



Summary Report on
Public Consultation on the draft
Hackbridge Masterplan

London Borough of Sutton

May 2009

Contents

1. **Introduction**
2. **Consultation Process**
3. **Consultation Response**
4. **Public Exhibition**
5. **Community Workshop**
6. **Questionnaire Response**
7. **Summary of Key Comments**
 - Statutory Consultees
 - Landowners
 - District Centre & local facilities
 - Building Heights
 - Land North of BedZED
 - Infrastructure
 - Housing
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Environment
 - Biodiversity
 - Green Spaces
 - Heritage
8. **Next Stages**

1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the consultation process and the key points/ comments received during the public consultation on the draft Hackbridge Masterplan.

Officers comments and considerations are also included. The consultation responses will assist the Council in developing its approach towards future plans for Hackbridge as a sustainable suburb.

The draft Hackbridge Masterplan builds on feedback received from public consultation over the last 3 years on how Hackbridge can become a sustainable neighbourhood, including consultation on the 'Draft Hackbridge Supplementary Planning Document- Towards a Sustainable Suburb: Issues and Options' in October 2006, a 'One Planet Living' Review in April 2007, Developers' Panel in June 2007, Hackbridge Week in February 2008 and Stakeholder Workshops in September 2008. .

The preparation of the draft Masterplan following the above consultations has assisted in informing policies put forward for Hackbridge in the Core Planning Strategy and Site Development Policies.

The consultation feedback on the draft Masterplan, together with further detailed studies and considerations will eventually feed into the preparation of a Hackbridge Supplementary Planning Document, providing detailed planning guidance on the future development and delivery of the Hackbridge 'Sustainable Suburb'.

2. Consultation Process

Public consultation on the draft Hackbridge Masterplan commenced 11 February and was completed on 25 March 2009. The consultation arrangements included:

- Distributing a leaflet summarising the content of the draft Hackbridge Masterplan document to all residents and businesses within Hackbridge, and sending copies to individuals on request.
- Consultation letters/ emails to consultees on the Hackbridge database, those who participated in prior consultations, Hackbridge Week, the September Stakeholder Workshops, landowners, businesses, relevant statutory bodies and any other person or groups who asked to be consulted;
- Forwarding copies of the draft Masterplan document to key stakeholders and consultees.
- Referring the Draft Masterplan to the St Helier, The Wrythe and Wandle Valley Local Committee for its view.

- Making the draft Masterplan document available for inspection at nearby local libraries and the Council's offices at Sutton Civic and at Denmark Road, Carshalton;
- Advertising the document through posters on local area and Council notice boards, articles in Sutton Scene, the Sutton Guardian, the Local Development Framework newsletter and other organisational publications/ newsletters.
- Placing details of the draft Masterplan on the Council website in interactive format and providing for representations and questionnaire responses to be returned electronically;
- Holding a public exhibition at the All Saints Community Centre between 18 February and 25 March 2009, with Council officers on hand at set times to provide advice on the document.
- Organising a community workshop at the All Saints Community Centre on 18 March 2009.

3. Consultation Response

A wide range of stakeholders provided responses to the consultation. Some are individual views, whilst some represent much larger organisations such as residents and local environmental groups. Responses were also received from government bodies and utilities companies.

Methods of response varied. Some filled in all or part of a questionnaire, others wrote letters or e-mails. Others discussed matters directly with Council officers over the phone, at the public exhibition and/ or the community workshop.

In total, 211 stakeholders provided written response to the consultation, 176 responded via the full questionnaire and 35 responded via letter or email.

Respondents comprised government bodies (including the Greater London Authority, Transport for London, Natural England and English Heritage) and infrastructure providers (including Thames Water Utilities, Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and Met Police); major landowners, local interest groups (including the Mitcham Commons Conservators, The Wandle Trust, the Wandle Forum, Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust, Spencer Road Wetlands LNR and Beddington Farm Bird Group); and local residents and businesses.

A further 51 respondents registered comments from general discussions with Council officers at the public exhibition and some further comments registered over the phone to Council officers.

A total of 54 participants registered at the Community Workshop held at All Saints Community Centre on the 18 March 2009, with a mix of local residents, businesses, schools, community groups, and Council representatives relaying their views on the draft plans. Many of the participants in the workshop also responded in writing via the questionnaire or letter/ email.

Letters from the GLA, TfL, Natural England, English Heritage and Thames Water are included in the appendices to this report. Letters from representatives of landowner interests at the Felnex trading Estate and the Wandle Valley Trading Estate are also included in the appendices.

A copy of the Summary Report on the discussions at the community workshop on the draft Masterplan is also included in the appendices together with a schedule of representation points divided into relevant themes from letters and emails, the questionnaire and the exhibition.

4. Public Exhibition

A public exhibition was held for 5 weeks of the consultation period between 18 February and 25 March 2009, at the All Saints Community Centre. The exhibition comprised a number of display boards providing more detail on draft proposals in the draft Hackbridge Masterplan. The display was available for viewing at designated times each day through the exhibition period, with Council officers also on hand at set times to provide advice.

The exhibition was largely attended by local residents and businesses. Comments and concerns raised followed similar themes to that of the wider consultation, with loss of green space, tall buildings and London Road common themes extensively discussed.

Comments registered during the exhibition are set out in more detail in the report and a schedule of responses registered at the public exhibition is also attached.

5. Community Workshop

The Community Workshop was held on the evening of the 18 March 2009 at the All Saints Community Centre.

The workshop provided an opportunity for the Council to discuss local issues in detail with the local community and to exchange local knowledge and ideas on key elements of the draft Masterplan.

The main topics discussed at the workshop event included review of the draft Masterplan on key themes such as the overall approach/ the sites/ the new district centre, new homes/ jobs, transport and getting around, and open space and parks.

The workshop was well attended with 54 participants registering at the event, with a mix of local residents, businesses, schools, community groups, and Council representatives.

The workshop split into small groups of 10-12 people to discuss proposals. Each group was asked to focus initially on one key topic before progressing to general discussion on the remaining topics.

The following notes provide a summary of comments and detailed responses from the groups at the event.

Summary of key comments at community workshop:

- Storey heights should be restricted particularly around the station and Felnax sites.
- Care needed when mixing uses particularly residential and employment uses.
- Density of development should not be too high.
- A preference for larger family homes rather than flats and one and two bedroom units.
- The new district centre should have a full range of shops and facilities, including supermarket, independent shops and cafes.
- New community, health, leisure and recreation facilities welcomed.
- Land north of BedZED questioned whether this would be better left as open/ green space.
- New jobs could be created in green industries improving the skills base for retrofitting existing houses and buildings, and applying these skills to new development.
- Road safety along the full length London Road is a major issue and in need of urgent response
- London Road and the railway are significant barriers to movement, improved linkages and crossings encouraged.
- Existing pedestrian/ cycle environment is poor and in need of enhancement.
- Improvement of the station and rail services should be a priority, lengthen trains/ platforms, increase frequency of trains.
- Support for integration of 127 and 151 bus routes and a new public transport interchange close to the station.
- More open space and parkland encouraged, particularly within development sites.
- Appropriate measures should be applied to protect and enhance local biodiversity.
- Maintenance seen as a major issue along the Wandle with many parts derelict and in disrepair. Enhancements along the full length of the Wandle River corridor encouraged.
- Educational notification boards/ signposting suggested along the Wandle Trail detailing wildlife/ tree species/ habitat facts.
- Leisure and recreation opportunities in Beddington Farmlands should be developed as soon as possible, particularly along the ped/ cycle path.
- A clear definition needed for 'sustainability'.

A copy of the full report on the Community Workshop is included.

6. Questionnaire Response

The consultation process provided for representations via a questionnaire in the back of the summary leaflet. Respondents were able to forward the completed questionnaire postage paid or online. A total of 176 questionnaire responses were received, 140 returned via post and 36 online.

The questions offered an opportunity to support or oppose the draft vision, proposals for sites and key elements of the draft Masterplan through the yes/ no boxes provided. Responses to the questionnaire questions were overwhelmingly supportive. The questionnaire response confirming majority support for the general principles of the draft Masterplan. The following covers the responses received to main queries/ statements:

1.	I support the vision to make Hackbridge the UK's greenest suburb using the principles of One Planet Living.	Yes	No	x*
		90%	7%	3%

*'x' denotes percentage that did not respond to question

Just over 90% of questionnaire respondents confirmed that they were supportive of the proposed 'vision to make Hackbridge the UK's greenest suburb, using the principles of One Planet living'. This presents a significant vote of support for draft plans for Hackbridge.

2.	Do you support the proposals on these major sites?	Yes	No	x*
	• Felnax trading Estate/ Kelvin House	91%	7%	2%
	• Wandle Valley Trading Estate	90%	9%	1%
	• Land North of BedZED	81%	17%	2%
	• Hackbridge Station	91%	7%	2%

Respondents appeared equally supportive of proposals for Felnax Trading Estate/ Kelvin House, Wandle Valley Trading Estate and Hackbridge Station with approx. 90% confirming 'Yes' to proposals shown in the draft Masterplan for these sites.

81% of questionnaire respondents were supportive of proposals shown for Land North of BedZED. This figure highlighting a significant level of support with a large majority voting in favour of proposals put forward for this site.

3.	Do you support the following key elements of the draft Hackbridge Masterplan ?	Yes	No	x*
	• Improved links to and along Beddington Farmlands and the River Wandle	96%	3%	1%
	• Prioritising pedestrian/ cycle movement	90%	9%	1%

- throughout Hackbridge
- New mixed use district centre, civic square, station forecourt and bus interchange close to the station **92%** **7%** 1%
 - New major green spaces including land east of Mill green, north of BedZED, within Felnex and west of Wandle Valley Trading Estate **92%** **5%** 3%

A groundswell of support was received for each of the above elements, with between 90% and 96% voting in favour of the listed key elements of the draft Masterplan. A great majority of respondents showing support for key elements such as: improving ped/ cycle access/ links, a new mixed use district centre, new and/ or improved civic and green spaces.

Of those that responded via the questionnaire, 81% were residents and 4% confirmed as working in Hackbridge.

Space was made available under each question and elsewhere to make any comments or observations relevant to the questions, and/ or supply any additional comments. The majority of respondents provided additional and more specific comments which are covered along with comments received in writing, email, public exhibition and the community workshop later in this report.

7. Summary of Key Comments

The following provides a summary of the key points, issues, comments and suggestions raised during the public consultation process.

Key/ common themes raised by respondents included: infrastructure including services, roads, public transport, sustainable transport, etc (114 representation points), green/ open space including Wandle River corridor, Beddington Farmlands, Spencer Road Wetlands, etc (75 representation points), land north of BedZED (40), pedestrian cycle access (55), environment sustainability/ One Planet Living (34), the new district centre (34), building heights (32), employment (24), biodiversity (20), housing/ density (19) and local image (13).

There were key areas of comment and/ or concern highlighted throughout the consultation process:

- Many questioned the impacts a development of this size would have on roads, public transport and services. A significant amount of residents were concerned with road congestion, overcrowding on trains, infrequent and unreliable rail and bus services.
- Many agreed the need to enhance pedestrian/ cycle access and connectivity in the area, and the need to create and enhance networks and destinations.

- Many of the responses related to green/ open spaces and local biodiversity. A number of respondents welcomed improvements to the River Wandle Corridor and Wandle Gateway and opportunities to enhance the Mill Green, land East of London Road and Beddington Farmlands and other local open spaces.
- Although 80% of respondents of the questionnaire were supportive of plans put forward for Land North of BedZED, a number of representations were received from local environmental groups, residents and the GLA concerned with the proposed de-designation of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) to develop housing, a school and open space on this site.
- The majority of respondents were generally supportive of expanding the local centre to a district centre, enhancing the image of the area and improving the offer of shops, and local services and facilities.
- Building heights were the cause of concern for many, so too the potential intensity of development. Many respondents were concerned in particular with the scale and height approved on the Kelvin House site and the higher density development and building heights shown on perspective diagrams. Many of the respondents preferred scale in development more in keeping with the 2-3 storey building heights currently existing, with more houses and less apartments preferred.
- Common questions asked through the consultation process was “when will all of this happen” and “will it actually happen”. Many of the residents are clearly keen to finally see some activity in their area and are notably frustrated that the area has been historically earmarked for regeneration for years though nothing has physically happened yet. Some respondents preferred no development and minimal change to Hackbridge.

GLA Response

The Greater London Authority (GLA) submitted a series of comments on the draft Hackbridge Masterplan. The GLA’s concerns largely based around the de-designation of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) proposed for land north of BedZED, considered by the GLA to be contrary to the London Plan. The GLA indicated the aspirations of Hackbridge were not considered ‘exceptional circumstances’ to justify the ‘loss of MOL’.

The GLA advised that detailed appraisals would need to be undertaken to identify the ecological value of land north of BedZED to fully appreciate whether the de-designation of the site would impact significantly on the biodiversity of the wider SMI.

The GLA also considered the upgrade from local centre to district centre would need to be supported by evidence from detailed retail needs and capacity studies to identify potential for growth, noting that the growth proposed for the centre should not rely on development on MOL.

The GLA were supportive of environmental sustainability proposals subject to further detailed review and provided suggestions on how to develop this further in the next stage document.

The GLA highlighted the opportunity for the 'Low Carbon Zone' proposed for Hackbridge to link into the Mayoral initiative to develop a number of Low Carbon Zones across London.

TfL and GLA noted that 1,100 new homes could have substantial impact on the area and developers would need to provide significant mitigation transport measures and funding via developer contributions/ Section 106 funding for public transport, roads, walking and cycling.

More GLA and TfL comments are included through this report, and a copy of the full letter of response is attached.

GOL

No response was received from the Government Office of London.

Environment Agency

No response was received from the Environment Agency.

Thames Water Utilities Plc

Thames Water highlighted that significant upgrades to the sewerage network may be required given the levels of development proposed and requested that developers demonstrate that adequate capacity exists both on and off each site to serve the development and not lead to problems for existing and future users.

Natural England

Natural England welcomed new and improved green spaces, linking these spaces and creating green corridors and wildlife corridors. The representation on the draft Masterplan recommended all habitats and planting should make use of native species, to provide potential ecological enhancements for the area. Natural England also invited proposals to improve the existing path parallel to the railway, and formalising permission for cyclists to ride along the path.

English Heritage

Requested recognition of the Grade 11 listed status of five places on any further reporting in Hackbridge (the Old Red Lion Pub. Riverside (former Mill House just off Middleton Road, the terrace of 9-15 Hackbridge Green, the villas of 40, 44 and 48 Mill Green Road and the 19th Century Mill Buildings at 258 London Road.

English Heritage highlighted the opportunity for future plans to embrace the historic significance of the Wandle and enhance former Mills sites. The representation requested the implementation of an agreed management/maintenance plan for the corridor to ensure its viability after implementation.

Landowners- Key Strategic Sites

Responses were received representing the interests of landowners of key strategic sites Felnex Trading Estate and Wandle Valley Trading Estate.

Felnex Trading Estate

Savills' representation requested that the Council should look to take a more flexible approach to key elements such as affordable housing, sustainability/renewable energy and developer contributions where site specific and viability conditions require it.

The response requested flexibility to Zero Carbon requirements with a request to amend the wording of paragraph 7.7 to state "all buildings and structures should be zero carbon, powered and heated by renewable energy *if the technology needed to achieve this cost effectively is available*". One Planet Living principles relating to zero waste, local and sustainable materials and sustainable materials were considered to have implications on the development costs.

Savills also requested flexibility in terms of housing mix, indicating that this will need to be assessed against the demand for housing within the local area and site viability requirements.

The representation also requested the Gillespies' 'Tall Buildings Strategy' be more reflected in the Masterplan and that existing employment use heights also be used as context.

Savills provided detailed thoughts in terms of public realm requesting further review of access arrangements and building setbacks.

Savills' representation also highlights the need for a supermarket/ foodstore in the area and recommends this be positioned to the north east of the Felnex site.

Wandle Valley Trading Estate

The representation from CMA Planning noted that plans for the Wandle Valley Trading Estate would need to be further qualified and could be interpreted and eventually delivered in an alternative manor to that shown on the draft plans after the site is fully assessed. The response notes that the draft plans show just 'one way' in which the Council's emerging policies may be interpreted. And that the Core Planning Strategy and Site Development Policies do not provide guidance as to the relative balance of residential and open space uses to be provided as part of redevelopment proposals.

CMA requested that the Council apply flexibility to new development in terms of the One Planet Living principles, ensuring that this takes into account individual circumstances, financial deliverability and the overall objective of encouraging new development.

These are included in the appendices to this document with key comments where relevant in the remaining sections of this report.

Local Issues

District Centre & local facilities

The majority of respondents were generally supportive of expanding the local centre to a district centre, creating a civic 'heart', enhancing the image of the centre and improving the offer of shops, and local services and facilities.

The draft Masterplan proposals were seen by many as an opportunity to improve the image and identity of this part of Hackbridge, particularly the Felnax Estate, the station and land north of the station.

Respondents welcomed the principles of the civic square in the district centre, with small shops, cafés and seating area to raise civic pride and provide a central focus, a place where people feel safe that 'doesn't close down in the evening'.

Both a food store/ supermarket and 'fruit and vegetable' store were highlighted as key priorities, with residents currently having to drive to Wallington, Carshalton and Sutton to satisfy weekly shopping needs. A number of respondents indicated a preference for smaller independent retailers rather than major retail brands.

New community, health, leisure and recreation facilities were welcomed to the centre and wider Hackbridge area. Local community facilities such as a leisure centre, gym, library and youth centre were encouraged.

The local schools highlighted the opportunity to co-locate the community hub next to Hackbridge Primary School strengthening connection between community facilities and the school and suggested provide new youth facilities and a new local leisure centre be included.

Some existing community facilities were highlighted as needing financial support, where it was highlighted a development such as this could assist with reinvestment into these facilities.

A new doctor's surgery was mostly supported, with this preferred close to the station. Respondents also suggested that this could include complementary health facilities/ a "Wellness Centre".

A number of respondents highlighted the need to protect existing businesses in the local centre.

The GLA considered the upgrade from local centre to district centre would need to be supported by evidence from detailed retail needs and capacity studies to identify potential for growth. The GLA requested that the growth proposed for the centre should not rely on development on MOL.

The GLA also questioned locating the secondary centre along London Road in that it assumes the development of land north of BedZED. The GLA suggested that a secondary centre might be more appropriately located near the Wandle Valley Trading Estate.

URBED highlighted the benefits of creating property based community development trusts to exercise a degree of local community control and ownership over the management and maintenance of key community and leisure based services and facilities.

URBED also questioned why land directly east of the station was not being utilised for development given its proximity to the station and expanded local centre.

Officer Comment

The Council will look to work closely with local businesses and community groups to ensure the needs of the local community are met.

The Healthy Hackbridge consultation carried out recently highlights that most local residents drive or catch public transport to other centres for their shopping needs. The Council acknowledges the need for improved retail offer to the Hackbridge centre and will review further the needs and opportunities when developing the draft Hackbridge SPD.

Community, health, leisure and recreation facilities will also be reviewed with the view to developing appropriate guidelines under the draft SPD.

The secondary centre shown on plans refers to the concentration of community and civic uses around this section of the neighbourhood which include All Saints Community Centre, All Saints Church, BedZED Pavilion and some local shops. It is considered that the inclusion of a new primary school to the south west corner of the land north of BedZED would further reinforce and complement this community/ civic grouping.

The work on the SPD will include a review of community and leisure management and maintenance opportunities for the sustainable suburb including the requirement for a community management/ stewardship plan and scope for funding through Section 106.

Building Heights

A number of respondents were concerned with the storey heights and the potential for tall buildings in Hackbridge.

The previously approved development at Kelvin House appears to have caused much concern amongst the local community in terms of its 'imposing' 7 storey height, its scale in the context of the 2-3 storey surrounding built form and the potential for overlooking into the adjacent school. Many respondents appeared to be unaware that this development proposal was approved quite some time ago.

Many respondents preferred future development to be at a similar scale to existing 2-3 storey housing/ built form. Respondents requested also that future developments respect the neighbouring Hackbridge Primary School in terms of size, scale and outlook.

The Savills' response supported the findings of the Gillespies' report on Tall Buildings, which highlights the opportunity to locate mid rise buildings along London Road and Hackbridge Road and a 'landmark' building adjacent to the station.

The potential for a 'landmark' building identified on draft plans at Hackbridge Station was questioned by a number of respondents, together with the appropriateness within this setting and on the landscape, particularly given that it would be adjacent to the proposed regional park.

There was a feeling that tall buildings would overshadow and overlook adjacent properties and local streets. A number of respondents requested that 'sensible' height controls be applied to future development.

Many questioned the way buildings were represented, in the form of blue coloured blocks on the perspective plans provided in the masterplan. A number of respondents were concerned with the intensity and scale of development represented on the perspective plans.

Savills noted that the scale of existing industrial should be taken into account when determining appropriate form in certain locations. Savills' response preferred heights not be restricted but rather to respond to the existing and surrounding built form context and the findings of the Gillespies Tall Buildings report.

Officer Comment

Planning permission for the development of the Kelvin House site (Ref. No. C2006/56201) was issued 2006, involving a 7 storey mixed use development. A further application was received by Council in April 2008 (Ref. No.

C2008/59625), which is yet to be determined by the Council in lieu of a revised scheme responding to design issues raised.

Gillespies' 'Tall Buildings Study' highlights the opportunity for mid rise buildings around London Road, the new district centre and Hackbridge Road, and a landmark building adjacent to the station.

The appropriateness of higher densities and taller buildings closet to the station and new district centre will be further reviewed as part of the preparation of the draft SPD. The Council will take into account all comments/ concerns raised when considering future development options. The local community will be given opportunity to comment further on the draft SPD when prepared.

Infrastructure

A number of local residents questioned the impact the significant increase in population proposed would have on existing infrastructure, access, roads, transport, services and capacity.

Many of the respondents were concerned as to how a comprehensive regeneration project of this scale would be funded.

TfL and GLA noted that 1,100 new homes could have substantial impact on the area and developers would need to provide significant transport mitigation measures and funding via section 106 funding for public transport, roads, walking and cycling.

Thames Water Utilities Plcs' response was supportive of the aim for new developments to meet best practice for sustainable water use. Thames Water indicated that it is essential that any water and sewerage infrastructure required to support development is in place ahead of the occupation of the development.

Thames Water highlighted that upgrading the sewerage network may be required given the significant levels of development proposed and stressed that developers must demonstrate that adequate capacity exists both on and off each site to serve the development and not lead to problems for existing and future users.

Some respondents were concerned as to what was being done to protect new and existing developments from flood risk. Existing drainage problems were highlighted on and near to London Road, the station and where the new district centre is proposed. Flooding problems were also highlighted along the section of river immediately downstream from Hackbridge Road bridge.

Several respondents including the Wandle Trust and Natural England encouraged the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) into the design of development to include permeable outdoor surfaces (roads,

paths, car parks) and green roofs to attenuate water flow from the site to the River Wandle, and settlement ponds and reed beds to absorb pollutants before runoff back into the river system.

Some respondents were concerned with the proximity of the existing electricity pylons to housing and the new primary school proposed on land north of BedZED.

Officer Comment

Preferred Policy DM10 in the Site Development Policies-Preferred Options relates to the provision for extra capacity, and the need for proposals to suitably satisfy this policy and provide any necessary upgrading as part of the Hackbridge Sustainable Suburb. These requirements will be carried over to the draft SPD for Hackbridge, together with more specific requirements relating to developers' contributions towards infrastructure, access, roads, transport, services and capacity.

The Council will also undertake further review of flood risk to sites and measures to adapt to future impacts of climate change. New developments will be required to demonstrate compliance with exception testing and identify options to suitably mitigate against any potential flooding.

Infrastructure will be funded and delivered through developers' contributions, Section 106, Section 278 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions. Further funding may also be sourced through Central Government/ EU Grants.

The draft SPD will require detailed Transport Assessments as part of future major applications in Hackbridge, to ensure impacts of proposed developments are considered reasonable.

Concerns relating to health with proximity of the existing electricity pylons to housing and new primary school proposed on land north of BedZED are noted and will be reviewed as part of the development of the draft SPD.

Land North of BedZED

A number of representations from local environmental groups, residents and the GLA concerned the proposed de-designation of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and Sites of Importance of Nature Conservation (SINC) to develop housing, a school and open space on land north of BedZED.

Some respondents preferred to maintain this site as green space, with future development limited to brownfield land.

Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust and Beddington Farm Bird Group preferred that land north of BedZED formed an integral part of Beddington Farmlands and the future Wandle Valley Regional Park, and that 'local

authorities should be investing in and expanding green infrastructure. Friends of Beddington and Grange Parks agreed with plans for an environmentally friendly development and the need for more housing, 'though not at the cost of MOL, and noted this area as an important migration corridor.

The GLA indicated that the aspirations for Hackbridge were not considered 'exceptional circumstances' to justify loss of MOL and that Council would need to provide sufficient evidence to fully demonstrate how the release of MOL would facilitate the objectives of the sustainable suburb. The GLA felt that insufficient appraisals had been carried out to date to determine the ecological value of the site and whether the de-designation of the site would impact significantly on the biodiversity of the wider SMI.

The Wandle Trust recommended that wildlife and habitat studies be undertaken by ecologists to confirm the value of land, both at the site and landscape scale, and that this should be more than compensated elsewhere in the development.

The Wandle Trust encouraged the use of the gravel to be extracted from land north of BedZED to be used locally, and this included for restoration of the natural bed of the River Wandle. Some other respondents requested that the gravel extraction not be carried out on the site.

Officer Comment

Detailed surveys of the area have been carried out for Council to identify the habitat value of land north of BedZED and its significance within the wider area.

The proposed de-designation of MOL on Land north of BedZED will be considered at the Core Planning Strategy Examination.

Pedestrian/ Cycle

Enhancements to pedestrian/ cycle access and connectivity were welcomed, for the most part. Improvements to paths along the Wandle Trail, London Road and Beddington Farmlands were strongly encouraged.

Pedestrian priority was largely welcomed, putting pedestrians first, 'winning back' certain areas of Hackbridge 'where the motor car currently dominates'. The PCT was greatly encouraged the reduction of speed limits along London Road to encourage walking and cycling and 'link communities across London Road'.

Respondents highlighted the need for convenient access to shops, centres, schools and open spaces. Improvements to the retail offer nearby, including a supermarket, was considered critical to encourage more people to walk/ cycle.

A number of respondents highlighted the benefits of separating paths from roads where possible, and creating a legible, safe and convenient, interconnected network of cycle/ ped paths throughout Hackbridge.

Some businesses were concerned with plans showing potential ped/ cycle access along Restmor Way, stating that it may invite vandalism to the estate, particularly when businesses are closed during evening and weekend hours.

Proposals for pedestrian/ cycle links were encouraged over Mile Road bridge and the bridge east of BedZED, connecting the Hackbridge Suburb with Beddington Farmlands, with early implementation of the proposed improvements to the pedestrian/ cycle path along Beddington Farmlands encouraged.

TfL highlighted that the Masterplan should provide for secure, accessible and sheltered cycle parking where possible at new developments and key destinations, including stations and transport interchanges.

A number of respondents highlighted that suitable disabled access, bike and pram access should be fully considered when developing plans, particularly to Hackbridge Station.

Several residents expressed concern after viewing the consultation leaflet plan which showed a red dotted line denoting a pedestrian/ cycle path to the rear of the Birchwood Avenue and Victoria Avenue properties, to the south east of the railway.

Officer Comment

The Council will consider each of pedestrian/ cycle related comments detailed in the schedule of representations when preparing the SPD. Pedestrian/ cycle access is a priority of the draft Masterplan, which will be carried over into the preparation of the SPD. The Council will ensure disabled access is fully considered as part of any future plans.

In regard to the pedestrian/ cycle path shown on the leaflet plan, to the rear of the Birchwood Avenue and Victoria Avenue properties and after further investigation it appears that there is little room to continue the ped/ cycle route along this section of the Wandle, as property boundaries directly adjoin the banks of the river.

Roads

Safety along London Road was highlighted as a major issue in need of urgent attention, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Crossing London Road was viewed by many as 'incredibly dangerous'. The junction of London and Hackbridge Roads in particular was highlighted as unsafe and intimidating for pedestrians, with several incidents/ accidents reported at this intersection.

Signals were encouraged at main intersections, and more 'creative' traffic calming treatments needed, not road humps. Several respondents including the PCT felt that traffic speeds were a problem, and were supportive of a 20mph limit along London Road.

Traffic congestion along London Road was highlighted as a major issue with 'gridlock' occurring during peak times. Residents were concerned that the significant increase in population to the area could further exacerbate this. Rat runs were also highlighted with local roads such as Wolseley and New Roads being used as an alternative to London Road.

Many were concerned as to when work on the new London Road road bridge would commence, why this had taken so long to mobilise and how they might be affected during construction.

Scope for lowering the car parking standards significantly below the maximum standards of the London Plan was welcomed by TfL, and Car clubs noted as 'invaluable'. Other residents were concerned that the development would add to parking congestion on local streets.

New road links were suggested by some residents promoting direct vehicular links to Croydon via Mile Road through Beddington Farmlands. A bypass for Hackbridge along Beddington Farmlands was also suggested, reiterating a concept suggested several years ago.

A number of residents expressed concern over the thick red line shown on the leaflet plan along the full length of Culvers Avenue noted in the key as 'all modes' of transport.

Officer Comment

The Public Realm Strategy put forward in the draft Masterplan provides a number of initiatives for improving access to, across and along roads in Hackbridge. The Council will continue to develop these plans in light of responses received, with priority given to enhancements to London Road in preparing the SPD.

Construction is due to commence on the new London Road road bridge later in 2009. Local residents and businesses will be consulted prior to the commencement of works and advised of any modified access arrangements.

The Council notes that the thick red line shown on the leaflet plan was an error. The Council is supportive of maintaining the current 'ped/ cycle' access arrangement along the Culvers House Primary School frontage.

The Council recognises that TfL has highlighted in its response, an opportunity to bring the route 80 bus through this section of road to link the bus service to

London Road, the public transport interchange and the new district centre. Local residents will be consulted, should Council and TfL wish to take this further.

Public Transport

Existing bus capacity was noted by GLA as insufficient to cater for expansion, with the GLA highlighting that developer contributions must be allocated to upgrade bus capacity to cater for the increased demand.

The TfL response requested that Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs) be referred to in the SPD document, reminding the Council that high density and large scale development should be carefully planned and located where PTAL values are higher and where sufficient transport capacity exists or can be provided to accommodate generated trips.

The current bus service reliability was considered poor by several respondents. There was general support for the integration of 127 and 151 bus routes and the provision of a bus/ train interchange somewhere near to Hackbridge Station. Some were supportive of the proposed location within the Felnax site and others preferring the interchange on the existing station car park, clearing the station car park and bringing buses right up to the station entrance. TfL appeared supportive of rerouting the 151 and 127 bus routes, though a number of constraints were highlighted, such as effect on bus journey times and patronage that would need to be further considered.

The TfL response suggested the benefit of extending Route 80 to create another bus route with connections to the new district centre. TfL highlighted that this could be made possible by changing the status of Culvers Avenue so as to enable bus access its full length, connecting with London Road.

There was strong response voicing concern on the impacts the proposed increase in population would have on train services and facilities. A significant number of residents advised that trains were already 'crammed full' during peak hours.

Many respondents felt strongly that improvement of the station and rail services should be a priority, and suggested that further plans should look to lengthen trains/ platforms, increase frequency of trains, provide toilet/ coffee shop facilities and improve the station car park area making this more pedestrian-friendly.

Officer Comment

The Council will continue to work with TfL, London Buses and Network Rail and relevant service providers to ensure public transport services and facilities are upgraded to cater for the anticipated increase in demand.

The proposed plans provide an opportunity to raise Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) for Hackbridge. The regeneration of Hackbridge can provide the

funding, increased patronage and impetus for significant improvements to the existing bus and train facilities and services. The Council will be working closely with the relevant authorities and service providers as plans develop.

TfL's proposals to extend route 80 will need to be further reviewed by the Council. Local residents will be fully consulted should Council, London Buses and TfL decide to take this further.

Housing

A number of respondents queried the densities that could be delivered under the draft Masterplan, with many preferring lower densities compatible with existing housing.

There was a general dislike by some for flats/ apartments, and in particular one and two bedroom units. A number of local residents indicated that they would prefer semi-detached, detached and terraced homes. The Felnax site was highlighted as most appropriate location, should apartments be developed. Family housing was considered appropriate on land north of BedZED, should this be developed.

Affordable and low cost housing was discouraged by a number of respondents, with some voicing concern that this type of housing may 'attract anti social behaviour'.

Some noted that consideration should be given to the design of affordable housing. Existing estates such as Corbet Close and Durand Close were highlighted, as poor in terms of design quality.

Respondents indicated that development should integrate with the existing built form character of the wider area, with some citing BedZED as failing to achieve this, whilst others appeared happy with the BedZED appearance/ design.

One respondent suggested that Hackbridge could provide some self-build housing, citing Ashley Vale as an example as how this could be delivered to produce diverse styles of housing.

The application recently submitted to Council for 49-71 Hackbridge Road was the cause of concern by a number of local residents. The proposal which comprises 31, 3-4 storey apartments building was looked at unfavourably by some in terms of height, scale and overlooking.

Local residents also questioned why Corbet Close wasn't included as a key strategic site on the draft plans, highlighting this estate as a regeneration opportunity, at the 'gateway' to Hackbridge that should be considered as part of plans.

The Council's Renewal and Commissioning Manager also requested that Gypsies and Travellers be taken into account when developing future plans for Hackbridge.

Officer Comments

Future housing will need to meet the London Plan provision requirement of 50% affordable/ 50% private sale. The mix and type of housing and density of future development will be further reviewed as part of the SPD.

The draft Masterplan document has not been adopted by the Council for development control purposes and therefore has limited weight in relation to the current application for 49-71 Hackbridge Road. The comments received though do provide an understanding of resident expectations in this area.

The Council is yet to consider the suitability of Hackbridge sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The local community will be consulted should Council decide to take this forward.

Education

The inclusion of a new primary school on plans on land north of BedZED was the cause of some concern. The request to improve and expand existing facilities at Hackbridge and Culvers House Primary schools was preferred to an additional school by a representation from existing schools.

Council's Children, Young People and Learning Services department highlighted local schools are already at capacity and rising birth rates and the new development anticipated for Hackbridge are contributing factors to the need for increased school provision within the area.

Some cited the need for a secondary school in the area to serve the anticipated increase in population.

Officer Comment

The Council's Children and Young Peoples Services have since met with local schools to discuss their concerns and agreed to increase from 2 forms to 3 forms of entry and maintain Culvers House at capacity at 2 forms of entry. Council's education service has confirmed that both schools should accommodate any marginal rise in population, though increases in population anticipated under the draft Masterplan will require a new school. Land north of BedZed east of London Road has been proposed in the Core Planning Strategy and Site Development Policies Plan to cater for this increase in population.

The Council's Children and Young Peoples Services officers will confirm future education requirements including secondary school needs prior to the next stage of preparing the draft SPD.

Employment

A number of local businesses queried the draft plans and how these would impact on them. Some were signed up to leaseholds and queried when all of this might happen and how this might impact on their tenure at their current premises. Some existing businesses/ landowners were concerned that the Council would compulsorily purchase their properties to deliver the project.

The GLA in its response recognised that it may be appropriate to release some sites in town centres for redevelopment into mixed uses in order to achieve employment objectives and appreciated that the redevelopment of land for mixed use can assist with meeting the need for more local employment opportunities. The GLA though was concerned the use of MOL to accommodate replacement employment land and the 'restricted transfer' status applied to some of these sites.

Savills highlighted that the draft plans did not adequately reflect office development (Use Class B1a). The Savills representation promoted the value of including office use to assist overall development viability and job creation. Other respondents questioned recent success and appropriateness of offices with numerous empty offices around.

The creation of new business opportunities to the Hackbridge area was encouraged and so too assistance for smaller businesses and jobs for local people. Opportunities were highlighted for jobs and skills training in delivering energy efficient homes and development to the area.

There was mixed response to proposed relocation of employment land. Some respondents preferred to keep the employment as it currently stands. Others could see the benefits in relocating employment and replacing with mixed use development.

Plans shown in the draft Masterplan for the Wandle Valley Trading Estate site were generally supported, though a number of respondents advised that they would prefer to retain the existing businesses and maintain the employment status of this site.

The principle behind mixing uses on the Felnax Estate and the land directly to the north of the station was questioned, particularly the mix of residential and industrial uses adjacent to each other. There was concern about the powers to prevent employment vehicles/ delivery trucks driving down residential roads all day.

Officer Comment

The Council has no intention of compulsorily purchase properties under current plans.

The Council acknowledges comments received from TfL requesting future development plans fully consider freight construction and delivery and servicing requirements during occupation as part of any planning application.

The Council will continue to develop its economic strategy for the Hackbridge Sustainable Suburb and provide guidance on preferred direction in terms of employment as part of the draft SPD.

The proposed development of existing industrial areas for mixed-use development will be considered in the Core Planning Strategy Examination in Public.

Crime

A number of respondents were concerned with crime problems currently experienced in the area and the potential for the future development of Hackbridge to add to these problems. Key concerns raised related to access via pedestrian bridges offering those that commit crimes an 'escape route'. A number of residents oppose the provision of any further bridges and would prefer the Wandle River to be a barrier rather than a connection to adjoining estates. Council housing also blamed for much of the crime in the area and youths loitering and drinking in parks was also an issue.

The Metropolitan Police response notes that pedestrian and cycle routes should be well defined routes and spaces that provide convenient movement without compromising security. Routes that are poorly lit, indirect and away from the front of building provide unwelcoming routes, ideal for criminal activity. All new developments should be required to achieve 'Secured by Design' accreditation.

Officer Comment

New development should be designed to greatly improve surveillance and security within existing residential areas. The SPD should include 'Secured by Design' certification. The Council will work closely with the Police to respond to concerns as part of the development of the draft SPD.

Environment

One respondent requested a clear definition of 'sustainability' in the eventual guidance document.

Savills and CMA Planning, although supportive of the objectives of One Planet Living, both requested better flexibility in requirements to ensure the deliverability of development on their sites.

Savills indicated some concern with the Zero Carbon aspirations for Hackbridge as the cost for achieving this are 'relatively unknown'. Savills suggested rewording the requirement to state 'all buildings and structures should be zero carbon, powered and heated by renewable energy if the technology needed to achieve this cost effectively is available'.

The GLA suggested that the new district centre could be an 'ideal location for a CHP/CCHP' and recommended that an energy masterplanning exercise be carried out to best identify appropriate plant and network locations.

The GLA highlighted the opportunity for the 'Low Carbon Zone' to link into the Mayoral initiative to develop a number of Low Carbon Zones across London. The GLA also requested a more robust definition for 'low carbon standards' be applied in line with government consultation on definition of Zero Carbon homes.

The River Wandle was suggested by some respondents as a potential source for renewable energy/ power. The Old Mill north of Wilderness Island, where water currently backs up, was suggested as possible source of hydropower, water wheel micro/ macro generation. The GLA suggested potential use of energy from waste and anaerobic digestion.

Opportunity for local food production was highlighted by a number of respondents, who requested the provision of allotments to the Hackbridge area that supply local farmers markets, reducing 'food miles'.

The retrofit of existing housing stock was questioned and how this would be delivered. Some residents felt that energy efficiencies should apply to more than new housing'. The cost for converting existing housing to be more energy efficient was viewed as prohibitive for most residents, many stating that this would only be possible with government grant/ subsidy assistance.

The GLA was supportive of policies that support the delivery of site composting and recycling bins included in the draft Masterplan. The GLA requested that future documentation demonstrate how it will meet these targets and set how performance will be measured/ monitored.

Officer Comment

A clear definition of 'sustainability' will be included in the draft SPD to ensure an understanding early in the document on the key elements of sustainability that should be achieved to deliver a truly sustainable suburb.

The draft Sustainability Action Plan will be developed further to ensure current aspirational actions are reasonable and deliverable. The Council will review the most appropriate wording for the draft SPD that enables project feasibility whilst successfully achieving the high environmental sustainability aspirations presented.

Biodiversity

Local interest groups such as the Mitcham Commons Conservators, the Wandle Forum, The Wandle Trust, Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust and Beddington Farm Bird Group highlighted the value of existing green spaces and the need to protect and enhance local biodiversity.

A series of suggestions were provided for protecting and enhancing the Wandle River corridor, northern open spaces such as Mill Green, and Beddington Farmlands, and the development of the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

The GLA noted that land of strategic importance for nature conservation and biodiversity should be protected and development resisted that would have a significant adverse impact on the population or conservation status of protected and priority species.

Natural England response was largely supportive of the draft Masterplan. Natural England welcomed new and improved green spaces, the linking of these spaces and creating green corridors and wildlife corridors. The inclusion of the Wandle Valley Regional Park and enhancements to the Wandle River corridor were welcomed. Natural England recommended all habitats and planting should make use of native species to provide potential ecological enhancements for the area.

Beddington Farm Bird Group advised that a significant number of species had been recorded in the area and raised concerns on adverse impacts development would have on existing wildlife populations. The Group advised that it hoped to establish Beddington Farmlands as major urban nature reserve and that it will continue to be an important habitat and feeding area for a range of species. The Group also requested that the restoration of land to the west of the railway north of land north of BedZED should be carefully considered, advising that this should be reliant on creating the right habitat, with a range of species likely to be attracted to the wider Farmlands and safeguarding these species through minimum disturbance.

The Council's Biodiversity officer advised that the site of importance for nature conservation north of Goat Road would provide a great opportunity to create bat and bird feeding and nesting habitat.

Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust requested that one side of the River Wandle be for people and the other for wildlife and the number of bridges should be minimised.

Officer Comment

An ecological assessment of land north of BedZED has been carried out to determine the site's current ecological value and significance within the wider

area. More detailed studies will be carried out also to determine further opportunities for enhancing biodiversity in Hackbridge.

Funding from the development of Land North of BedZED and from developer contributions can be reinvested to significantly improve biodiversity in the Hackbridge area. Detailed guidelines ensuring appropriate allocation of funds are directed towards biodiversity could be included in the draft SPD for Hackbridge.

The proposed development of land north of BedZED and the impact on biodiversity will be considered at the Core Planning Strategy Examination.

Wandle River Corridor

Enhancements to the Wandle River Corridor were generally encouraged. Detailed suggestions were provided from the Spencer Road Wetlands Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Natural England, Wandle Trust and members of the local community in terms of opportunities for enhancement of local habitats, vegetation and water qualities along the Wandle.

The green open space islet, shown to the east side of the Wandle Valley Trading Estate, was welcomed by local residents, Natural England, Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust and Spencer Road Wetlands LNR. The contribution that this could make to the northern gateway to the Wandle was highlighted and the opportunity to create wetlands within this space linking the Spencer Road Wetland LNR and Wandle Valley Nature Reserve was encouraged.

Paths were viewed as disjointed and difficult to navigate, more signposting was noted as needed at junctions and lighting to improve legibility. The Sutton Cycling Club welcomed improvements to path access, the use of friendly materials and designs, the reduction of barriers and the creation of interpretation boards informing cyclists and pedestrians about local landmarks and wildlife.

Maintenance was seen by many as a major issue along the Wandle with many parts in disrepair and in need of enhancement. English Heritage requested the implementation of an agreed management/ maintenance plan for the corridor to ensure its viability after implementation.

The importance of an existing flood barrier was acknowledged to the north of Hackbridge, which currently controls water levels and movements from the Spencer Road Wetlands Local Nature Reserve, the Wandle Valley Nature Reserve and the Wandle Valley Trading Estate.

Officer Comment

The Council will work closely with the local organisations to ensure appropriate improvements and management of open spaces along the Wandle is incorporated in the draft SPD..

Spencer Road Wetlands Local Nature Reserve

A number of respondents including the GLA, Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust, The Wandle Trust and Spencer Road Wetlands LNR highlighted that a section of the Spencer Road Wetlands SINC to the north, including an old mill pond and ditch, was not considered on the draft Masterplan, with this section shown as part of the Wandle Valley Trading Estate Development.

Spencer Road Wetlands LNR advised that adequate buffer zones should be provided on adjacent boundaries to ensure the wetlands and local habitats are appropriately protected.

Officer Comment

The Council will ensure that the Old Mill Pond and Ditch will be included and protected under the draft SPD.

Adequate buffer zones should be included in the draft SPD, for Hackbridge and the Wandle Valley Trading Estate to ensure the protection of the adjacent wetland and local nature reserve.

Beddington Farmlands

A number of respondents highlighted that access to Beddington Farmlands is currently poor and feels unsafe. Respondents were supportive of opening access to from Mile Road and north of BedZED and improving these links, the approach and gateway to the Park.

Natural England and the Sutton Cycling Club invited proposals to improve the existing path parallel to the railway and formalise permission for cyclists to ride along the path.

The Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust requested that pedestrian access be restricted in Beddington Farmlands with a network of paths providing viewing points for pedestrians whilst protecting local wildlife.

The Group also noted that the landscape strategy promotes tree planting within Beddington Farmlands, where the likely landscape result will be a mix of wetlands, grassland, heathland and neutral meadows, scrub planting with minimal tree planting.

A number of respondents suggest the potential for Beddington Farmlands to become a bird sanctuary/ wildlife area (something similar to the Wetland Centre in Barnes).

Officer Comment

The Council recognises the importance of Beddington Farmlands within the context of the Wandle Valley Regional Park, future plans for Hackbridge and the wider area. The Council will continue to work with the Wandle Forum, local

ecological, leisure and environmental groups and residents to develop plans for Beddington Farmlands as part of the preparation of the draft SPD.

Other Green Spaces

New major green spaces including land east of Mill Green, north of BedZED, within Felnax and west of the Wandle Valley Trading Estate were welcomed.

Some respondents highlighted the importance in distinguishing natural green spaces with biodiversity value from leisure and recreation open spaces to ensure suitable designation, use and protection of relevant spaces.

Some responses requested improvements to existing parks such as Watercress Park, the Grange and Dale Park, citing a number of areas needing improving, notably pedestrian access, reducing barriers, improving park drainage and child play areas.

A community farm and allotments were strongly encouraged by several respondents providing local produce for the area.

Sports fields were encouraged, particularly given the 'failure' to deliver football pitch at BedZED. The need for more child play facilities also highlighted.

Officer Comment

A further review of existing and proposed green/ open space opportunities within Hackbridge will be carried out when developing the draft SPD to take account of the opportunities for improving green spaces.

Heritage

English Heritage requested recognition of the Grade II Listed status of five places on any further reporting in Hackbridge (the Old Red Lion Pub. Riverside (former Mill House just off Middleton Road, the terrace of 9-15 Hackbridge Green, the villas of 40, 44 and 48 Mill Green Road and the 19th Century Mill Buildings at 258 London Road).

The Sutton Cycling Club highlighted the opportunity for future plans to embrace the historic significance of the Wandle and enhance former Mills sites.

Officer Comment

The Council agrees that Hackbridge's past should be fully embraced and suitably acknowledged as part of any future plans. The next stage SPD should make the appropriate allowances to ensure heritage matters are incorporated.

8. Next Stages

The consultation feedback, further considerations and the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination will inform the preparation of a Hackbridge Supplementary Planning Document, providing detailed planning guidance on the future development and delivery of the Hackbridge 'Sustainable Suburb'.

The Hackbridge Sustainability Action Plan will also be further developed, together with work on a number of other studies on renewable energy, climate change & flood risk, biodiversity, transport & infrastructure, community/ health, employment, in order to assist with realising the Hackbridge vision.

It is intended to produce the draft Hackbridge Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) bringing the above studies and work streams together, in Autumn 2009, when the local community will again be consulted.

Appendices

- A) Combined Comment Count
- B) Leaflet Questionnaire Results
- C) GLA Response
- D) Thames Water
- E) Natural England
- F) English Heritage
- G) Landowner representations
- H) Community Workshop Report
- I) Schedule of comments:
 - i) Letter/ email
 - ii) Questionnaire comments
 - iii) Public Exhibition