited impacts the assessment may only be a few pages in length.

7. Benefits of a Sustainability Assessment

7.1 Sustainability Assessments can:

- (i) Ensure that the planning process is not slowed down by the discovery of adverse environmental effects at a late stage in the planning process.
- (ii) Identify any environmental opportunities associated with the site and enable these to be incorporated into the design of a development.
- (iii) Encourage more sustainable building techniques and more efficient use of land, which can facilitate economic benefits to developers.
- (iv) Reduce environmental impact of a development on the surrounding environment.
- (v) Assist in creating a more transparent decision making process.
- (vi) Identify any social benefits that can be achieved by a development.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Islington UDP

Local Agenda 21 Strategy

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999.

UNECE: Human Settlement Division: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Best practice literature covering Environmental Impact Assessments required by legislation is currently available from:

Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA)
St Nicholas House, 70 Newport, Lincoln, LN1 3DP

Tel: 01522 540069

Fax: 01522 540090

Email: www.iema.net

TP/02/400, John O'Neil, February 2002



ISLINGTON SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary.

(i) Description of Proposal

Information on the design, size or scale and materials used in construction of the development.

Empty space for the description of the proposal.

(ii) Site Analysis

Information about the site and its surroundings, including consideration of the opportunities and constraints, detailing how the design has had regard to these factors.

Empty space for the site analysis.

(iii) Key Sustainability Criteria

Assessment of the impact of the development on the listed criteria, describing the effects and any relevant mitigation measures on the environmental, social and economic goals of sustainable development. Only enter comments on the significant effects.

Impact: enter one of the following:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> negative	<input type="checkbox"/> – no significant impact	<input type="checkbox"/> ? uncertain
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Comments: enter details on type of impact, the direct and indirect effects and, where relevant, a description of measures to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse impacts on the criterion.

Environmental Criteria

Criterion	Impact	Comments
Nature Conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protection ▪ Enhancement ▪ Access 		
Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flora ▪ Fauna ▪ Habitats ▪ Populations ▪ Green Corridor 		
Landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping ▪ Trees 		
Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open space ▪ Brownfield ▪ Mixed Use 		
Archaeology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect remains 		

APPENDIX A

Criterion	Impact	Comments
Historic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation Area ▪ Listed Building 		
Pollution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Air ▪ Water ▪ Soil ▪ Light ▪ Noise 		
Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consumption ▪ Efficiency ▪ Renewable Energies 		
Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generation ▪ Minimisation ▪ Reuse ▪ Recycling 		
Built Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Existing Buildings ▪ Density ▪ Design ▪ Materials 		
Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traffic Generation ▪ Modes ▪ Car Parking ▪ Green Travel Plan 		

Social Criteria

Criterion	Impact	Comments
Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Safety ▪ Access for All ▪ Crime Prevention ▪ Amenity Space 		
Affordable Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Integration ▪ Proportion 		
Community Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health ▪ Education ▪ Childcare ▪ Leisure 		
Locality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local needs met locally ▪ Access to services / facilities 		

Economic Criteria

Criterion	Impact	Comments
Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local job opportunities ▪ Inclusive 		
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local training opportunities ▪ Initiatives 		
Enterprise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small businesses ▪ Local economic life 		