



Habitats Regulations Assessment

Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option

December 2017

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CONSULTATION	TIMETABLE
Informal consultation	2013-Spring 2016
Evidence gathering and refinement of the baseline information, plans, programmes and strategies, key issues, objectives and IIA framework	2015-Spring 2016
Developing and refining options and assessing effects and preparing the Integrated Impact Assessment Report	Spring 2016
Consultation on Integrated Impact Assessment Scoping Report	12 February 2016 - 18 March 2016
Consultation on the draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan Preferred Option draft AAP policies and Integrated Impact Assessment	June 2016 – November 2016
Consideration of responses and developing the draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan and Integrated Impact Assessment Report	Autumn 2016
Consultation on the draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan proposed new and amended AAP policies and Integrated Impact Assessment (this document)	June 2017 - September 2017
Consultation on AAP: Further Preferred Option	December 2017 - March 2018
Consultation on the submission version Old Kent Road Area Action Plan and Integrated Impact Assessment Report	2018
Submission of the draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan Integrated Impact Assessment Report to the Planning Inspectorate	2018/19
Examination in Public	2018/19
Adoption of the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan	2019

HOW TO COMMENT ON THIS REPORT

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Consultation on this document begins on 13 December 2017 All comments must be received by 21 March 2018

Introduction

- 1.1. This report presents the findings of a screening exercise undertaken to determine whether stages 2 and 3 of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process are needed for the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option. The council has also undertaken a separate Integrated Impact Assessment incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Assessment for the document which outlines the environmental baseline data for the area.
- 1.2. The Old Kent Road Area Action Plan (AAP) is a plan to regenerate the Old Kent Road and surrounding area. It sets out a vision for how the area will change from 2017 to 2036. This includes delivering 20,000 new homes and 10,000 additional jobs. The vision will be delivered by a strategy with policies, designations, site allocation and masterplans over the next 20 years. We will require development as set out in the AAP to make sure that we get the right development needed to support a healthy, safe and prosperous community and a fairer future for all in the Old Kent Road area.
- 1.3. The AAP will be part of our framework of planning documents. It will be a material planning consideration in deciding planning applications in the opportunity area. It will help ensure that we make decisions transparently, providing clarity for members of the public and giving more confidence to developers to invest in the area. It will also be an opportunity area planning framework (OAPF) and will be endorsed by the Mayor of London.
- 1.4. The proposed policies are in general conformity with existing policies in the emerging New Southwark Plan which will replace existing saved policies and the Core Strategy. An AA screening exercise was also carried out for other adopted AAP's in Southwark and the Core Strategy and the New Southwark Plan: Proposed Submission Version which found that there was no significant discernible adverse impact on European sites.

2. The need for Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.1. In October 2005, the European Court of Justice ruled that the HRA must be carried out on all planning policy documents in the UK. The purpose of HRA of planning policies is to ensure that the protection and integrity of European sites¹ (also known as the Natura 2000 network) is part of the planning process at the regional and local level. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to ensure that the HRA process is carried out in accordance with the Habitat Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) and Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations').
- 2.2. The Habitats Regulations requires that authorities assess the effects of land use plans on European sites to determine whether there will be any 'likely significant effects' (LSEs) on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the plan's implementation (either on its own or in combination with other plans or projects). If there are LSEs there will be a need for the authority to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to determine whether or not there will be any adverse effects on the sites' integrity. Guidance on the statutory obligations relating to biodiversity and geological conservation is set out in Circular 06/2005.
- 2.3. Guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on Appropriate Assessment² states that: 'The purpose of Appropriate Assessment (AA) of land use plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of 'European sites' is a part of the planning process at a regional and local level.
- 2.4. The DCLG guidance summarises the AA process prescribed in Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive into three main stages:
 - 1. likely significant effects (AA task 1);
 - 2. appropriate assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity (AA task 2);
 - 3. mitigation and alternative solutions (AA task 3); and
- 2.5. The test to identify whether a plan option is 'likely to have a significant effect' on a European site is also referred to as 'screening'. This determines whether stages 2 and 3 of the HRA are required.

¹ Strictly, 'European sites' are any Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from the point at which the European Commission and the UK Government agree the site as a 'Site of Community Importance' (SCI); any classified Special Protection Area (SPA); any candidate SAC (cSAC); and (exceptionally) any other site or area that the Commission believes should be considered as an SAC but which has not been identified by the government. However the terms is also commonly used when referring to potential SPAs (pSPAs), to which the provisions of Article 4 (4) of Directive 2009/147/EC (the new wild birds directive) are applied; and to possible SACs (pSACs) and listed RAMSAR Sites, to which the provisions of the Habitats Regulations are applied a matter of government policy (NPPF para 118) when considering development proposals that may affect them. The Natura 2000 network is therefore used in this report in its broadest sense, as an umbrella term for all of the above designated sites.

umbrella term for all of the above designated sites.

Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment Guidance For Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, DCLG, August 2006

Box 1 Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment

Stage 1 - Screening:

This stage identifies the likely impacts upon a European Site of a project or plan, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment:

Where there are likely significant effects, this stage considers the effects of the plan or project on the integrity of the relevant European Sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, with respect to the sites' structure and function and their conservation objectives. Where it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on sites' integrity, it is necessary to consider potential mitigation for these effects.

Stage 3 - Assessment of Alternative Solutions:

Where adverse effects remain after the inclusion of mitigation, this stage examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.

Stage 4 - Assessment Where No Alternative Solutions Exist and Where Adverse Impacts Remain:

This stage assesses compensatory measures where it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). The EC guidance does not deal with the assessment of IROPI.

HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA)

3. Identifying likely significant effects (LSEs)

- 3.1. The first stage, screening for HRA, will determine if planning policy and guidance documents are likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites. This will determine whether stages 2 and 3 of the HRA are required. In considering whether the plan policy, guidance or site is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, it should be noted that a site may be located either within or outside the area covered by the plan as significant effects may be incurred in cases where the area of the plan is some distance away. The effects of the AAP must also be considered in combination with other plans or projects on European sites.
- 3.2. When considering the LSEs of a policy, it is recognised that some policy 'types' cannot affect any European sites. Different guidance documents suggest various classification and referencing systems to help identify those policies than can be safely screened out to ensure the HRA focuses on the policies with any potential to result in LSEs. Table 2.1 summarises the characteristics of policies that can usually be screened out.

Table 2.1 Policy 'types' that can usually be screened out

Broad Policy Type	Notes
General statements of policy	The European Commission recognises* that plans or plan components that are general statements of policy or political aspirations cannot have significant effects
General design / guidance criteria	A general 'criteria based' policy expresses the tests or expectations of the plan-making body when it comes to consider particular proposals, or relate to design or other qualitative criteria which do not themselves lead to development (e.g. controls on building design).
External plans / projects	Plans or projects that are proposed by other plans and are referred to in the plan being assessed for completeness
Environmental protection policies	Policies designed to protect the natural or built environment will not usually have signifcant or adverse effects

^{*} EC, 2000, Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC April 2000 at 4.3.2

4. Methodology

- 4.1. The legal requirement to undertake HRAs is set out in the Habitats Directive. However, there is no standardised method for undertaking an HRA. The council has followed the screening method used on the HRA of the London Plan iterations (2009 and 2013) and also the methodology used to prepare the HRA for the Core Strategy (2011) and subsequent planning documents.
- 4.2. The methodology used is based primarily on the guidance by Tydesley and Associates prepared for Natural England 'The Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies and Sub Regional Strategies under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations' (2006).

5. Identification of relevant sites

5.1. Using the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) website³, and in line with the methodology employed in the HRA of Further Alterations to the London Plan, the council identified those Natura 2000 sites within a 10km zone extending from the boundary of the borough. SACs, SPAs, RAMSARS and OMSs were included. European sites were scoped into the study if they occurred either wholly or partially within this geographical area. The council identified that there are no Natura 2000 sites in Southwark. Four sites are partially within 10km of Southwark and are set out below:

Identified conservation sites of EC importance
Sites at least partially in Southwark None
Sites at least partially within 10km of Southwark
Wimbledon Common (SAC)Richmond Park (SAC)

Epping Forest (SAC)Lee Valley (SPA)

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³ www.jncc.gov.uk

5.2. The information for these sites concerning the rationale for EU conservation has been taken from the HRA Screening report on the Consultation replacement London Plan (October 2009) which also includes supplementary information in order to assist in considering the vulnerability of sites to potential adverse impacts. This is presented in the tables below.

Site Description table

This information has been sourced from the HRA Screening report on the Consultation replacement London Plan (October 2009). The contents of the table were compiled with reference to the sources listed below, and also informed by consultation with Natural England.

Site name and location

Obtained from Natural England 'Natura 2000 Forms' and RAMSAR forms from the JNCC website.

Qualifying Interest (habitats and species)

Denotes the habitats and species for which the sites have been awarded EU conservation status. It is these qualifying features which the HRA must safeguard. This information is obtained from 'Natura 2000' and RAMSAR forms. The qualifying features form the basis of Natural England's 'conservation objectives for the European interest on SSSIs', which were drawn upon for pertinent additional information.

Conservation objectives

Conservation objectives are set by Natural England (NE) to ensure that the obligations of the Habitats Regulations are met, particularly to ensure that there should be no deterioration or significant disturbance of the qualifying features from their condition at the time the status of the site was formally identified. The conservation objectives are also essential in determining whether the effects of a plan or project are likely to have a significant effect on the qualifying interests of the site.

Site sensitivities

The key site sensitivities / vulnerabilities for each habitat type were established by reviewing information provided within the conservation objectives for each site and also from site condition monitoring (typically of the underlying Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation) and from discussions with Natural England

Current condition (July 2006 survey)

Threats

Information pertaining to the potential threats. From Natura 2000, RAMSAR, and Conservation Objectives forms.

Natura 2000 Site	Location	Qualifying Interest (Habitats and Species)	Conservation Objectives	Site Sensitivities	Current Condition (July 2006 condition survey)	Threats
Wimbledon Common SAC	Within GLA boundary	Lucanus cervus (stag beetle)	The conservation objectives for the European interest on the SSSI are	Water quality – e.g. pollution through groundwater and	Area reference la	Site is located in an urban area and experiences
(348.31 ha)	The following boroughs are within or adjacent to the European sites: • Merton • Wandsworth • Richmond upon Thames • Kingston upon Thames	Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths	to maintain*, in favourable condition, the: • European dry heath • Northern Atlantic wet heath with <i>Erica tetralix</i> to maintain*, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of: • Stag beetle (<i>Lucanus cervus</i>) * Maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.	surface run-off sources Water level — maintenance of water table Heavy recreational pressure Spread of non- native / invasive species Scrub encroachment Atmospheric pollution (nutrient deposition and acidification)	Area unfavourable but recovering 59%	intensive recreational pressure which can result in damage, particularly to the sensitive areas of heathland. Air pollution is also thought to be having an impact on the quality of heathland habitat.
Richmond Park SAC (846.68 ha)	Within GLA boundary The following boroughs are within or adjacent to the European sites:	Lucanus cervus (stag beetle)	The conservation objectives for the European interest on the SSSI are: to maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of: Stag beetle (Lucanus cervus) The conservation objectives	Water level Water quality – nutrient enrichment from fertiliser run- off etc Scrub encroachment (often due to	Area favourable 6% Area unfavourable recovering 8% Area unfavourable no change 86%	Site is surrounded by urban areas and experiences high levels of recreational pressure. This does not directly affect

	 Richmond upon Thames Kingston upon Thames Wandsworth Merton 		for the Richmond Park proposed Special Area of Conservation are, in accordance with para C 10 of PPG 9, the reasons for which the cSAC was proposed.	undergrazing) Development pressure Spread of introduced nonnative species Human disturbance (off-road vehicles, burning (vandalism)) Atmospheric pollution e.g. nitrous oxides from vehicle exhausts		the European interest feature however.
Epping Forest SAC	Partially within GLA boundary The following boroughs are within or adjacent to the European sites: Waltham Forest Redbridge Enfield	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: • Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with Ilex and sometimes also Taxus in the shrub layer (Quercion robori- petraeae or Ilici- Fagenion) Annex I habitats	The Conservation Objectives for this site are, subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition, with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features (habitats, vegetation types, species, species assemblages etc.) for which the land is designated (SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar) as individually listed in Table 1.	Water quality – e.g. pollution through groundwater and surface run-off sources Water level – maintenance of water table essential e.g. restrict new drainage ditches around wet woodlands Heavy recreational pressure Spread of nonnative / invasive	Area favourable 30% Area unfavourable recovering 34% % area unfavourable no change 26% % area unfavourable declining 10% Reintroduction of pollarding and wood pasture management is helping to reverse the decline of the epiphytic bryophyte population.	Existing air pollution, particularly arising from traffic is thought to contribute to poor condition of parts of the site. Increasing recreational pressure could have an impact on heathland areas.

		present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site: Lucanus cervus (stag beetle)	 (Biodiversity Action Plan categories) Lowland wood pastures and parkland Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland Dwarf shrub heath Acid grassland Neutral grassland Standing open water and canals Fen, marsh and swamp 	species Scrub encroachment Atmospheric pollution (nutrient deposition and acidification) Development pressure		
Lee Valley SPA / Ramsar (447.87 ha)	Partially within GLA boundary The following boroughs are within or adjacent to the European sites: Enfield Waltham Forest Haringey	SPA: Over winter: • Botaurus stellaris (bittern) Over winter: • Anas strepera (gadwall) • Anas clypeata (shoveler)	The conservation objectives for the European interest on the SSSI are to maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of migratory bird species + of European importance, with particular reference to: open water and surrounding marginal habitats Gadwall, Shoveler	Water quality - eutrophication is a threat, particularly from point source pollution (e.g. sewage outfalls) but also from surface run-off or groundwater pollution and atmospheric deposition	There are a number of SSSIs contained within the Lee Valley Ramsar site of which Walthamstow Reservoirs, Waltham Abbey and Turnford and Cheshunt Pits are 100% favourable. Walthamstow	Most of the site is in favourable condition, though an increase in recreational use could affect wintering wildfowl numbers.
	Hackney	Ramsar: The site also qualifies as a Ramsar Wetland of assemblage	*maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition. The Conservation	Water levels – a high and stable water table is fundamental. Disturbance to bird	Marshes are 36% favourable and 63% unfavourable but recovering.	currently no factors having a significant adverse effect on the site's

qualification: A	Objectives for the Lee Valley	feeding and	character.
wetland of	SPA are, in accordance with	roosting habitat	onardotor.
international	para C 10 of PPG9 9, the	(noise / visual)	
importance.	reasons for which the SPA	(Heles / Head)	
importanioo.	was classified.	Siltation (e.g.	
	was classified.	excessive poaching	
	The SPA includes land	of lake margins by	
	within: Amwell Quarry SSSI,	stock, suspended	
	Rye Meads SSSI, Turnford	sediments leading	
	and Cheshunt Pits SSSI and	to transport of	
	Walthamstow Reservoirs	nutrients)	
		indirente)	
	SSSI	Scrub or tree	
		encroachment	
		(leading to shading,	
		nutrient and	
		hydrological	
		effects)	
		Spread of	
		introduced non-	
		native species	
		Recreational	
		pressure /	
		disturbance	
		(particularly on-	
		water activities with	
		potential to disturb	
		sediment and	
		increase turbidity in	
		lakes)	
		Development	
		pressure	
		·	
		Diffuse air pollution	
		from traffic and	
		agriculture.	

6. Appraisal Framework

- 6.1. The Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option has been analysed to assess whether it would be likely to result in significant adverse impacts on European sites. The Natural England guidance⁴ defines 'likely' as meaning 'probably', not merely a 'fanciful possibility'. The potentially adverse impacts were screened according to the approach set out in Appendix A and Figure 3 of the guidance. However criteria 2 and 3 were not considered because these are applicable to the assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies (now abolished), not Local Plan Documents.
- 6.2. A precautionary approach was adopted so that the assessment also considered cumulative impacts therefore all potentially significant adverse impacts were assessed.

Coding used for recording effects / impacts on European Sites (from Tydesley and Associates, 2006, Annex 2).

Coding used for recording effects/impacts on European Sites

Reason why policy will have no effect on a European Site

- **1**. The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it relates to design or other qualitative criteria for development, or it is not a land use planning policy)
- **4**. Concentration of development in urban areas will not affect European Site and will help to steer development and land use change away from a European Site and associated sensitive areas.
- **5.** The policy will help to steer development away from a European Site and associated sensitive areas, e.g. not developing in areas of flood risk or areas otherwise likely to be affected by climate change.
- 6. The policy is intended to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity.
- **7.** The policy is intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, and enhancement measures will not be likely to have any effect on a European Site.

Reason why policy could have a potential effect

8. The document steers a quantum or type of development towards, or encourages development in, an area that includes a European Site or an area where development may indirectly affect a European Site.

Reason why policy would be likely to have a significant effect

- **9**. The policy makes provision for a quantum, or kind of development that in the location(s) proposed would be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site. The proposal must be subject to appropriate assessment to establish, in light of the site's conservation objectives, whether it can be ascertained that the proposal would not adversely affect the integrity of the site.
- 6.3. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening (stage 1) has been undertaken to assess the impact of the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option. This is set out below. The preparation of the AAP is considered

⁴ The Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies and Sub Regional Strategies under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations' (2006).

likely to have no significant adverse effect on the European sites therefore it is deemed to require no further HRA (stages 2 and 3) to be undertaken.

7. Screening Analysis of the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option

7.1. This section screens the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option for impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Each guidance reference within the AAP has been assessed against the criteria provided in section 6 which itself is based on guidance prepared by Tydesley and Associates for Natural England titled, 'The Assessment of Regional Strategies and Sub Regional Strategies under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations 2006.'

Analysis

Theme	Policies	Why policy will have no impact on Natura 2000 sites	Likely to have an impact	Essential recommendatio ns to avoid potential negative effects on European sites
Policies	AAP1: The Masterplan AAP2: Site allocations AAP3: Infrastructure and delivery	4 4 4	No No No	None None None
Theme 1: Social regeneration to revitalise neighbourhoods	AAP4: Social regeneration to revitalise neighbourhoods	1,4	No	None
Theme 2: Quality affordable homes	AAP5: Quality Affordable homes	4	No	None

Theme 3: Strong local	AAP6: Businesses and workspace	4	No	None
economy AAP7: Town centre, leisure and entertainment		4	No	None
Theme 6: Cleaner, greener,	AAP8: Character and heritage	4,7	No	None
safer	AAP9: Tall buildings strategy	4	No	None
	AAP10: Parks and open spaces	4,6	No	None
	AAP11: Cleaner, greener, safer	4,6		
Theme 4: Healthy active lives	AAP12: Healthy active lives	4	No	None
Theme 5: Best Start in life	AAP13: Best start in life	4	No	None
Sub area 1	OKR1: Bricklayers Arms roundabout	4	No	None
Mandela Way, Crimscott	OKR2: Crimscott Street and Pages Walk	4	No	None
Street and Old Kent Road	OKR3: Mandela Way	4	No	None
(North)	OKR4: Dunton Road (Tesco Store and car park) and Southernwood retail park	4	No	None
	OKR5: Salisbury Estate Garages	4	No	None
	OKR6: 96-120 Old Kent Road (Lidl Store)	4	No	None
	OKR7: Former petrol filling station, 233-247 Old Kent Road	4	No	None
	OKR8: Kinglake Street Garages	4	No	None
	OKR9: 4/12 Albany Road	4	No	None

Sub area 2 Cantium Retail Park and Marlborough Grove	OKR10: Land bounded by Glengall Road, Latona Road and Old Kent Road OKR11: Marlborough Grove and St James Road OKR12: Former Southern Railway Stables	4 4 4	No No No	None None None
Sub area 3 Sandgate Street and Verney Road and Old Kent Road	OKR13: Sandgate Street and Verney Road OKR14: 634-636 Old Kent Road OKR15: 684-698 Old Kent Road (Kwik Fit Garage)	4 4 4	No No No	None None None
Sub area 4 Hatcham, Ilderton and Old Kent Road (South)	OKR16: Hatcham Road and Ilderton Road OKR17: South of Old Kent Road 760, 812 and 840 Old Kent Road, Toysrus and Aldi Stores) OKR18: Devon Street and Sylvan Grove	4 4	No No No	None None None
Sub area 5 South Bermondsey	Strategic Protected Industrial Land (SPIL)	4	No	None

8 Conclusion

The Old Kent Road Area Action Plan: Further Preferred Option on its own or in combination with other plans and projects is not likely to have any significant discernible adverse impact on European sites therefore stage 2 (appropriate assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity) and stage 3 (mitigation and alternative solutions) of the HRA process are not considered necessary.

References

Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and geological conservation – statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report – Consultation replacement London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London), October 2009

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report – Further Alterations to the London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London), December 2013.

Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment Guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, DCLG, August 2006.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Tyldesley and Associates - prepared for Natural England Guidance - The Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies and Sub Regional Strategies under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations 2006.