



Executive Board Sub Committee

**Thursday, 7 September 2006 at 10.00
a.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. R." or a similar variation.

Chief Executive

SUB COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Mike Wharton (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Phil Harris	Labour
Councillor Steff Nelson	Labour

Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 471 7395 or e-mail gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.

The next meeting of the Sub Committee is on Thursday, 21 September 2006

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached and (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members) to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
2. CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO	
(A) LEGAL SERVICES JOINT PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS	1 - 4
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3. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO	
(A) NEW TERM CONTRACT FOR SURFACE TREATMENTS - APRIL 2007 TO MARCH 2012	35 - 38
(B) APPROVAL OF PUBLICATION OF HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION	39 - 114
4. COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO	
(A) HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUND	115 - 120

PART II

In this case the Sub Committee has a discretion to exclude the press and public, but in view of the nature of the business to be transacted it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

5. CORPORATE SERVICES

(A) LAND TO REAR OF MERSEY ROAD WIDNES

121 - 124

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

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REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

DATE: 7th September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Legal Services – Joint Procurement Arrangements

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To obtain authority for the Council Solicitor to select a firm or firms to form a standing approved list of external Solicitors.
- 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Council Solicitor be authorised to select a firm or firms to form standing call-off arrangements for external Solicitors to be drawn on exceptionally and as circumstances require and to take such other actions as may be necessary give effect to these arrangements.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 From time to time the Council Solicitor needs to appoint external firms of Solicitors. Typically this happens where there is a temporary peak of work, where there is a need to cover for maternity or sickness, where there is a need for specialised advice or where circumstances are especially sensitive or that a degree of separation or demonstrated independence is required.
- 3.2 Appointing an external Solicitors is one of a range of responses to these and other situations. On occasions agency staff have been used and more often in connection with litigation Counsel have been used.
- 3.3 Whenever an external appointment of Solicitors has been made Standing Orders must be complied with. This usually involves having to get competitive quotes or formal tenders. This is time-consuming and has to be repeated on each occasion work is put out. The ad hoc process also makes poor use of the Council's purchasing power.
- 3.4 There is an alternative and that is that the Council Solicitor goes out to tender once to appoint a single firm or panel of firms which can be drawn on whenever needed. A panel is preferable as approved firms need to be available for certain specialised categories of work (which might include child protection). Some firms are generalists but others

develop authoritative specialisms in certain fields. Legal Services needs to be able to tap into both types of firm.

- 3.5 This is reflected in an initiative which the Council Solicitor has been exploring jointly with the chief legal officers of Knowsley MB, Sefton MB and West Lancashire DC. This has the advantage not only of using Halton's buying power to secure best prices but working with other authorities to secure potentially better charging rates.
- 3.6 During July Halton acting jointly with the other authorities will be advertising for expressions of interest. With the assistance of First Law (acting as procurement advisers) shortlists will be drawn up for each authority although it is anticipated that there will be a substantial overlap. The intention is that by October 2006 following tenders and presentations to the legal officers of all four authorities standing lists will be approved.
- 3.7 The arrangement will be for a period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years. There is no legal commitment to place any work with any firm on the approved list. The firms sign up to provide their services if and when one of the authorities makes a request. The rates to which the firms are bound are part of the tendering and selection process made on a blend of quality and price. There will be nothing to stop authorities continuing to place work with firms not on the approved lists if circumstances justify.
- 3.8 The Trade Unions have been consulted and have indicated support on the basis that the facility is available to deal with circumstances where legal work would currently be put out. The intended arrangement has no employment implications for existing staff.

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This arrangement is consistent with the Council's Procurement Policy and with the Overall Aim: *To create the maximum effect on the quality of life in the communities of Halton through the efficient use of the Council's resources*. The costs associated with the procurement advisers will be divided amongst the four Councils. Halton's share will not exceed £3000 which will be met from existing budgetary provision.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The risks and opportunities are being managed through the procurement process and contract documentation. There will be no joint liability with the other authorities. Documented systems will promote certainty, transparency and accountability.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Criteria for selection will be applied in a way that is not discriminatory.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
NIL	n/a	John Tradewell

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REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7th September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is for members to consider 1 application for Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, the following application for Discretionary Rate Relief be refused:

**National Council of Young Men's Christian 20%
Associations**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority is allowed to grant Discretionary Rate Relief to organisations who are either a charity or a non-profit making organisation. A summary of the application follows and a list of the associated figures are attached in Appendix 1.

National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations
73 Widnes Road, Widnes

National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations is a registered charity promoting a Christian ethic but providing help and assistance to young people, regardless of faith, gender, race or ability. The organisation uses the working name of YMCA England.

The property is used as a shop for the sale of donated goods, to provide funds for the organisation. These funds are used to provide support, social welfare, recreation and other leisure activities for people of all ages, with the object of improving their condition of life.

As a registered charity, the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations receives 80% Mandatory Rate Relief but the application also contains a request for 20% Discretionary Rate Relief. The

organisation was not awarded the additional relief for a charity shop at 8 Halton Lea, Runcorn.

Cost to Taxpayer (75%) 2006/07 £557.86

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Members are required by the regulations to consider each application on its own merit. Any recommendations provided are given for guidance only and are consistent with previous decisions and council policy.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 75% of any Discretionary Rate Relief granted to organisations receiving Mandatory Rate Relief must be met by the Council Taxpayer, whilst 25% must be met if Mandatory Rate Relief has not been awarded. Appendix 1 identifies the cost to the Council Taxpayer for each new application. All the applicants provide support and/or education to the community, which is consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are no key risks associated with the proposed action.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 YMCA England will provide assistance to **any** person, requesting the support of the organisation.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Application form and supporting evidence	Catalyst House, Widnes	Phil Murphy, Business Rates Manager

APPENDIX 1

Ratepayer	Address	Annual Rates 2006/2007 £	Actual Rates Payable £	Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded	Discretionary Rate Relief Claimed	Cost of Relief to HBC 2006/2007 £
National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations	73 Widnes Road, Widnes	4,763.00	3,719.05	80%	20%	557.86

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REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7th September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Financial Services

SUBJECT: Treasury Management 2006/07
1st Quarter: April-June

WARDS:

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members about activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Short Term Rates

The base rate remained at 4.5% throughout the period. The current thoughts on base rate movement are that the next move will be upwards, but not until after the new year. Sector, the Council's advisers, are forecasting a rise in September 2007.

	Start	April		May		June	
		Mid	End	Mid	End	Mid	End
Call Money (Market)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 Month (Market)	4.45	4.45	4.50	4.40	4.57	4.55	4.55
3 Month (Market)	4.50	4.50	4.56	4.59	4.59	4.63	4.63
	4.53	4.56	4.60	4.63	4.65	4.68	4.71

3.2 Longer Term Rates

The longer period rates have steadily climbed from the record low levels seen earlier in the year. Current rates are well above any trigger levels for new borrowing.

	Start	April		May		June	
		Mid	End	Mid	End	Mid	End
1 Year (Market)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 Year (Market)	4.71	4.71	4.79	4.96	4.86	4.94	4.93
10 Year (PWLB)	4.55	4.70	4.80	4.85	4.70	4.70	4.85
25 Year (PWLB)	4.35	4.50	4.60	4.60	4.50	4.50	4.65

The PWLB rates are for "lower quota" entitlements.

3.3 Temporary Borrowing/Investments

Turnover during period

	No. Of Deals Struck	Turnover £m
Short Term Borrowing	2	7.70
Short Term Investments	37	56.65

Position at Month End

	April £m	May £m	June £m
Short Term Borrowing	-	-	-
Short Term Investments	33.80	38.30	43.60

Investment Income Forecast

The Authority is currently lending at a level slightly higher than forecast and at a rate above the estimated rate. The forecast income is therefore above estimate.

3.4 Longer Term Borrowing/Investments

The Authority did not borrow any long term money. To achieve a more balanced investment book, two £2.5m investments were made for two years fixed at 5%+.

3.5 Policy Guidelines

Interest Rate Exposure – complied with.

Approved Investments/Maximum Deposits – complied with.

Borrowing Instruments – complied with.

Prudential Indicators – complied with:

- Operational Boundary for external debt;
- Upper limit on interest rate exposure on fixed rate debt;
- Upper limit on interest rate exposure on variable rate debt;
- Maturity structure of borrowing as a percentage of fixed rate borrowing;
- Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days;
- Maturity Structure of New Fixed rate Borrowing during 2005/06.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The main risks associated with Treasury Management are security of investment and volatility of return. To combat this, the Authority operated within a clearly defined Treasury Management Policy and an annual borrowing and investment strategy, which set out the control framework.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no issues under this heading.

**8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

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REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7th September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Financial Services

SUBJECT: Treasury Management 2005/06

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To comply with the Council's Treasury Management Policy Statement an annual review of the year report must be prepared and reviewed.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The annual review is attached in the Appendix.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The main risks associated with Treasury Management are security of investment and volatility of return. To combat this, the Authority operates within a clearly defined Treasury Management Policy and an annual borrowing and investment strategy which sets out the control framework.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no issues under this heading.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Working papers	Accountancy Office	J. Viggers

APPENDIX

TREASURY MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL REVIEW 2005/06

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Treasury management in local government is regulated by the 1996 revision of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities (the Code). This Council has adopted the Code and fully complies with its requirements. The primary requirement of the Code is the formulation and agreement by full Council of a Treasury Policy Statement which sets out Council, Committee and Operational Director – Financial Services' responsibilities, and delegation and reporting arrangements. (A new revision of the Code was published in December 2001 which was adopted in March 2002 for the 2002/03 year onwards.)

1.2 A requirement of the Council's Treasury Policy Statement is the reporting to the Executive Board Sub-Committee of both the expected treasury activity for the forthcoming financial year (the annual treasury strategy statement) and subsequently the results of the Council's treasury management activities in that year (this annual treasury report). Treasury management in this context is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's cash flows, its borrowings and its investments, the management of the associated risks, and the pursuit of the optimum performance or return consistent with those risks".

1.3 This annual report covers:

- the Council's current treasury position;
- performance measurement;
- the borrowing strategy for 2005/06;
- the borrowing outturn for 2005/06;
- compliance with treasury limits;
- investments strategy for 2005/06;
- investments outturn for 2005/06;
- debt rescheduling;
- other issues.

2.0 CURRENT PORTFOLIO POSITION

2.1 The Council's debt position at the beginning and end of year was as follows:

	31st March 2006				31st March 2005		
	Principal £m	£m	Rate %	Life Yrs	Principal	Rate %	Life Yrs
Fixed Rate Funding							
– PWLB	10.00		3.70	50	21.00	7.11	14.50
– Market	10.00	20.00	4.42	2-60	10.00	4.50	2-40
Variable Rate Funding							
– PWLB	0.00				10.00	4.87	
– Market	4.00	4.00	4.46		3.00	4.79	
Total Debt		24.00	4.13		44.00	5.35	
Investments							
– In-house	33.40		4.66		28.50	5.19	
– With Managers	0.00				0.00		
Total Investments		33.40	4.66		28.50	5.39	

3.0 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

3.1 One of the key changes in the revision of the Code in 1996 was the formal introduction of performance measurement relating to investments, debt and capital financing activities. Whilst investment performance criteria have been well developed and universally accepted, debt performance indicators continue to be a more problematic area with the traditional average portfolio rate of interest acting as the main guide (as incorporated in the table in section 2). CIPFA has however issued draft indicators, although accompanied by a cautionary note. In effect these represent a potential range of statistics which will not give a definitive set of indicators, but will rather aid comparison with neighbouring authorities treasury structures.

The use of benchmarks for investments may be inappropriate for those Local Authorities with small cash balances as they may only be able to put money out for short periods and often at weaker rates.

4.0 THE STRATEGY FOR 2005/06

Sections 4.0 and 5.0 are reproduced from the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the Executive Board Sub-Committee on 14th March 2005.

4.1 The Council appointed Sector Treasury Services as a treasury adviser to the Council and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Appendix A draws together a number of current City forecasts for short term or variable (the base rate or repo rate) and longer fixed interest rates.

4.2 Sector View: Interest rate forecast – January 2005

(%)	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006	Q/E1 2007	Q/E2 2007	Q/E3 2007
Base Rate	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.25%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%
5 yr Gilt Yield	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.75%	4.75%
10 yr PWLB	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%
25 yr PWLB	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%

4.3 Economic background

UK

- Above trend GDP robust, but indications of weakening activity ahead.
- Slowdown in household spending and weakening housing market.
- Benign inflation at present, may rise in 2005 as high street competition cannot sustain the current situation against the effect of rising oil prices.
- Sterling expected to remain at \$1.80 or above.

International

- US - measured interest rate raising by the Federal Reserve; weak trend employment data.
- Consumer slowdown shows no signs of abating and this will be compounded by high oil prices, rising interest rates, the fading effects of past tax cuts and a faltering labour market.
- US inflation benign.
- ECB has held repo rate at 2.00% since June 2003.
- Weak domestic demand/export led growth indicates an economy about to suffer as world economy expected to slow.

Interest rate forecast

- The base rate is expected to rise to 5.00% in Q1 2005, but is nearing the peak of the cycle, and is consequently expected to fall back in 2005.

Long term 25 year PWLB rate:

- Expected to remain around 4.75%.
 - Housing market to weaken from fast market increases causing consumers to feel the pinch.
 - Slower global growth driven by weakness in the US.

5.0 CAPITAL BORROWINGS AND THE BORROWING PORTFOLIO STRATEGY

5.1 The anticipation is that there is not likely to be much difference between short-term variable PWLB rates and medium and long-term PWLB fixed rate borrowing during 2005/06 provided base rate stays around 4.75% as expected until quarter 3 of 2005. Variable rate borrowing will therefore be slightly more expensive than long term fixed borrowing during quarter 2, but is expected to become cheaper in quarter 1 of 2006 when base rate is forecast to fall to 4.5%. Thereafter variable rate borrowing is expected to become still cheaper during 2006 and so the gap will widen further between long term fixed and variable rates.

5.2 Long-term rates are not currently expected to move significantly in 2005/06 but may drift to the downside.

5.3 These interest rate expectations provide a variety of options:

- that short-term variable rates will be good value compared to long-term rates, and are likely to remain so for potentially at least the next couple of years. Best value will therefore be achieved by borrowing short term at variable rates in order to minimise borrowing costs in the short term or to make short-term savings in order to meet budgetary constraints. To assist in effective debt management the authority should attempt to build up the level of volatility [exposure to variable rate borrowing] in their debt portfolios. If fixed PWLB rates should fall significantly, then a suitable trigger point for considering new fixed rate long term borrowing would be about 4.5%.
- that the risks intrinsic in the shorter term variable rates are such, when compared to historically relatively low long term fixed funding, which may be achievable in 2005/06, that the Council will maintain a stable, longer term portfolio by drawing longer term fixed rate funding at a marginally higher rate than short term rates.

5.4 Against this background caution will be adopted with the 2005/06 treasury operations. The Executive Director of Resources will monitor the interest rate market and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances, reporting any decisions to Corporate Services Board at the next available opportunity.

5.5 Sensitivity of the forecast - The main sensitivities of the forecast are likely to be the two scenarios below. The Council officers, in conjunction with the treasury advisers, will continually monitor both the prevailing interest rates and the market forecasts, adopting the following responses to a change of sentiment:

- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp rise in long and short term rates, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in world economic activity, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates were still relatively cheap.
- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp fall in long and short term rates, due to e.g. growth rates remaining low or weakening, then long term borrowings will be postponed, and any rescheduling from fixed rate funding into variable or short rate funding will be exercised.

6.0 OUTTURN FOR 2005/06

6.1 Shorter-term interest rates

Base rate had peaked at 4.75%, in August 2004 and remained there at the start of 2005/06. Base rate cuts came back onto the MPC's agenda during quarter 2 of 2005 as the slowdown in consumer expenditure gathered momentum. Activity weakened in other areas of the economy and manufacturing output fell for a second quarter in a row i.e. a technical recession. Claimant count unemployment showed monthly increases although total employment continued to grow. During quarter 3, the interest rate cycle turned with a base rate cut to 4.5% in August as overall economic growth and growth in household expenditure continued to weaken. The rise in the oil price to a record high of just under \$70 per barrel pushed manufacturer's price inflation up to 14% in July – the highest rate since records began in 1987. Manufacturers absorbed most of this increase but CPI inflation nevertheless jumped above the MPC's 2.0% target level, from 1.9% in March to 2.4% in August. However, there was little evidence of this jump in inflation feeding through into second round inflation effects (e.g. pay increases). The August MPC minutes revealed only a narrow majority voting in favour of a cut so market expectations and confidence of a further cut to 4.25% were abated. In quarter 4, the MPC left interest rates on hold as it became very concerned that the rise in CPI inflation would feed through into second round wage

effects, although there was actually little evidence that this was occurring. CPI inflation behaved itself well, falling from a peak of 2.5% in September to 2.1% in November while average earnings were on a downward trend from a peak of 4.5% reached in July. One MPC member started to vote for a further base rate cut at the December MPC meeting which, together with the overall weak tenor of economic news, shifted market sentiment after the release of the MPC minutes from the next move being up to now remaining stable. This was what indeed happened during quarter 1 of 2006 as MPC concerns continued at possible second round inflationary effects and over a modest recovery in the housing market, with house prices rising 5.4% in March (Nationwide survey). CPI actually dipped below the 2.0% target in both January (1.9%) and March (1.8%) but on the other hand, manufacturer's output inflation rose from 2.3% in November to 2.9% in February. In addition, the high wholesale price of gas fed through into price hikes of up to 20% to the consumer. GDP growth had been on a rising trend from a floor +0.2% q/q in Q1 2005 to +0.7% in Q1 2006. Despite that, claimant count unemployment increased in each month of 2005/06 and significant levels of immigration, particularly from Eastern Europe, had also helped to keep wage inflation at modest levels. Overall, the broadly stronger tenor of economic news militated against a cut in base rate in quarter 1 and only one MPC member voted for a rate cut at all three MPC meetings in the quarter.

In the US, the Fed. continued its programme of measured increases in the Fed. rate in order to return it to more normal levels after being at 1.0% up to June 2004. Further 0.25% increases pushed the rate up from 2.75% at the start of 2005/06 to finish the year at 4.75%. GDP growth peaked in 2004 at 4.2% before settling back to 3.6 % in 2005 and a forecast 3.0% in 2006. Hurricane Katrina at the end of August, caused a temporary blip to employment and production, both of which soon recovered.

In the Euro zone, the ECB left its rate unchanged at 2.0% throughout 2004 and then again through nearly all of 2005 until it raised the rate to 2.25% in December and then to 2.5% in March after the economy at long last stirred into a moderate increase in growth. GDP growth improved from 0.7% in 2003 to 1.8% in 2004 but fell back to 1.5% in 2005. It is expected to recover to average 2.3% in 2006.

6.2 12-month bid rates

The 12-month LIBID rate started the year at a high point for the year of just over 5.0% but then fell and made a number of brief sorties down to around 4.35% in July to October before market expectations of one possible imminent further cut in base rate to 4.25% finally vanished. By the end of 2005/06, the rate had climbed steadily back up to 4.70% as market expectations geared themselves up for an increase in base rate as being the next move on the back of the recovery of GDP growth to near the long term average and concerns around inflation.

6.3 5 and 10 Year Gilts

The 5-year gilt yield fell from about 4.68% (10 year 4.73%) at the start of the year to a low of about 4.05% (10 yr 4.09%) on 1 September (after being at nearly similar levels previously around the end of June) before hitting two peaks around 4.45% (10 year 4.40%) in early November and the end of March. The 10 year gilt hit a low of about 3.96% in mid January 2006.

6.4 Longer-term interest rates

The PWLB 25-30 year rate started the year at 4.750% and then fell into a range of 4.30 – 4.50% for most of 2005 after mid May. However, long gilt yields plunged to levels unprecedented in recent history in late January and the 25-30 year rate bottomed out at 3.85% before rising back to a new peak of 4.25% at the end of the year. A major innovation in 2005/06 was the introduction by the Government of the longest maturity period gilts since the 1960s, namely for 50 years. The first issue of £2.5bn on 26.5.05 was followed by further similar sized tranches in July, December and February. The PWLB took its cue from the 7 December issue to introduce at the same time new PWLB borrowing for maturity periods longer than 25 – 30 years and up to a maximum of 45 – 50 years. This longest band started at a rate of 4.20% (compared to 4.30% for 25-30 year borrowing) and the rate bottomed at 3.70% in late January before ending the year at 4.15%. The phenomenally low rates above were widely interpreted as having been caused by unusually high demand for long gilts from non UK institutions including oil rich and Asian countries buying financial assets with their cash mountains.

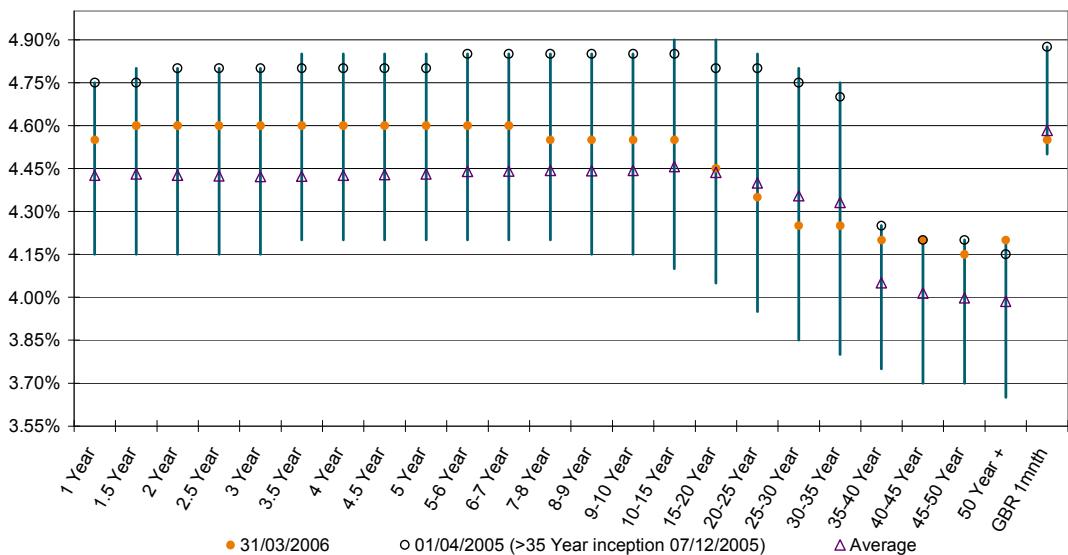
7.0 BORROWING OUTTURN FOR 2005/06

7.1 As comparative performance indicators, average PWLB maturity loan interest rates for 2005/06 were:

1 year	4.43%
9 - 10 year	4.44%
25 - 30 year	4.35%
45 – 50 year	4.00%
1 month GBR variable	4.58%

7.2 The graph below shows the range (high and low points) in rates for each maturity period during the year, and individual rates at the start and end of the financial year.

PWLB rates 2005/06



7.3 Debt Performance

As highlighted in section 2.1, above the average debt portfolio interest rate has moved over the course of the year from 5.35% to 4.13%. The approach during the year was to fund borrowing from surplus cash unless rates were particularly attractive when the Council would draw longer term fixed rate debt to take advantage of low long term rates and reduce exposure to fluctuations in short term interest rates.

7.4 The only new long term borrowing transaction was as follows:

Loan No.	Value	Type	Period	Rate
491216	£10m	Maturity	50 years	3.70%

8.0 COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY LIMITS

8.1

During the financial year the Council operated within the treasury limits set out in the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Strategy Statement.

9.0 TEMPORARY INVESTMENTS STRATEGY

Section 9.0 is reproduced from the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the Executive Board Sub-Committee on 14th March 2005.

9.1 In-house funds:

The Council's in-house managed funds have during the past twelve months been in the value range of 18 to 25m with a core balance of around 10m which is available for investment over a longer (say) 2-3 year period. Investments will accordingly be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12

months). A suggested limit on maturities over one year would be a maximum of 75%, with a limit over 2 years of a maximum of 50%.

The Council already has investments that span the financial year e.g. longer-dated deposits including callable deposits, which were taken out at the peak of the last rate cycle as shown below.

	Amount	Maturity	Rate
Cheshire BS	2.0m	02/06/05	5.22
Cheshire BS	2.5m	15/08/05	5.30
Norwich & Peterborough BS	2.5m	15/08/05	5.30
Nottingham BS	2.5m	01/07/05	5.22

It is unlikely therefore that further long dated investments will be undertaken until either rates improve or these investments mature.

Interest Rate Outlook : Sector's is forecasting base rates to be on a falling trend from 4.75 % in Q1 and Q2 2005 to 4.50% in Q1 & 2 of 2006. The Council will therefore seek to continue to lock in longer period investments at higher rates before this fall starts for some element of its investment portfolio which represents its core balances.

The Council has identified 4.95% as an attractive trigger rate for 1-year lending and 4.90% for 2-3 year lending. The 'trigger points' will be kept under review and discussed with Sector so that investments can be made at the appropriate time.

For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its business reserve accounts and short-dated deposits (1-3 months) in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

End of year Investment Report

At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

10.0 INVESTMENTS OUTTURN FOR 2005/06

- 10.1 Internally Managed Investments – The authority manages its investments in-house and invests within the institutions listed in the authority's approved lending list. The authority invests for a range of periods from overnight to 3 years, dependent on the authority's cash flows and the interest rates on offer.
- 10.2 Investment Outturn – Detailed below is the result of the investment strategy undertaken by the Council.

	Average Investment Level	Rate of Return (gross of fees)	Rate of Return (net of fees)	Benchmark Return*
Internally Managed	£30.337m	4.90%	4.90%	4.64%

*The benchmark for internally managed funds is the average 7-day LIBID rate (uncompounded) sourced from the Financial Times. The benchmark for externally managed funds is the 7 day LIBID rate, averaged for the week, and compounded weekly.

NB: The 3 month LIBID benchmark rate was 4.57%.

10.3 No institutions in which investments were made showed any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

11.0 DEBT RESCHEDULING

11.1 Halton had already fixed the borrowing position in preparation for the Housing Stock Transfer and it would not have been beneficial to do any rescheduling in advance of this.

11.2 After the stock transfer, during January 2006, long term rates fell to an all time low and the Council renegotiated the Depfa Bank Borrowing as follows:

Was	LTBI	£10m	6 months rollover	40 years	4.50%
Now	LTBI(a)	£10m	6 months rollover	60 years	4.42%

12.0 OTHER ISSUES

12.1 Euro Entry

The Chancellor made a statement in Parliament on 9 June 2003 on the outcome of the five tests that needed to be passed prior to UK entry into the Euro. The conclusion reached was that the UK was not yet ready to enter into the Euro; most commentators and the foreign currency exchanges, considered that the UK would be unlikely to meet those tests for at least several years although the Government announced it was keeping the door open.

12.2 Housing Stock Transfer

In treasury management terms, the stock transfer went smoothly. The careful positioning of the Authority's external debt in the preceding two years meant that the Government fully repaid all the Council's PWLB debt and its associated premia.

This was achieved by rescheduling the low interest rate debt at a discount, and replacing it with short term variable money up to the maximum limit. This produced a one-off discount of £368,000 for the

Council whilst leaving a premia of £9.544m to be picked up by the Government at the transfer date.

APPENDIX A

INTEREST RATE FORECASTS

The data below shows a variety of forecasts published by a number of institutions. The first three are individual forecasts including those of UBS and Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy). The final two represent summarised figures drawn from the population of all major City banks and academic institutions. The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views.

1. INDIVIDUAL FORECASTS**Sector View** interest rate forecast – January 2005

	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006	Q/E1 2007	Q/E2 2007	Q/E3 2007
Base Rate	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.25%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%
5 yr Gilt Yield	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.75%	4.75%
10 yr PWLB Rate	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%
25 yr PWLB Rate	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%

UBS Economic interest rate forecast (for quarter ends) - January 2005

	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006
Base Rate	4.75%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
10 yr PWLB Rate	4.70%	4.60%	4.65%	4.70%	4.70%	4.70%	4.70%	4.70%
25 yr PWLB Rate	4.55%	4.55%	4.60%	4.65%	4.65%	4.65%	4.65%	4.65%

Capital Economics interest rate forecast – January 2005

	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006
Base Rate	4.75%	4.50%	4.25%	4.00%	3.75%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
5 yr Gilt Yield	4.40%	4.30%	4.20%	4.00%	3.80%	3.60%	3.70%	3.80%
10 yr PWLB Rate	4.55%	4.45%	4.45%	4.35%	4.25%	4.15%	4.25%	4.35%
25 yr PWLB Rate	4.50%	4.40%	4.50%	4.45%	4.50%	4.50%	4.55%	4.55%

2. SURVEY OF ECONOMIC FORECASTS

HM Treasury – 15.12.04 summary of forecasts of 28 City and 14 academic analysts for Q4 2004 and 2005. (2006 – 2008 are as at November 2004 but are based on 11 forecasts)

	Quarter Ended		Annual Average Repo		
	Q4 2004	Q4 2005	Average 2006	Average 2007	Average 2008
Indep. Forecasters BoE Base Rate	4.77%	4.77%	4.81%	4.82%	4.76%
Highest Base Rate	5.00%	5.25%	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%
Lowest Base Rate	4.75%	3.90%	4.10%	4.10%	3.80%

APPENDIX B

Date	Base Rate	7 Day Libid	1 Year	9-10 Year	20-25 Year	50 Year
	%	%	%	%	%	%
April 1, 2005	4.75	4.74	4.75	4.85	4.80	4.70
April 8, 2005	4.75	4.75	4.70	4.80	4.75	4.70
April 15, 2005	4.75	4.77	4.70	4.80	4.75	4.70
April 22, 2005	4.75	4.72	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.60
April 29, 2005	4.75	4.71	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.60
May 6, 2005	4.75	4.71	4.60	4.65	4.65	4.60
May 13, 2005	4.75	4.70	4.50	4.55	4.55	4.50
May 20, 2005	4.75	4.69	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.45
May 27, 2005	4.75	4.69	4.40	4.50	4.50	4.45
June 3, 2005	4.75	4.69	4.35	4.40	4.40	4.40
June 10, 2005	4.75	4.72	4.40	4.35	4.40	4.35
June 17, 2005	4.75	4.70	4.50	4.55	4.55	4.50
June 24, 2005	4.75	4.77	4.35	4.40	4.45	4.40
July 1, 2005	4.75	4.69	4.25	4.30	4.35	4.35
July 8, 2005	4.75	4.78	4.15	4.35	4.40	4.35
July 15, 2005	4.75	4.70	4.25	4.50	4.55	4.50
July 22, 2005	4.75	4.75	4.30	4.50	4.55	4.55
July 29, 2005	4.75	4.65	4.30	4.45	4.50	4.45
August 5, 2005	4.50	4.48	4.35	4.50	4.55	4.50
August 12, 2005	4.50	4.41	4.45	4.55	4.55	4.50
August 19, 2005	4.50	4.51	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.35
August 26, 2005	4.50	4.52	4.35	4.35	4.40	4.40
September 2, 2005	4.50	4.60	4.20	4.25	4.35	4.35
September 9, 2005	4.50	4.60	4.30	4.30	4.35	4.35
September 16, 2005	4.50	4.57	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35
September 23, 2005	4.50	4.45	4.30	4.30	4.35	4.30
September 30, 2005	4.50	4.48	4.35	4.40	4.40	4.35
October 7, 2005	4.50	4.42	4.30	4.40	4.40	4.40
October 14, 2005	4.50	4.55	4.35	4.55	4.55	4.50
October 21, 2005	4.50	4.45	4.45	4.55	4.50	4.45
October 28, 2005	4.50	4.43	4.45	4.55	4.50	4.45
November 4, 2005	4.50	4.51	4.55	4.60	4.50	4.45
November 11, 2005	4.50	4.43	4.50	4.55	4.50	4.40
November 18, 2005	4.50	4.45	4.40	4.35	4.30	4.25
November 25, 2005	4.50	4.43	4.35	4.35	4.30	4.25
December 2, 2005	4.50	4.50	4.35	4.35	4.30	4.20
December 9, 2005	4.50	4.47	4.45	4.40	4.30	4.10
December 16, 2005	4.50	4.63	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.10
December 23, 2005	4.50	4.60	4.30	4.35	4.25	4.05
December 30, 2005	4.50	4.60	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.05

Date	Base Rate	7 Day Libid	1 Year	9-10 Year	20-25 Year	50 Year
	%	%	%	%	%	%
January 6, 2006	4.50	4.48	4.30	4.25	4.15	3.95
January 13, 2006	4.50	4.46	4.35	4.25	4.10	3.85
January 20, 2006	4.50	4.47	4.35	4.20	4.00	3.75
January 27, 2006	4.50	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.15	3.85
February 2, 2006	4.50	4.43	4.50	4.35	4.15	3.85
February 9, 2006	4.50	4.41	4.40	4.35	4.20	3.95
February 16, 2006	4.50	4.42	4.40	4.35	4.20	4.05
February 24, 2006	4.50	4.43	4.40	4.30	4.10	3.95
March 3, 2006	4.50	4.59	4.50	4.40	4.15	4.00
March 10, 2006	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.45	4.30	4.10
March 17, 2006	4.50	4.62	4.50	4.45	4.30	4.10
March 24, 2006	4.50	4.44	4.55	4.50	4.30	4.10
March 31, 2006	4.50	4.58	4.55	4.55	4.35	4.20
Maximum	4.75	4.77	4.75	4.85	4.80	4.70
Minimum	4.50	4.41	4.15	4.20	4.00	3.75
Spread	0.25	0.36	0.60	0.65	0.80	0.95
Average	4.67	4.66	4.51	4.53	4.48	4.38

APPENDIX C

PRUENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2005/06

The following prudential indicators were set for the purposes of an integrated treasury management strategy.

No.	Prudential	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £
	(1) Extract from Budget and Rent Setting			
3	Affordable Borrowing	4.17	4.93	4.93
4	Increase in Council Tax B7 (Band D, per annum)	-	-	-
7	Increase in Housing Rent per			
	Capital Financing Requirement (as at 31 March)	£m	£m	£m
	Non-HRA	70.4	76.6	82.5
	HRA (applies only to Housing Authorities)	-	-	-
	TOTAL	70.4	76.6	82.5

No.	Prudential	2005/06 £m	2006/07 £m	2007/08 £m
	(2) Treasury Management Prudential			
9	Authorised Limit for External Borrowing	range 33.9-64.9	32.0	34.9
	Other Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-
	TOTAL	33.9-64.9	32.0	34.9
10	Operational Boundary Borrowing	range 23.9-54.9	22.0	24.9
	Other Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-
	TOTAL	23.9-54.9	22.0	24.9
12	Upper Limit for Fixed Interest Rate Expressed as Net Principal re Variable Borrowing/ Investments	54.9 (100%)	22.0 (100%)	24.9 (100%)
13	Upper Limit for Variable Rate Expressed as Net Principal re Variable Borrowing/ Investments Net Interest re Variable Rate Borrowing/ Investments	54.9 (100%)	22.0 (100%)	24.9 (100%)
14	Maturity Structure of New Fixed Rate Borrowing during 2005/06 Under 12 months		Upper 100%	Lower 0%
	12 months and within 24 months		50%	0%
	24 months and within 5 years		75%	0%
	5 years and within 10 years		75%	0%
	10 years and above		100%	0%

No.	Prudential	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
15	Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums invested for over Up to 1 year (per maturity date) Up to 2 years (per maturity date) 2 Years+ (per maturity date)	100% 75% 25%	100% 75% 25%	100% 75% 25%

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AGENDA ITEM NO.

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7th September, 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Sale of Land at Avondale Drive, Widnes

WARDS: Broadheath

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek approval to the sale of land forming part of the site of the former Our Lady of Perpetual Succour R. C. Infants School, Avondale Drive, Widnes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) the report is noted, and,
- (2) approval be given for the sale of the site of the former Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Infants School, Avondale Drive, Widnes to Beara Properties.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- The land shown edged red on the attached plan is the site of the former Our Lady of Perpetual Succour R. C. Infants School which closed in July 2001 and was subsequently demolished.
- The Council owns the land shown hatched on the plan (0.11 hcts or thereabouts) with the remainder of the site being within the ownership of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool (0.46 hcts or thereabouts). The Council's land is landlocked and therefore it was proposed that the Diocese and the Council dispose of the entire site jointly.
- Discussions took place with the Diocese with regard to the proceeds of sale and it was provisionally agreed that the Council would receive 50% of the pro-rata net capital receipt for the entire site. The 50% reduction reflects the fact that the Council's site is landlocked with no retained rights of access.
- The site was advertised for sale on the open market. Prospective purchasers were also required to submit details of their proposed development.
- 14 bids were received ranging from £300,000 to £1,134,500. The bids, together with the development proposals were considered by

the Diocese representative and the Council's Land and Property Manager and Planning Officer.

- All the development proposals included apartments which would not be acceptable from a planning prospective. The four highest bidders were therefore invited to resubmit their bids and development proposals taking into account the Borough Council's planning advice.
- Two revised bids were received, £867,322 from Langtree Homes and £1m from Beara Properties.
- The proposal from Beara Properties provides a scheme of 20 dwellings comprising detached and semi-detached properties. They have taken into account the requirement to locate a substantial amount of the parking behind the building line. They have also incorporated relevant contributions for public open space and loss of green space.
- Acceptance of the bid will give the Borough Council a projected capital receipt of £96,500 and therefore this is recommended for acceptance.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- There will be resource implications in that there will be a capital receipt in the region of £96,500 on completion of the documentation.
- There will be legal implications in that documentation will be required for the disposal.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

If the Council does not dispose of its site jointly with the Diocese, it will be left with responsibility for a plot of land to which it is unable to gain access.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality and diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

8.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

The site has been advertised for sale on the open market. The bid from Beara Properties is the highest bid and also proposes a scheme that is provisionally acceptable from a planning prospective.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The alternative is a do nothing approach which will leave the Borough Council with a responsibility for a plot of land to which it has no formal right of access.

10.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

As soon as possible

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act

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REPORT: Executive Board

DATE: 7 September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: New Term Contract for Surface Treatments
April 2007 to March 2012

WARD: Borough Wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report requests agreement to the preparation of an ad-hoc select list of suitable contractors for a new highway surface treatments contract to replace the existing contract that expires on 31st March 2007.
2. **RECOMMENDED: That an ad-hoc select list of suitable contractors be prepared and used to procure a new highway surface treatments contract in the form of a Partnering Arrangement based on a schedule of rates to run from 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2012, with an option to extend the contract by a further five years by agreement of the parties.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The existing term contract for "Combined Carriageway & Footway Surface Dressing and Footway Slurry Sealing Term Maintenance Contract (2002 to 2007) – Contract Number HE 334" expires on 31st March 2007. The new term contract needs to be in place before the above date to ensure continuity and a smooth transition of work to the successor contractor.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the new contract would be a framework document based on a schedule of rates but without specified work packages. Works orders and annual works programmes will be raised as necessary during the period of the contract. The contract would be for an initial five years and include an option to extend by up to a further five years by agreement of the parties and subject to quality thresholds that must be met for the Employer to consider the desirability of extending the contract.
- 3.3 The use of a schedule of rates format and a works order system of procuring works will allow for continuous alteration of the size and type of works and will easily allow for variations in funding allocations.
- 3.4 Construction cost inflation will be allowed for by including Variation of Price (VOP) clauses in the contract based on Dti published cost indices.

- 3.5 The estimated value of the works covered by the contract is an average of £225,000 for each of the initial five years of the contract.
- 3.6 Public notices will be given in local and appropriate national journals inviting expressions of interest from suitable specialist surface treatment contractors. A questionnaire will be prepared and sent to those contractors who express an interest in the new surface treatments term contract. The Operational Director will draw up an ad-hoc select list of suitable contractors after consideration of replies to the questionnaire and other contractor submissions.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The annual LTP settlement and Revenue funding means that contracts must be commenced as soon as possible within the financial year to enable a realistic works programme to be implemented. It is imperative that a smooth transition from the existing term contract to this new term contract occurs to enable this Council to meet its obligations as Highway Authority to the public and others safety.
- 4.2 The necessary close working relationship between the Employer and the new term Contractor must be developed for the proper working of the contract. The present unofficial partnering arrangement and contract ethos is working well, however it is recommended that the partnering option be included in the new contract to improve the teamworking approach.
- 4.3 The new contract would be formed under the (NEC) Engineering and Construction Short Contract standard form under Option X12 – Partnering Option. Partnering has been identified as giving significant benefits as well as cost savings, which accrue from the earlier sharing of information, savings in supply chain costs, and improved process selection by early contractor involvement.
- 4.4 The Partnering Arrangement would be in line with the Council's Procurement Standing Order 1.15 and with Key Objective 2 of the corporate Procurement Strategy: "*Deliver consistent and significantly better quality services that meet the identified needs of individuals and groups within Halton and develop mixed economy, through strategic partnerships, framework agreements and collaboration with a range of public, private and voluntary suppliers*".

5. RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The main risks for the Council would arise from not having the new contract in place and the condition of the highway deteriorating to an extent that the Council would be exposed to claims for injury and damage. The risk of appointing an inappropriate contractor will be

mitigated by following the approved and established procurement processes.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no additional financial implications associated with this report. Expenditure will be met from within approved budgets. Continuity from the existing to the new term contract is essential to enable staff to carry out design and supervise construction of the works programme (both LTP and Revenue funded) within the agreed timescales.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no specific issues that will not be addressed by following the approved and established procurement processes.

8. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None

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REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7th September 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Approval of publication of House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.

WARDS: Borough wide

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the publication of draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions for the purposes of statutory public consultation.
- 1.2 A copy of the House Extensions SPD can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) The draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions be approved for the purposes of statutory public consultation;
- 2) The comments received at the partnership consultation stage, as set out in the statement of consultation and responses to them are noted;
- 3) Further editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the content of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director - Environmental & Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, if necessary, before the document is published for public consultation; and
- 4) The results of the public consultation exercise and consequent recommended modifications to the draft SPD be reported back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At the 2nd March 2006 Exec Board it was resolved that the second Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Halton be approved by the Council for

submission to the Government Office for the North West (GONW). This document sets out the spatial planning policy priorities for the Council, for the next three years. The GONW has informed the Council that they do not intend to amend the content of the LDS.

- 3.2 Included within the LDS programme of works is the production of a House Extensions SPD. The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:
 - a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
 - b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
 - c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
 - d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
 - e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
 - f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.
- 3.3 The new planning system requires that a record be kept of any consultees, their comments and how they have been taken into account, throughout the production of an SPD. An informal draft of the House Extensions SPD was circulated between 13th June 2006 and 27th June 2006 to a number of key stakeholders for comment. This consultation stage was essentially concerned with seeking technical observations from individuals within organisations that would either use or potentially endorse the document once it becomes an adopted SPD. This consultation was not looking for ratification of the document by those organisations. A list of those consulted, comments received and how these were taken into account is contained in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 3.4 Another new requirement is that a scoping exercise must be undertaken to see if a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is required to assess the environmental effects of the SPD. Between 6th April 2006 and 11th May 2006 a Scoping Report was consulted upon in line with the relevant regulations, the conclusion was that a SEA was not required in relation to this SPD. An additional new requirement in relation to producing a SPD is that a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is produced. The purpose of the SA is to independently assess the contribution that the House Extensions SPD will make to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives of sustainable development. The SA also refers back to the conclusion and responses received in relation to the Scoping Report. The SA Report (**Appendix 3**) is currently being produced and will be consulted upon at the same time as the Draft House Extensions SPD.
- 3.5 Once the formal public consultation exercise has been conducted, the responses will be recorded and taken into account. It is intended that a

further report will be written to the Executive Board, seeking formal adoption of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The SPD has been produced to ensure that through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council: -
 - a) Is in accordance with national and regional planning policy and advice.
 - b) Wherever possible meets the priorities of the community it serves, as set out in the Halton Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.
- 4.2 This SPD directly relates to a number of policies within the Halton Unitary Development Plan. It is particularly intended to provide further detail of what the Council expects in relation to H6, which provides the criteria for new house extensions.

5 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No other known implications.

6 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 No legal or financial risks to the Council can be identified so long as the statutory procedures for the preparation of SPDs are met.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 The adoption of the draft SPD does will not have any identifiable equality and diversity implications.

8 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 8.1 The alternative options considered with regard to the preparation of this document are set out in the SA Report.

9 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

<u>Document</u>	<u>Place of Inspection</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Halton Unitary Development Plan, April 2005	Planning & Policy Division, Environmental & Regulatory Services, Rutland House.	Neil Macfarlane
Halton Local Development Scheme 2006	Planning & Policy Division, Environmental & Regulatory Services, Rutland House.	Neil Macfarlane

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House Extensions



Supplementary Planning Document
Public Consultation Draft
September 2006



Halton Borough Council

Draft
House Extensions

Supplementary Planning
Document

Public Consultation
September 2006

Presented 7th September 2006 for public consultation
Between 14th September to 26th October 2006

Responses to be sent to:
Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
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This guidance note should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

I Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

1.2 By stating this purpose, the Council will seek to improve through its function as the Local Planning Authority any development proposal that does not provide for, or meet the principles encouraged and required within this SPD and the Halton UDP

1.3 These guidelines are intended to illustrate the criteria that will be applied by the council in assessing proposals for house extensions. They also provide advice for planning and designing domestic extensions in a way that will enhance the appearance of the dwelling whilst maintaining the character and amenity of the neighbourhood.

1.4 This SPD is also intended to encourage residents to follow the practical guidance it contains wherever opportunities arise whether or not formal consent is required.

1.5 **It is important that each section is not read in isolation, as guidance provided in the whole of the document will be applied, as required.**

Application of the Policy

The definition of “house” in the policy includes bungalows, but excludes apartments or maisonettes.

“Extension” means all additions to the house whether attached or not, and includes garages.

This House Extensions SPD also applies to:

- Houses that are listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas.
- Houses in the Green Belt.

However, due to the special characteristics of these areas, more stringent controls may need to be applied.

Exceptions may be considered for an extension to provide basic amenities or facilities at ground floor level for a disabled person. However, where possible, the extension should be designed to comply with the guidance. In circumstances where the guidance cannot be adhered to, acceptable proof of disability and a written statement justifying why an exception should be made shall be submitted with any application.

2 Guiding Principles

2.1 This section sets out some of the documents that contain guiding principles that have been used to inform the general principles set out in this document.

By Design

2.2 By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice, is a companion guide to National planning policy guidance. It does not provide policy, but encourages better design. By Design summarises the objectives of urban design as:

- **Character** - A place with its own identity
- **Continuity and enclosure** - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- **Quality of the public realm** - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
- **Ease of movement** - A place that is easy to get to and move through
- **Legibility** - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- **Adaptability** - A place that can change easily
- **Diversity** - A place with variety and choice

Securing the Future

2.3 Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy, sets out the Government's sustainable development agenda. It sets the following guiding principles for sustainable development:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

Building in Context

2.4 The belief underlying 'Building in context' is that the right approach is to be found in examining the context for any proposed development in great detail and relating the new building to its surroundings through an informed character appraisal. It suggests that a successful project will:

- relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it;
- respect important views;
- respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings; and
- create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

3 General Principles for all Extensions

3.1 These principles apply to all extensions:

Design in relation to existing dwellings

3.2 An extension should relate closely to, and harmonise with the existing building in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance. In particular:

- The size of the extension should be subordinate to the size of the dwelling as first built.
- The external materials used shall closely match those of the existing dwelling in their design (see diagram 1).



Diagram 1: Poor choice of external materials for the extension

- On prominent elevations, problems of bonding old with new brickwork on the same plane should be overcome by setting the extension back from the main wall of the dwelling.
- The roof of an extension should be pitched to match that of the existing dwelling. Flat roofs are not normally acceptable, except where they are a feature of the original dwelling house. (see diagram 2)
- The windows of any extensions should be in line with existing windows and should match their proportions, size and design. (see diagram 2)



Diagram 2: Examples of side extensions – one with an appropriate pitched roof and well matched windows and one with an inappropriate flat roof and poorly matched windows.

How and where to extend?

3.3 The choice of how and where to extend will depend upon a variety of factors. However, the Council's policies as set out in this booklet will be an indicator as to whether or not a particular proposal will be acceptable.

3.4 The position of the dwelling within its plot will be one of the most important considerations. Is there more space at the side or at the rear? How will the extension relate to the internal arrangement of the house?

3.5 For dwellings in substantial plots, there may be several options where an extension can be accommodated with little affect on neighbouring properties.

3.6 However, a basic principle to follow is that extensions should respect the style and character of the original house and not overwhelm it.

Effect on the street scene and the character of the area

3.7 Apart from its relationship to the existing house, an extension should not be visually detrimental to the existing

character or appearance of the street scene or the surrounding area. In particular:

- Where a house is one of a group, similar in appearance and significant in the street scene, the effect of an extension to that house on the appearance of the group, as well as the individual house should be carefully considered.
- An extension should respect any regularity and width of spaces between existing houses and the visual effect of these spaces when significant in the street scene.
- An extension should respect any regularity in the distance between the road and the frontage walls of existing houses when this distance is a significant factor in the street scene.
- An extension at the rear of a dwelling should not be so extensive in relation to the size of the rear garden or yard that the enlarged house would constitute overdevelopment of the site that would be out of character with the area.

Amenity of neighbours

3.8 An extension should respect the existing standard of daylight and privacy experienced by neighbours, in particular:

- Where principal windows will allow views to other principal windows of a neighbouring property, a minimum distance of 21 metres must be maintained. (see diagram 3)

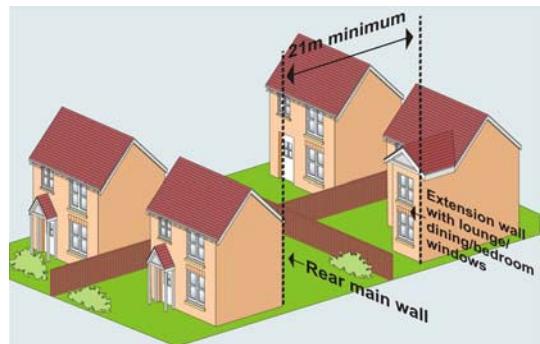


Diagram 3: 21 metres between facing principal windows

- Where principal windows directly face a blank elevation, a minimum distance of 13 metres must be maintained. (see diagram 4)

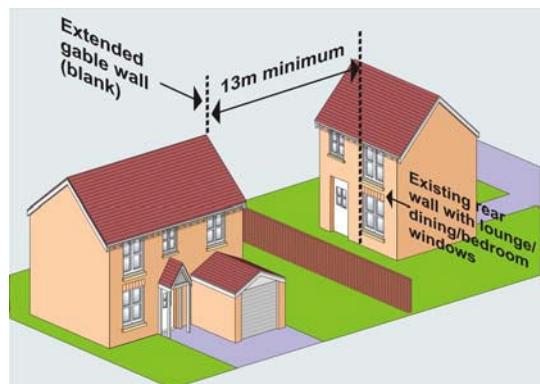


Diagram 4: 13 metres between principal windows and blank wall

- Where the house concerned is more than two storeys, the Council will normally apply a further 3 metres for each additional floor in addition to the distances stated above. For example, a three-storey house will normally require 16 metres (13m + the additional 3m) between a principal window and a blank elevation or 24 metres (21m+3m) between facing principal windows.
- Any new patio area or balcony at first floor levels should not have the potential for an unacceptable degree of overlooking from any main window of a principal room in an adjacent house; nor for the direct sideways overlooking of

neighbouring private garden or yard.

- The Council uses the '45-degree rule' to help assess impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties and to protect from overshadowing or obstruction, caused by large extensions on or close to the boundary. The code is principally applied to single storey rear extensions and side extensions where building lines are staggered. (see diagrams 5, 6 & 7)



Diagram 5: The '45-degree Rule' applied to a semi detached or terraced property

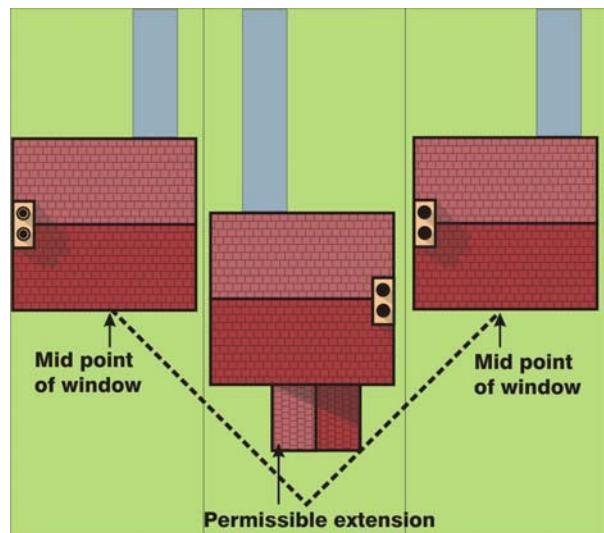


Diagram 7: The '45-degree Rule' applied to staggered properties

Note: a principal window is a main window of a living room, dining room, conservatory or a bedroom.

Building Control

3.9 Building regulation requirements should be taken during the design of any alteration or extension. More advice on the building regulations may be obtained from the Council's Building Control Division, contact details can be found in the Appendix.

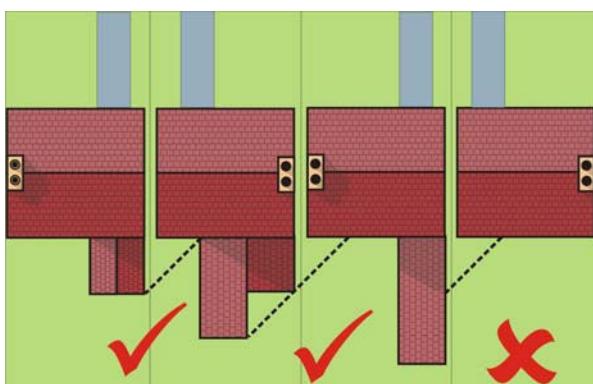


Diagram 6: The '45-degree Rule' applied to a detached property

4 Front Extensions & Porches

4.1 These principles apply to front extensions and porches:

- Front extensions should respect the existing property, and neighbouring properties, regarding design, size and siting.
- Any extension to the front elevation must be designed to harmonise with the existing property.
- Proposals should not result in the loss of existing parking provision.
- If the buildings on the street follow an established pattern or clear building line, front extensions are more likely to be considered to adversely affect the appearance of the street scene.
- Where planning permission is required, conversions of integrated or attached garages will not normally be allowed if two off road parking spaces cannot be provided.
- Porch extensions should also match the original design of the property.
- The height of the porch should not exceed the sill height of the first floor windows.



Diagram 8: Inappropriate porch extension.

5 Side Extensions

5.1 To avoid terracing and / or an unbalanced effect, two storey and first floor side extensions to a semi detached, linked detached or end terrace property, should incorporate the following principles:

- The extension should not exceed more than 50% of the width of the frontage of the original dwelling.
- A minimum of 800mm shall be retained between the sidewall of the extension and the inside of the plot boundary to allow for access to the rear for bin and cycle storage. (see diagram 9)
- A minimum gap of 800mm shall be retained between the sidewall of the first floor and the plot boundary. (see diagram 9)



Diagram 9: Good side extension with 800mm retained between the sidewall of an extension and the plot boundary

- The extension shall be set back a minimum of 1 metre from the main front elevation of the existing dwelling. (see diagram 10)
- The roof of the extension shall have a lower ridge height, than the existing house. (see diagram 10)



Diagram 10: Good side extension - set back 1m and with lower ridge height

- A minimum of two off road car parking spaces shall be provided.

Other considerations

5.2 This policy is designed to prevent extensions at the side of detached or semi detached houses from joining up with neighbouring houses to create a continuous terrace effect. Whilst there is nothing wrong with terraced housing as such, the aim of the policy is to protect street scene and the amenities of areas that were originally designed and laid out as detached or semi detached developments. Such areas can provide attractive views between houses to trees and the scene beyond, and they permit the penetration of sunlight and daylight into the street and into gardens and rooms opposite the gaps. Closure of these important gaps between dwellings can alter the character of a residential street leading to a reduction in the amenity enjoyed by residents and passers by. (see diagram 11)



Diagram 11: Inappropriate side extensions which have lead to a 'terracing effect'

- 5.3 For detached properties the lower ridge height and first floor front elevation set back may not be required but this is based on a case-by-case assessment.
- 5.4 This policy also ensures that the extension is subordinate to the existing dwelling and harmonises with it.

Corner plots

- 5.5 Even though a corner plot may seem to have more garden space to the front and side, they should remain open, with clear views to be seen when travelling around the corner. The Council will normally expect all extensions on corner plots (single and two storeys) to meet all the following criteria:

- Corner extensions should not project beyond the front elevations

of those properties on adjacent roads. (see diagram 12)

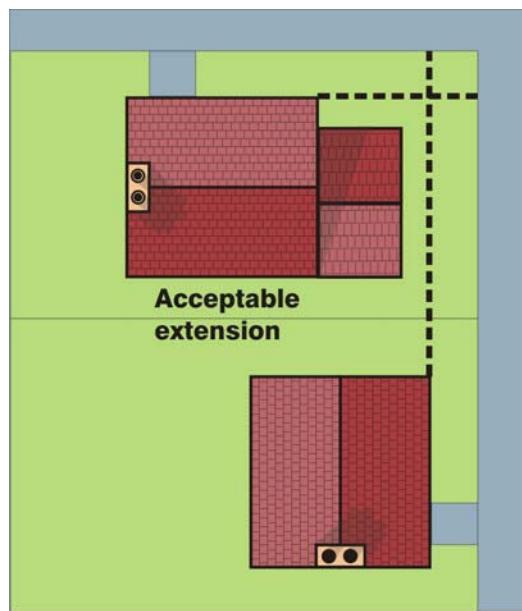


Diagram 12: Appropriate corner extension not projecting beyond either properties front elevation

- The width of the extension should not be more than half the width of the original frontage of the property.
- The width of the extension should not be more than half the width of the garden / plot between the property and adjacent highway.
- The extension should have a pitched roof to match the design of the main roof.

6 Rear Extensions

6.1 When considering rear extensions the Council will use the 45-degree rule. This will help to assess the impact of any rear extension upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties and to protect them from overshadowing or obstruction, caused by extensions on or close to the boundary.

Single storey rear extensions

6.2 These principles apply to single storey rear extensions:

- An extension will not normally be allowed if it projects more than a 45 degree line from the middle of the nearest affected neighbouring window or exceeds a maximum of 4 metres.
- To comply with the 45-degree code, extensions should be designed so as not to cross the 45-degree line from the neighbours nearest habitable room (living, dining, conservatory or bedroom) window. The 45-degree line shall be drawn in the horizontal plane, and taken from the middle of the neighbour's window. The line will show the maximum width and / or depth that a proposed extension can build up to avoiding obstruction from light or views. (see diagram 13)
- The council when assessing single storey rear extension will consider the impact on the neighbouring property and take into account differences in land levels.
- The council will also take into consideration the height of a proposed extension when assessing an application.

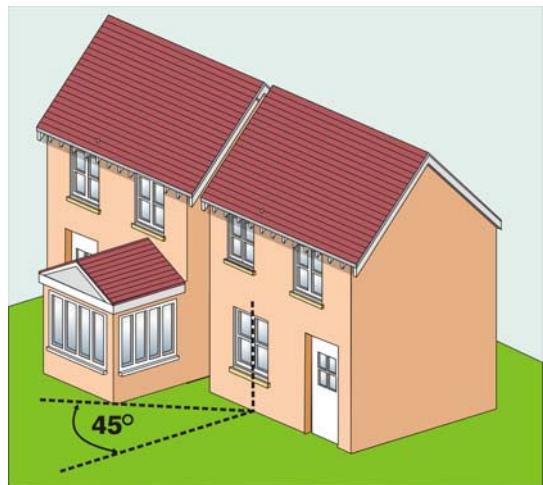


Diagram 13: 45-degree rule

Two storey rear extensions

6.3 The following principles apply to two storey rear extensions:

- Two storey extensions along shared boundaries shall not project at first floor level by more than 2 metres.
- In any other case, the following sizes shall be applied:

Distance between extension and adjoining property	Maximum projection at first floor level
1m	2.5m
2m	3m
3m or more	4m

- Where properties have a staggered building line and a neighbouring property is set forward in the plot, the maximum projection will be measured from the rear building line of that neighbours property.

7 Dormer Extensions

7.1 Wherever possible dormer windows should be restricted to the rear of the dwelling in order to preserve the character of the street scene. This may not be so important where front dormers are already a common feature of other buildings in the street.

7.2 Side dormers will not normally be permitted where they allow overlooking or adversely affect the streetscene.

7.3 Where dormers are on the front or rear elevation of the dwelling or readily visible from public space, their scale and design are particularly important and the following criteria will apply:

- They should not normally exceed more than one third of the width of the roof.
- They should not project above the ridge of the roof (see diagram 14).
- Dormers which wrap around the side ridges of a hipped roof are not acceptable.
- The face of a dormer should be set back by a minimum of 1 metre behind the main wall.
- A dormer should not extend to the full width of the roof, but should be set in from the side/ party walls. Two smaller dormers may be better than one large one (see diagram 15).
- Dormer windows should vertically line up with existing windows and match their style and proportions.
- Flat dormer roofs are not acceptable unless considered appropriate to the particular building or the street scene.
- Dormer cheeks should normally be clad in materials to match the existing roof.



Diagram 14: Examples of dormer window extensions



Diagram 15: Examples of dormer window extensions

8 Parking & Garage Space

8.1 Extensions will not normally be allowed if they have the potential to reduce off-road parking. In most circumstances a minimum of two off-road parking spaces should be provided. The size of a parking space should be a minimum of 2.4 metres x 5 metres.

8.2 It is preferable that at least one parking/garage space is provided behind the building line, and that the driveway can accommodate at least one vehicle length of 5 metres. This should not include any service verge or footpath. Where a garage has been provided adequate space shall be given to allow for a parked car and for a garage door to be opened (see diagram 16). Where space is restricted the use of roller or sectional garage doors which require less space may be more appropriate than 'up and over' doors.

8.3 Where the extension or alteration will create a 5-bedroom property three off road parking spaces will be required unless there are other material considerations.

8.5 An extension should not be constructed in a position where it would interfere with an adequate standard of visibility for road users to the detriment of highway safety.

8.6 Property boundaries, including extensions should be 300mm clear of the highway boundary (including footpath and service verge) so that foundations do not interfere with service apparatus.

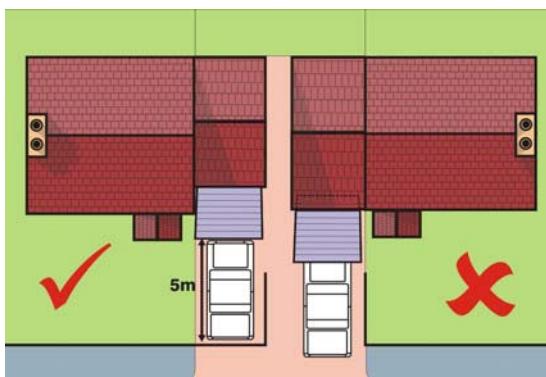


Diagram 16: Examples of parking spaces

8.4 Consideration of parking arrangements is particularly important if you are thinking of either converting an integrated or attached garage to living accommodation or building on or over an existing garage or driveway. Extensions which prevent the parking

9 Garden Space

9.1 Enough private garden space should be left after any extensions have been built to accommodate various leisure pursuits, to ensure that enough space is kept between neighbouring houses to avoid a cramped overcrowded feel and to prevent overlooking between windows.

9.2 The minimum garden area acceptable to the Council is 50 Sq.m of usable garden space, and this should be private enclosed space e.g. rear garden. In most cases it will be necessary to keep a larger area to avoid cramped appearance and to maintain the character of the area. Large trees within gardens may restrict options to extend especially if the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

9.3 Generally rear extensions will encroach onto garden space to a greater extent than side extensions. If the garden is already quite small (approximately 50m²), a rearwards extension may not be advisable.

the canopy of such trees or in close proximity must be accurately shown on the submitted plans, and include the crown spread.

Trees

9.4 Proposals that would require the felling of protected trees, trees in conservation areas or other trees that contribute significantly to the character of an area or that could endanger its health (for example by severing its roots), are very rarely considered to be acceptable. Instead, alternative methods of providing additional accommodation should be explored.

9.5 Extensions will not normally be allowed where the extension will be overshadowed by surrounding tree, as this could lead to pressure to remove these trees.

9.6 Proposals that would result in the felling of trees or would extend within

10 Other Considerations & Information

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Green Belt

10.1 Extensions should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The interpretation of this policy will vary according to the character of the property, but as a general guide, extensions, which increase the volume of the original house by more than about one third, are unlikely to be acceptable.

10.2 Special regard should be given to matters of siting, height, scale, design and use of materials in order to maintain the openness and visual integrity of the Green Belt.

10.3 Planning applications for extensions should be accompanied by drawings that demonstrate the size/ volume of the original building. Very special circumstances will have to exist to justify any exception to the strict control of development in the Green belt. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this justification.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

10.4 Extensions to listed buildings and/ or within Conservation Areas are likely to be particularly sensitive. In particular, the design standards applied may be stricter than those previously outlined in this policy document. Most works to listed buildings will require Listed Building consent, even if they do not require planning permission.

OTHER INFORMATION

Building Regulations

10.5 In addition to the need for planning permission, house extensions may also require approval under the Building Regulations. These regulations are designed to ensure appropriate standards of design and construction are employed. Approval under these regulations is a separate issue and for further advice, please contact the Council's Building Control Division on 0151 471 7360.

The Party Wall Act

10.6 The Act provides a framework for preventing and resolving disputes in relation to party walls, boundary walls and excavations near neighbouring buildings. It does not resolve boundary disputes but is intended to manage the process of work to or up to the party boundary and includes reference to the right of access to neighbouring properties to carry out works. An explanatory booklet is available should further details be required.

Neighbours

10.7 The council always recommends that you consult neighbours affected by the proposals before submitting the plans to the council. This may facilitate minor amendments and resolve any unknown issues. In any event, the council will formerly notify neighbouring properties inviting comments, and a period of 21 days is allowed for such comments to be made in writing to the council.

11 The Planning Application

Do you need to apply for planning permission?

- 11.1 If you live in a house, you can make certain types of minor changes to your home without needing to apply for planning permission. These rights, are called "permitted development rights". However, Permitted Development Rights will not apply if your property is Listed or in the grounds of a Listed building; in a Conservation Area; and/or has had the Permitted Development Rights removed.
- 11.2 If you are in any doubt as to whether you require planning permission please write in with details of your proposal including sketches and sizes to: Planning & Policy Division, Environmental and Regulatory Services, Rutland house, Halton, Lea, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GW.
- 11.3 Further information in relation to planning permissions and Permitted Development Rights can be found on the Planning Portal website at www.planningportal.gov.uk or on the Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk
- 11.4 It should also be noted that house extensions may require building regulations approval regardless of whether or not they need planning permission. More advice on the building regulations may be obtained from the Council's Building Control Division, contact details can be found in the Appendix.

If you build something, which needs planning permission, without obtaining it first, you may be forced to put things right at a later date. This may prove troublesome and costly. You might even need to remove an unauthorised building!

What to submit with your application

- 11.5 When you are preparing your application, you should include the following information:
 - 3 copies of the completed planning application forms. Blank copies are available online or from Halton Direct Link receptions. You can also apply on line at www.planningportal.gov.uk
 - 3 copies of the location plan, (OS based) showing your property in relation to neighbouring properties and its position in the street, with numbers of nearby houses clearly indicated, to scale of not less than 1:1250. You should outline the boundaries of your property (including land to the front, rear and sides) in red with any other adjoining land in your ownership outlined in blue.
 - 3 copies of the plans and elevations of the house as existing
 - 3 copies of the plans and elevations showing the extension proposal, to a scale of 1:100 or 1:50.
 - A block plan to a scale of not less than 1:500 showing the distances from the extension to your plot boundaries and showing any other features such as trees, outbuildings. The block plan should show the relationship of the extensions to neighbouring windows. It should also show the means of access and parking arrangements. Note the block plan should be based upon accurate survey measurements. On sloping sites, plans showing proposed levels may be required. (Diagram 15 provides an example of a block plan)

Please note all plans and elevation drawings should be produced in a metric scale.

special site characteristics warrant a relaxation. Officers will always be pleased to advise.

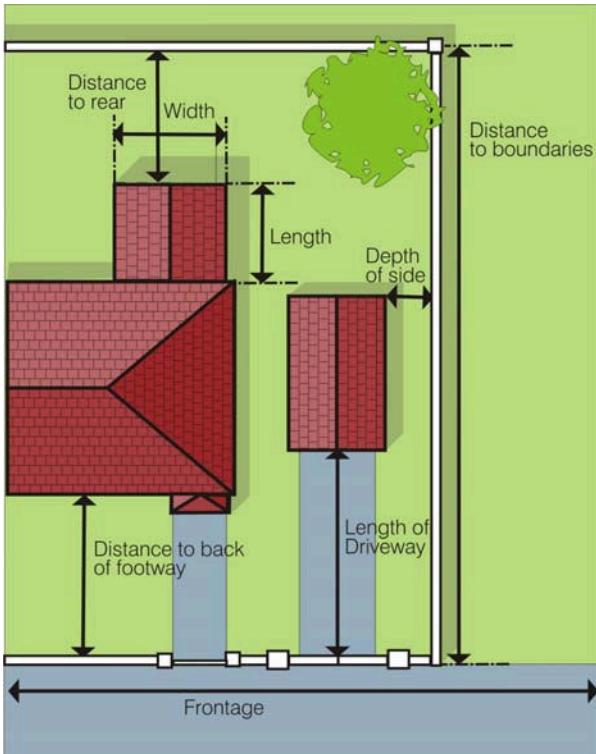


Diagram 15: A typical block plan for a rear extension and garage is shown on the following page.

- A covering letter with any other relevant information in support of your application.
- 1 copy of the correct Certificate of Ownership, signed and dated.

If you are not the sole owner of all the land to which the application relates the owner/s must be told about your application, this is done by serving Notice No. 1 on each owner.

NOTE: All applications requiring planning permission must be accompanied with the appropriate fee, which must be submitted with the application forms and plans. Unless the fee is correct, and the forms and certificate are correctly filled in, including accurate plans, the application cannot be registered and will be returned.

11.6 Please note that the advice contained in this document is not binding in every case, so there may be occasions where

12 Policy Background

12.1 This SPD has been produced to ensure that through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council complies with national and regional guidance and advice and contributes, wherever possible, to meeting the priorities of the community its serves.

National Policy

12.2 *Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Creating Sustainable Communities*, states that 'good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.'

12.3 *Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 3: Housing*, states that new housing and residential environments should be well designed and should make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance and improving quality of life. PPG3 further suggests that the Council and developers should think imaginatively about designs and layouts that make more efficient use of land without comprising the quality of the environment.

12.4 'Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3: By Design' published by the DETR in 2000 provides specific urban design advice to help deliver the objectives of PPG3. This companion guide considers the principles of urban design and the features of urban form, together with advice on the design and layout of successful residential housing developments, such as understanding character, privacy, orientation and safety.

12.5 Additional good practice guidelines include 'Planning - A Guide for Householders' published by the DETR (2002). This document states that the purpose of the planning system is to protect amenity and the environment in

the public interest. Further advice contained in this document state that a well-designed building or extension is likely to be much more attractive to you and to your neighbours and it is also likely to add value to your house when you sell it. The guidance for householders specifically suggests that extensions often look better if they use the same materials and are in a similar style to the existing buildings and in some instances the Council's design guides or advisory leaflets may help you or you may wish to consider using a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced designer.

Regional Policy

12.6 One of the core principles of Regional Planning for the North West (RPG13), which is now by virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), is good design. Policy DP3 states that 'new development must demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting'. It goes on to state that local authorities should set out guidance that ensures more innovative design to create a high-quality living and working environment, especially in housing terms, which incorporates: more efficient use of energy and materials; more eco-friendly and adaptable buildings; sustainable drainage systems; community safety and 'designing out' of crime; and appropriate parking provision and best practice in the application of highway standards.

12.7 Policy DPI of the Draft RSS (2006) states that all proposals and schemes must demonstrate excellent design quality, sustainable construction, efficiency in resource use and respect for their physical and natural setting.

Local Policy

12.8 The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was adopted in April 2005, contains a number of strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part I of the UDP. In relation to environmental quality, these include creating a safe and healthy Halton, and ensuring that future development is of a quality of design that enhances the built environment and encourages the use of energy efficient design. At the centre of these strategic aims and objectives is the desire of the Council to create sustainable places that all people will want to live and work within.

12.9 Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part I of the UDP. The proposed SPD is intended to support Policy H6, which states that proposals for house extensions will be permitted where:

- a the proposal would not unacceptably alter the appearance or character of the original dwelling but relate closely to it and harmonise with it in terms of their scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b the proposal would not create dangerous highway conditions by obstructing visibility for pedestrians or drivers of motor vehicles; and
- c Reasonable private garden space is provided for use by the residents of the extended property

12.10 However, other policies within the UDP may also be relevant to some developments so this SPD. Therefore, this SPD should be read in conjunction with all the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

12.11 The intended SPD will be produced to contribute to the priorities, principles, objectives and targets of the Halton Community Strategy (2006). This strategy coordinates the resources of the local public, private and voluntary

organisations towards common purposes.

12.12 Two of the main priorities set out in this strategy cover issues that are expected to be raised in the proposed SPD, within the priority to *Halton's urban renewal* one of the objectives to support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet people's expectations and add to their enjoyment of life. Within the priority to *a Safer Halton* one of the objectives is to create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents to improve public perceptions and attractiveness.

12.13 Halton Borough Council is signed up and committed to contributing to achieving the priorities of the Community Strategy. The Council's priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan. This plan also has five priorities, including 'safe and attractive neighbourhoods' and 'promoting urban renewal'.

12.14 The intended SPD is being produced to help meet this target and others set out within the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan are based on the priorities set by the people of Halton. These were identified through community involvement via area panels, focus groups, and a telephone questionnaire. The Corporate Plan was based on the same community involvement and statistical information compiled for the State Of Borough Report, 2005.

Appendix I: Contacts and Useful Information

General information

To access a downloadable copy of the Planning Policy Guidance notes or Planning Policy Statements detailed in Section 2, or for further general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk or for a hard copy contact the Department of Communities and Local Government by phone on 0870 1226 236.

To access a downloadable copy of 'By Design, Urban Design in the planning system: Towards Better Practice' and 'Safer Places', documents relating to urban renewal, urban design and creating sustainable communities, and general planning information visit The Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk.

For information relating to urban design there are several documents available. Design at a Glance: A quick reference to national design policy, Design Review and The Value of Good Design can be downloaded free of charge from the CABE website at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/> and The Urban Design Compendium produced by English Partnership and the Housing Corporation can be ordered online free of

charge from English Partnerships at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk Urban Design Guidance: urban design frameworks, development briefs and masterplans, produced by the Urban Design Group, and From Design Policy to Design Quality, produced by the RTPI, can be purchased from Thomas Telford Ltd.

Further information on the Secured By Design initiative, including details relating to the standards required for a development to receive Secured By Design accreditation may be found at www.securedbydesign.com

For information regarding any development affecting a historic building or conservation area 'Building In Context' will be able to provide advice. It is available from English Heritage and the CABE and can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.cabe.org.uk> or for a hard copy contact English Heritage at: Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2YP, Tel: 0870 333 1181, Fax: 01793 414 926

You can find out about the planning system and how it works at www.planningportal.gov.uk

Local information

For advice relating to submitting a planning application, for pre-application discussion or to purchase a copy of this SPD or any other SPD contact:

Planning & Policy Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061
Fax: 0151 471 7314
Email: dev.control@halton.gov.uk or
forward.planning@halton.gov.uk
Website:
www.halton.gov.uk/developmentcontrol or
www.halton.gov.uk/forwardplanning

If further highways or transport information is required, please contact the:

Highways Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061
Fax: 0151 471 7521

If further information is required relating to accessibility or building control please contact:

Building Control Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061
Fax: 0151 471 7314
Website: www.halton.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

If further information is required in relation to trees in development, please contact:

John White (Trees & Woodlands Officer)
Landscape Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Landscape Services Department
Picow Farm Depot
Picow Farm Road
Runcorn
WA7 4UB

Tel: 0151 424 2061
Website: www.halton.gov.uk





House Extensions

Draft Supplementary Planning Document
Statement of Consultation
September 2006



Halton Borough Council

House Extensions

Draft
Supplementary Planning Document

Statement of Consultation

Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Introduction

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it is a requirement to prepare and publish a Statement of Consultation for a range of planning policy documents, including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). This is a reflection of Government's desire to "strengthen community and stakeholder involvement in the development of local communities". The Council has recently adopted the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), this sets out how the public will be consulted on new planning policy and significant planning applications. This Statement of Consultation has been prepared to meet the requirements of the SCI, and also aims to reflect the intentions of Government planning guidance for reporting on community involvement in the plan making process.

This Statement of Consultation sets out the comments and representations made, and the response to them, in respect of Partnership Consultation Stage conducted by Halton Borough Council, in relation to the House Extensions SPD. The Partnership Consultation Stage took place between 13th June and 27th June 2006. This Statement of Consultation has been produced in accordance with Regulation 17 (1) and 18 (4) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

The period of formal public participation on the draft House Extensions SPD will be conducted between 14th September and 26th October 2006. The document will be made available at various deposit locations throughout the Borough, along with a copy of the public notice of 'SPD Matters and Public Participation', Representations Forms, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and an explanatory letter. Each of the aforementioned documents has also been made available on the Council website and in various formats upon request.

Statutory consultees (as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Development Frameworks, Appendix E) will be consulted specifically via letter with an individual copy of the draft SPD attached. In addition, those individuals on the Council's Local Development Framework consultation database that had requested to be informed of the publication of the draft SPD will also be sent a covering explanatory letter, a copy of the public notice of SPD Matters and Public Participation, and a Representation Form.

Partnership Consultation

Partnership consultation period: 13th June – 27th June 2006

Date of consideration of representations: 28th June 2005 – 30th June 2005

Note – All paragraph and page references relate to the numbers as set out in the partnership consultation draft

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	19/06/06 Written comments	Para. 1.5 - Change the second 'guidance' to 'document'.	This text has been amended.
		Application of the Policy – Change 'for the disabled' to 'for a disabled person'.	This text has been amended.
		Should there be an introduction to the Guiding Principles section?	Text has now been inserted to explain the Guiding Principles section.
		Para 2.1 – Change 'is aimed at promoting' to 'promotes'.	This text has been amended.
		Para.2.1 provide further information in relation to 'PPGs'.	This text has been amended.
		Para 2.2 is this section in relation to 'Securing the Future' relevant?	It is felt that this document still provides one of the overarching principles for all development (ie sustainable development).
		Diagram 2 – this doesn't do justice to how bad the 2 nd extension is. Consider altering the point of view.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 4 – insert the word 'blank' to 'extended gable wall'.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 9 – the diagram should be made clearer so that it shows 800mm on each side of the boundary.	Diagram has been amended.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued . . .</i>		Diagram 9 – as this text refers to semi-detached and terraced properties should the diagrams not also show a terrace or semi-detached property.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 10 – this diagram should show room for 2 off road parking spaces.	Diagram has been amended.
		Section 5 –Should a policy to consider linked detached or the creation of linked detached properties be included?	The text in this section has been amended to include linked detached properties.
		Para. 7.3 bullet 1 – does this apply individually or cumulatively?	It is felt that the text contained in this bullet point is sufficient and a change has not been made.
		Para. 7.3 bullet 2 – could a diagram be included to show this?	Diagram to be included.
		Para 7.3 bullet 5 – insert 'to' between 'extend' and 'the'.	This text has been amended.
		Para 7.3 bullet 5 – insert reference to diagram 14.	This text has been amended.
		Para. 8.3 – would it be appropriate to say that 'where space is tight the use of roller or sectional garage doors that require less room may be more appropriate than 'up and over' doors.	This text has been amended.
		Diagram 15 – should be amended to show the distance from the garage rather than the porch.	Diagram has been amended.
		Para. 11.3 – this paragraph should be rephrased for clarity.	This text has been amended.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued . . .</i>		Para. 11.4 – The old SPG had a useful example of a block plan highlighting key information required should this also be included.	Diagram to be included.
Neil Macfarlane Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 Written comments	Para. 8.5 – is the term 'property boundary' correct as this suggests a garden wall or fence should be 300mm clear of the highway boundary.	This is the correct terminology.
		Para. 9.2 – how will this principle work for areas where a covenant states that gardens can not be enclosed?	It is felt that many such covenant would relate to front gardens and in this case would not be included within this principle.
		Para. 10.5 – Contact details should be referred to or included here.	Contact details have now been included.
		Para. 11.3 – Amend address. Section 11 blue box – should this also refer to building control as there are likely to be extensions that do not require planning but may need building control.	Address amended Further text inserted in relation to building control.
		Para 11.4 bullet 1 – Provide further detail as to what a 'set' is.	Further detail has been included.
		Para 11.4 bullet 2 – Should this be changed from 'A' to '4' location plans.	This text has been amended.
		Para 11.4 bullet 2 – Should this also make clear that the plan must be OS based and include at least 2 street names?	This text has been amended to include OS based however, it not felt necessary to require 2 street names.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Neil Macfarlane Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued...</i>		<p>Para 11.4 bullet 3 & 4 – should further information be given as to how many plans should be included?</p> <p>Para 11.4 bullet final bullet – should this state 'a signed and dated copy' of the correct certificate and should it also make reference to the possible need to notify the owners?</p> <p>Local Information Section – refer to development control website before forward planning.</p>	<p>This text has been amended.</p> <p>This text has been amended.</p> <p>This text has been amended.</p>
Dave Tierney Building Control Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 by email	The SPD needs to give further consideration to window design in relation to extensions & loft conversions.	Further text has been added to both section 2 and 11 in relation to the need to consider building regulation requirements.
Phil Watts Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 by email	<p>There should be an agreed format for the Local Information Section i.e.</p> <p>Joanne Dutton - Senior Planning Officer, Planning And Policy Division, Environmental And Regulatory Services</p> <p>John White - Tree and Woodlands Officer, Landscape Division, Environmental And Regulatory Services</p>	This text has been amended.
Steve Williams Housing Strategy Policy & Support Department	22/06/06 by phone	Generally happy with this document.	Acknowledged no change needed.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Steve Williams Housing Strategy Policy & Support Department <i>Continued ...</i>		Some concern over the 45-degree rule, which may restrict some of the house extensions that are required for those who are less able.	The 45-degree rule is felt to be important in terms of general amenity for neighbouring properties. However, exceptions may be made for those who are less able as set out in section 1 of the SPD.





House Extensions

Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Appraisal

September 2006



Halton Borough Council

Draft House Extensions

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Public Consultation
September 2006

Presented for public consultation
between 14th September and 26th October 2006

to:
Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

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I Summary and outcomes

Non-technical summary

1.1 This document contains the information relating to the appraisal of the draft House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation to how it contributes to meeting environmental, social and economic objectives. Put simpler, this document assesses how the SPD contributes towards achieving development that ensures a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The technical name for this document is a Sustainability Appraisal or SA for short. The SA is required to be produced because of new government guidance and legislation relating to the planning system.

1.2 The objectives that are used to test whether the House Extensions SPD contributes towards achieving sustainability have been taken from the information gathered during the production of the Core Strategy SA and from other documents that identify the sustainability priorities of the local community. The main source of these objectives is the Community Strategy, produced by the Halton Strategic Partnership in consultation with the people of Halton, which was based on a new State of the Borough Report and a telephone survey of residents.

1.3 The objectives that are used to test the sustainability of the SPD are set out in a table (Appendix A), this table is called the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). This table sets out how the Council will measure each of the objectives to see if quality of life in Halton is improving. Earlier this year, in advance of producing the full SA, the Council asked a number of bodies if they agreed with the objectives that we included in the SAF. These bodies agreed with us, all their comments and how the Council responded is set out in

Appendix B.

1.4 At the same time as asking these bodies about the SAF, we also asked if they agreed with us if we needed to produce a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) of the SPD. The SEA is like an SA but looks in more detail at the effects that the SPD could have on the environment. SEA is required by a European Directive on plans and programs that could have a significant effect on the environment. The Council made an initial screening of whether a full SEA was needed to be produced, and decided it was not. The bodies agreed with us. This decision has been set out in the House Extensions SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.

1.5 The Council then tested the draft SPD against the objectives in SAF, to appraise if the SPD contributes to achieving sustainability. This is set out in a table (Appendix D). The appraisal recognises that the SPD is supplementary policy and will not make dramatic changes to the way that we live, but will make small changes to the way buildings and places are designed. Therefore, the SPD will not significantly affect any of the environmental, social or economic objectives set out in the SAF.

1.6 Overall the appraisal shows that the SPD will have a positive effect upon contributing towards achieving sustainability, but there are several objectives that are difficult to test the SPD against because the Council is unsure how the SPD will affect those objectives. The appraisal also tells us that the positive effects will mainly only be seen in the longer term because the SPD will make gradual changes to places over many years as new development happens.

1.7 This SA is not the end of the process, if you think that the appraisal has missed something out, or hasn't properly realised the effect that the SPD could have on a particular objective then let us know by following the instructions in section 1.10 – 'How to comment on the Appraisal'. A final SA, which includes all the comments received on this appraisal, will be published alongside the SPD when it is adopted. Sources of further information about the process and purpose of Sustainability Appraisals can be found in Appendix F.

Statement on the difference the process has made

1.8 Although the scope of the SPD is not significant, it is supplementary policy, providing practical guidance in relation to policies contained within Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the SA process has made a valuable contribution to the process of producing the SPD. Firstly it focused attention at the pre-production scoping stage to identify the key areas that the SPD needed to address. This was achieved through the analysis of baseline information. This process has helped to shape the purpose of the SPD, which has provided a strong foundation upon which the rest of the SPD has been constructed.

1.9 By testing the SPD against the SAF it has helped to recognise the limitations of the SPD and how these might be overcome through additional planning policies or by other means (such as the need for better training within the planning section to understand 'design' better). The 'testing' process has also helped create a sharper more responsive SPD focused upon its purpose and contributing to achieving sustainability. The SA process has made a real difference to help ensure a quality end product.

How to comment on the Appraisal

1.10 If you would like to make comments on the SA or the SPD, which it has been produced to appraise, please complete one of the representation forms, which can be obtained from places of inspection, from the Council's website or by contacting the forward planning section. Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specific address of the adoption of the SPD and hence the publishing of the final SA. The formal period of public participation in relation to the SPD and this SA, commences on 14th September 2006, for a six week period until 26th October 2006.

2 Sustainability Appraisal Rationale

Approach taken

2.1 The methodology selected to be applied within this Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been chosen to ensure that the SPD, and the Local Development Framework (LDF) as a whole, is tested against the most appropriate sustainability criteria.

2.2 SA is fundamentally based on an objectives-led approach whereby the potential impacts of a plan are gauged in relation to a series of objectives for sustainable development. In other words, the objectives provide a methodological yardstick against which to assess the effects of the SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF) – as the Guidance refers to it – consists of objectives and associated targets and indicators, the SAF is set out Appendix A.

2.3 The methodology of the SA has therefore been drawn from the information collected during the production of the LDF and the priorities, objectives and targets of other documents such as the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This approach has been agreed by both the Council and the Statutory Environmental Bodies and has been used for earlier SAs, which have assessed earlier SPDs. However, the SAF used in these earlier documents has now been updated using the information collected as part of the production of the Core Strategy.

2.4 It is our intention that the objectives, targets and indicators that form the SAF within this document will be broadly consistent throughout all future SAs that the Council undertakes. However, as the SAF evolves there may be situations that require the framework to be reviewed. These situations could

include:

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that information within the framework needs amending, such as through consultation on this SA Report.

When the SA was carried out?

2.5 The SA process began in January 2006 with the production of the SA Scoping Report; this document was consulted upon between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006. The responses to the Scoping Report were considered and have informed and lead to the production of this document. The SA process has been an integral part of the production of the SPD, and has been prepared to enable its publication to coincide with the public consultation on the draft House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document.

Who carried out the SA?

2.6 Halton Borough Council has conducted the entire process of the production of the SA, with consultation at the appropriate stages with statutory consultation bodies (for the SA and SEA process) and other stakeholders as necessary. This approach was felt to be commensurate to the intended purpose of the SPD. Responses to the Scoping Report, particularly those from the statutory consultation bodies, acknowledged the scope of the SPD and did not raise any significant issues that would deem it necessary for the SA to be produced externally / more independently.

Who was consulted, when and how?

2.7 The scope of the SA was formally consulted upon between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006. The consultation was targeted at those who the Council felt were best placed to further shape the SA process and the purpose of the proposed SPD. A list of those consulted, their comments and the how these have been addressed in the SA is contained in Appendix B.

3 Background

Purpose of the SA process and the SA Report

3.1 The House Extensions SPD will form part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF). This document will not form part of the Statutory Development Plan for Halton. To be able to be formally adopted as part of the Halton LDF, the process of forming the SPD must comply with Part Five of The Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Part five requires the production of a SA for SPDs. The purpose of preparing a SA is to encourage sustainable development, through improved integration of sustainability considerations throughout the preparation and adoption of land use plans and policies.

Purpose of House Extensions SPD (Draft)

3.2 The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

3.3 The geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore borough wide.

Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations

3.4 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004, the SA Scoping Report included a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening statement. The Council's intermediate determination of the statement was that the proposed SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a SEA to be produced. The four statutory agencies (English Nature, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Countryside Agency) were consulted as part of the pre-production scoping stage and they agreed with the Council's determination, their comments are set out in Appendix B.

3.5 Therefore a formal determination can be made that the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document is unlikely to have significant environment effects and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This decision has been set out in the House Extensions SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.

4 Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

Relationship to other relevant plans and programmes

4.1 In producing the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the Core Strategy the Council considered a large number of relevant plans, policies and programmes. However, in relation to the proposed SPD a smaller number of documents with a specific relationship to housing and house extensions have been identified.

National Planning Statements

4.2 Government guidance in **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Creating Sustainable Communities**, states "Planning authorities should plan positively for high quality design." Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context should not be accepted.

4.3 **Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 3: Housing**, states that new housing and residential environments should be well designed and should make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance and improving quality of life. PPG3 further suggests that the Council and developers should think imaginatively about designs and layouts that make more efficient use of land without comprising the quality of the environment.

4.4 **Draft PPS3: Housing**, promotes the creation of places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, which are attractive, have their own distinctive identity, and positively improve local character. It also promotes the use of designs and layouts that are inclusive, safe, take account of public health, crime prevention and community safety,

ensure adequate natural surveillance and make space for water where there is flood risk.

4.5 'Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3: By Design' published by the DETR in 2000 provides specific urban design advice to help deliver the objectives of PPG3. This companion guide considers the principles of urban design and the features of urban form, together with advice on the design and layout of successful residential housing developments, such as understanding character, privacy, orientation and safety.

4.6 Additional good practice guidelines include 'Planning - A Guide for Householders' published by the DETR (2002). This document states that the purpose of the planning system is to protect amenity and the environment in the public interest. Further advice contained in this document state that a well-designed building or extension is likely to be much more attractive to you and to your neighbours and it is also likely to add value to your house when you sell it. The guidance for householders specifically suggests that extensions often look better if they use the same materials and are in a similar style to the existing buildings and in some instances the Council's design guides or advisory leaflets may help you or you may wish to consider using a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced designer.

Regional Spatial Strategy & Sustainability Framework

4.7 One of the core principles of Regional Planning for the North West (RPG13), which is now by virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)

the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), is good design. Policy DP3 states that 'new development must demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting'. It goes on to state that local authorities should set out guidance that ensures more innovative design to create a high-quality living and working environment, especially in housing terms, which incorporates: more efficient use of energy and materials; more eco-friendly and adaptable buildings; sustainable drainage systems; community safety and 'designing out' of crime; and appropriate parking provision and best practice in the application of highway standards.

- 4.8 Policy DPI of the Draft RSS (2006) states that all proposals and schemes must demonstrate excellent design quality, sustainable construction, efficiency in resource use and respect for their physical and natural setting.
- 4.9 Action for Sustainability is the North West Regional Sustainability Framework, produced by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA), the main goal of the framework is to improve the quality of life within the region.

Unitary Development Plan

- 4.10 The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was adopted in April 2005, contains a number of strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part 1 of the UDP. In relation to environmental quality, these include creating a safe and healthy Halton, and ensuring that future development is of a quality of design that enhances the built environment and encourages the use of energy efficient design. At the centre of these strategic aims and objectives is the desire of the Council to create sustainable places that all people will want to live and work within.

- 4.11 Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part 1 of the

UDP Plan. The proposed SPD is intended to support Policy H6, which states that proposals for house extensions will be permitted where:

- a the proposal would not unacceptably alter the appearance or character of the original dwelling but relate closely to it and harmonise with it in terms of their scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b the proposal would not create dangerous highway conditions by obstructing visibility for pedestrians or drivers of motor vehicles; and
- c Reasonable private garden space is provided for use by the residents of the extended property

- 4.12 The UDP was subject to a SA at two key stages in its production. These were the UDP First Deposit and Second (Revised) Deposit stages. This process has helped to ensure that the policies that this SPD is based upon contribute towards achieving sustainable development.

Community Strategy & Corporate Plan

- 4.13 The intended SPD will be produced to contribute to the priorities, principles, objectives and targets of the Halton Community Strategy (2006). This strategy co ordinates the resources of the local public, private and voluntary organisations towards common purposes.
- 4.14 Two of the main priorities set out in this strategy cover issues that are expected to be raised in the proposed SPD, within the priority to *Halton's urban renewal* one of the objectives to support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet peoples expectations and add to their enjoyment of life. Within the priority to *a Safer Halton* one of the objectives is to create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting

the priorities of residents to improve public perceptions and attractiveness.

4.15 Halton Borough Council is signed up and committed to contributing to achieving the priorities of the Community Strategy. The Council's priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan. This plan also has five priorities, including 'safe and attractive neighbourhoods' and 'promoting urban renewal'.

4.16 The intended SPD is being produced to help meet this target and others set out within the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan are based on the priorities set by the people of Halton. These were identified through community involvement via area panels, focus groups, and a telephone questionnaire. The Corporate Plan was based on the same community involvement and statistical information compiled for the State Of Borough Report, 2005.

Baseline Information

4.17 The baseline information for this SPD can be put into two categories. Firstly, information relating to specific housing and house extension issues that will be covered by the intended SPD; and secondly, other generic sustainability baseline information that is consistently applied as a baseline to all appraisals within Halton and that was collected as part of the production of the SA of the Core Strategy.

Residential Issues

4.18 The composition of the population in Halton in terms of age and household size is also changing, with the following points being particularly relevant for housing taken from the 2001 census:

- The number of households has increased by 3,000 from 45,857 in 1991 (although the Council's own

council tax records suggest an increase of nearly 6,000 to 51,000);

- The over 75-year-old group has increased by 17%;
- The average household size has fallen from 2.8 in 1991 to 2.44 in 2001; and
- The proportion of single person households has increased from 22.7% to 27% over the same period.

4.19 Additional Population and housing baseline information taken from the 2001 census is set out below:

Household Composition 2001

- One person households 27.3%
- Couples with no children 16.5%
- One parent families with children 13.6%
- Families with children 30.5%

Housing Tenure

- Total dwellings 2004 51,855
- Private 71.9%
- Council 12.9%
- Housing Association 15.2%

Housing Type 2001

- Detached 19.2%
- Semi detached 33.0%
- Terraced 37.5%
- Other (flats etc.) 10.3%

Generic sustainability baseline information

4.20 The Council has identified a range of generic sustainability baseline information that it feels needs to be considered by all SA applied to land use plans and policies. This baseline information can be found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report. The key elements of this baseline information have been included within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF), which can be found in Appendix A.

Predicted future baseline information

4.21 The current generic baseline information will continue to be used

until such a time as it is felt a review of the baseline is required. Situations that may require the baseline information to be reviewed could include

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that baseline information needs amending.

4.22 It is felt that the current generic baseline information represents a competent rational for assessing the sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area, specific baseline information to assess the effect of the proposed SPD.

Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data

4.23 Ideally the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report and in the SAF (Appendix A of this document), should relate to 2006, unfortunately due to the time it takes to collate data this has not been possible in many cases. As far as possible the most up date information has been used for each set of data provided.

4.24 The information tables also contain some omissions because, in some cases, it has not been possible to establish the most appropriate targets, figures or sources. Some difficulties in collecting data have also been associated with the reliance on external bodies to collect the data. For example, where external bodies have collected data for their own purposes, in the future the data may not be available, or not available in the same format, in order to make reliable comparisons. Where possible the Council will look to overcome these problems by including information that is known to be collected by the Council

or will be collected by the Council in the future. This may require further monitoring and data collection to be undertaken in the future.

4.25 It should be noted that the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report, represents a 'work in progress' in the sense that it will be added to / amended as new indicators / sources of baseline information come to the attention of the Council.

Sustainability Issues

4.26 In determining an appropriate SA approach to apply to this SPD, it is important to draw upon sources that identify those sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area. This can be achieved by identifying issues that are based upon sound quantitative analysis; and / or involved extensive community participation.

4.27 The key sustainability issues for Halton and the wider area include:

- **Unemployment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Disparity in employment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Access to Employment** - State of the North West Economy (Sub-regional Report) (Oct 2004)
- **The need to raise the levels of education & skills** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
- **The need to foster enterprise and entrepreneurship** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
- **Reliance on a narrow economic base and low wage economy** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **The need to improve the Economy** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)

- **The need to revitalise the Town Centres** - Community Strategy (2006)
- **The image of the Borough** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **The need to improve health & life expectancy** - North West Public Health Observatory & Community Strategy (2006)
- **Long-term ill** - 2001 Census & Community Strategy (2006)
- **Ageing residents & the need to grow the health-care sector** - Department of Health
- **Perception of crime levels and fear of crime** - 'Quality of Life Survey' of 1999
- **Increased demand for affordable housing** - Land Registry and Housing Needs Study
- **Providing an appropriate and balanced housing supply** - Draft Housing Strategy 2005/06 to 2007/08
- **Providing appropriate sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers** - Circular 01-2006 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites'
- **Improve access to Services from the East of Runcorn** - Local Transport Plan 2
- **Improve access to Services in Widnes** - Local Transport Plan 2
- **Improve access to Services to those who do not own cars**
- **Community facilities**
- **Amount, location and access to Recreational Space** - PMP Open Space study
- **Population** - Nomis
- **Deprivation** - 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- **Water quality** - Environment Agency
- **Conserving biodiversity, habitats and species** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **SSSI** - English Nature, April 2005
- **Waste Management** - Halton's Waste Management Strategy 2004
- **Transport congestion & pollution** - Local Transport Plan 2
- **Air Quality** - Local Transport Plan 2
- **Design quality in development** - Housing Audit (CABE, 2005)
- **Protecting cultural & built heritage** - English Heritage (2005)
- **Obtaining energy from renewable sources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Requiring energy efficiency improvements** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Ensuring the most effective use of land** - Draft RSS (2006)
- **Water resources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Climate change** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Industrial legacy** - Community Strategy (2006)

4.28 The issues highlighted blue are those issues which are considered to be of particular importance with regard to the proposed House Extensions SPD

5 Plan issues and options

Main strategic options considered and how they were identified

5.1 Three strategic options for delivering the purpose of the draft SPD were considered. These were identified and considered as part of the Housing Extensions SA Scoping Report. This approach was taken as it was felt important that before the Council resources were committed to progressing the policy response selected to deliver the intended purpose of the SPD, the option selected was:

- a based on which would address the issues identified in the scoping report;
- b most likely to contribute to achieving sustainable development, and
- c supported by the statutory consultation bodies and other stakeholders.

5.2 In summary, the options considered during the pre-production scoping stage were identified based on the preliminary purpose and geographical coverage of the intended SPD. Significantly the coverage of the SPD is borough wide and does not directly relate to an identified geographical area. The preliminary purpose and coverage were consulted upon, and neither has been amended as a result of responses to the SA Scoping Report consultation exercise, however, the purpose of the SPD has been slightly amended to reflect changes made during the drafting of the SPD. The comments received in relation to the Pre-Production Scoping Report consultation and the Council's responses are contained in Appendix B.

5.3 The preferred option identified and selected in the Scoping Report is the option appraised within this SA. For comprehensiveness the options

considered at that stage in the process are contained in Appendix E.

How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in comparing the options and choosing the preferred option.

5.4 As stated in 5.1 the purpose and coverage of the intended SPD were tested as part of the Scoping Report and have not been amended as a result of the SA Scoping Report consultation exercise. The report included the formal screening exercise required by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations. This exercise made an initial assessment of the characteristics of the proposed SPD, and its (environmental) effects, and of the area likely to be affected by it. This assessment demonstrated that the purpose and coverage of SPD would not have a significant environmental effect.

5.5 This process also contributed to identifying the limited scope of the SPD, that it will only provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process, which are adopted in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This recognised that the UDP itself had been through the Sustainability Appraisal process. The screening process identified that the purpose of the SPD is to promote sustainable development by creating a more pleasant, healthier and safer environment. The statutory SEA bodies and other stakeholders have agreed with the Council's conclusions during the screening process.

5.6 The preferred option for delivering the purpose of the intended SPD has been established and tested through the Scoping Report, it is recognised as contributing to achieving sustainability

and that its scope is only to provide additional practical guidance. This is felt to represent a sufficient scrutiny of comparison of the options identified. It also establishes that the preferred option that has been selected is commensurate to the scope of the intended SPD.

Other options considered, and why these were rejected

5.7 This was established and consulted upon as part of the Scoping Report. The relevant extract is contained in Appendix E.

Proposed mitigation measures

5.8 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary at this stage in the process, because of the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP.

6 Assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the draft House Extensions SPD

Significant sustainability effects of the draft SPD

6.1 The Scoping Report, which incorporated the formal SEA screening statement, established that the intended SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect. Additionally, the screening statement established that the intended scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies within the adopted UDP. Within the context of this, an assessment of the likely social, environmental and economic effects can be made to accompany the draft House Extensions SPD, this is set out in Appendix D.

6.2 The assessment tests the likely effects that the proposed SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives, indicators and targets set out within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). These objectives, indicators and targets have been derived from the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This will ensure that the SPD is tested against local, sub-regional and regional priorities. The SAF was established in the Scoping Report and is contained in Appendix A.

Consideration of sustainability issues in developing the draft SPD

6.3 The pre-production stage enabled the identification of the social, environmental and economic issues relevant to Halton and to the intended purpose of the SPD, this was mostly through the collection and analysis of baseline information. This process influenced the preliminary purpose of

the SPD (which has now been slightly amended during the drafting of the SPD) and the preferred option to achieve its delivery. Additionally, the approach taken in relation to the SA, was also identified. These issues were 'tested' and consulted upon through the Scoping Report consultation. The outcome of this consultation led to the production of the draft SPD which has continued to take into account the relevant social, environmental and economic problems that can be addressed through the purpose of the SPD.

Proposed mitigation measures

6.4 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary after the testing of the SPD against the objectives contained within the SAF because the assessment did not identify any issues that could be suitably mitigated for. Additionally, the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP means that necessary policy checks are in place that afford greater protection to areas such as protected wildlife habitat, which the SPD is supplementary to.

Uncertainties and risks

6.5 The assessment of the likely effects that the proposed SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives (as set out in Appendix D) identified that the effect of the SPD on a number of objectives was difficult to determine. This creates a degree of uncertainty in relation to the effects of the SPD. Additionally, the incremental cumulative nature of the changes that the SPD will make to places is difficult to test and predict against the objectives in the SAF.

7 Implementation

Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level

7.1 The strategy for implementation of the proposed SPD, once adopted as a formal SPD will include Council Officer training in relation to the guidance set out in the SPD. This is to ensure that its purpose is achieved more consistently across the Borough. The SPD will also be actively signposted by relevant Officers to ensure that the general public and the development industry is fully aware of the content of the SPD, and take it into account within their proposals.

Proposals for monitoring

7.2 The objectives, targets and indicators contained within the SAF will be monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. This will bring together the monitored data from their source, such as the Regional Sustainable Development Framework for the North West monitoring report, and collect data deficits where appropriate.

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Economic	1. To continue reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increase the economic activity rate	Social inclusiveness Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage new employment that is consistent with local needs? 	Population in and unemployment	To bring Halton's employment and unemployment rates in line with England and Wales rate by 2021.	40% of people aged 16-74 in Halton are economically active and in full time employment, whilst 4.5% are economically active and unemployed. Compared to 40.6% of people aged 16-74 in England & Wales who are economically active and in full time employment with 3.4% economically active and unemployed. (Source: Office of National Statistics, April 2001)
	Job Density			To bring Halton's job density in line with England and Wales densities by 2016.	The 2003 job density, the ratio between total jobs to working age people, in Halton (0.76) is lower than the regional (0.81) and national average (0.83). (Source: Nomis)	
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide improved access to vocational training, education and skills for young people? Will it provide improved skills and knowledge in the workplace? 	% of 15 yr olds achieving five or more GCSE's at grades A-C or equivalent % of adults educated to NVQ level 2, 3 or 4	Increase proportions achieving five or more GCSE's at Grades A*-C to 60% by 2010. Increase the % of adults qualified to Level 3 to 70% by 2010. Reduce the number of adults with no qualifications to 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	49.1% (2005) (Source: Department for Education and Skills) NVQ2 and above: Halton – 54.3%, GB – 61.5% NVQ3 and above: Halton – 33.1%, GB – 43.1% NVQ4 and above: Halton – 15.7%, GB – 25.2% (Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, Nomis, Mar 2003-Feb 2004)
3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business	Economic development		Will it encourage the growth of indigenous businesses?	Total number of VAT registered businesses	To increase the number of VAT registered businesses by 15% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	2,185 (2004) (Source: Nomis)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
	business development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the number of new, competitive businesses that last? Will it provide or contribute to the availability of a balanced portfolio of employment sites? 	Percentage of business registrations and de-registrations	To increase the % of VAT registrations whilst decreasing the % of de-registrations	10.8 % VAT registrations and 9.8% de-registrations (Source: InterDepartmental Business Register (IDBR), Nomis, 2004)
4.	To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve business development and enhance competitiveness? 	Gross Value Added (GVA) per head	Sustain levels of GVA at above the regional norm. (Community Strategy)	GVA per head for Halton and Warrington was £17,190 (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2005)
5.	To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide an improvement to one or more of the town centres? 	Footfall within the town centre Vacancy rates within the town centre	Increase footfall through each town centre by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy) Decrease vacancy levels year on year.	Average weekly footfall within Halton Lea of 292,605 Average monthly footfall for Widnes 595,747 (July – Nov 2005) Average monthly footfall for Runcorn Old Town 187,207 (July – Nov 2005) (Source: Halton Lea – Brandspace, Runcorn and Widnes – Halton Borough Council Footfall Counters) Number of vacant units in 2005 Halton Lea – 35 Widnes – 4 Runcorn Old Town – 41 (Source: Town Centre Survey 2005, Halton Borough Council)
6.	To improve the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage inward investment? 	Number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions (enquiries that are translated into actual, completed investment or expansion projects).	To increase the number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions.	317 enquiries 42 conversions (2004/5) (Source: Economic Development, Halton Borough Council)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities	Population and human health, Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the standard of healthcare, particularly for the elderly? Will it support healthy lifestyles? 	Years of healthy life expectancy	Narrow the gap between life expectancy, at birth, in Halton and the national average by at least 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton: Males – 73.90 years Females – 78.21 England: Males – 76.0 years Females – 80.6 (2000-2002) (Source: North West Public Health Observatory)
				Number of people who have a long-term illness	To reduce the % of residents in Halton with a long-term illness to within 1.5% of the England & Wales % by the 2011 Census.	21.5% of residents in Halton considered themselves to have a limiting long-term illness, compared to 18.2% for England and Wales as a whole. (Source: 2001 Census)
	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage crime-sensitive design? Will it target, reduce and sustain a reduction in crime? Will it reduce the likelihood of violence and antisocial behaviour? 	Recorded crimes per 1,000 population	To reduce number of offences per 1,000 pop.	Halton offences per 1,000 population: Violence against the person 04/05 – 23 Sexual offences 04/05 – 1 Robbery 04/05 – 1 Burglary dwelling 04/05 – 4 Theft of a motor vehicle – 7 Theft from a vehicle – 11 (Source: Basic Command Unit - Recorded Crime for Six Key Offences 2004/05, Crime in England & Wales 2004/5, Home Office)
				Number of people reporting fear of crime	Reduce levels of expressed fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	16.4% of people in Halton thought reducing crime would improve their local area. Just under three tenths (29.2%) of residents stated that they feel 'fairly unsafe' (17.3%) or 'very unsafe' (11.9%) when they are outside in their local area after dark.(Source: Halton Strategic Partnership Consulting the Communities of Halton 2005, March 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	9. To provide well designed, good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide for affordable housing for local people? Will it ensure that new housing is of a high standard of design and layout? Will it provide safe, secure and decent housing? 	Proportion of different housing types and tenures	To meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.	<p>Housing Type 2001: Detached 19.2% Semi detached 33.0% Terraced 37.5% Other (flats etc.) 10.3%</p> <p>Housing Tenure 2004: Private 71.9% Council 12.9% Housing Association 15.2% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p>
				Average household income	To increase average household income in Halton to 90%+ of the national average by 2010. (Community Strategy)	<p>The average household income in Halton is £27,898 which is 89.4% of the UK average (UK average salary is £31,200). (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2006)</p>
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve transport provision and accessibility? Will it provide for local retail needs? Will it improve public access to services and amenities? 	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	To ensure that all new housing development is within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a town centre.	<p>% of housing completions 2004/5 within 30 minutes public transport time of key services:</p> <p>GP – 100%</p> <p>Hospital (Halton) – 48%</p> <p>Primary School – 100%</p> <p>Secondary School – 100%</p> <p>Employment – 100%</p> <p>Town centre – 100%</p> <p>(Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p>
	11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural	Social inclusiveness Biodiversity, fauna and flora. Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it ensure that all people have access to public open space within a reasonable 	Number and area of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	Ensure no loss of LNR (number or area).	10 LNRs covering an area of 142.02ha (Source: Halton Borough Council, 2004)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	natural greenspace	flora, Cultural heritage and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a reasonable distance from where they live? Will it improve access to natural greenspace? 	Number of Green Flag Parks	To maintain and if possible increase the number of Green Flag Parks.	5 parks in Halton have Green Flag Awards. (Source: the Civic Trust – Green Flag Awards, 2005)
Social	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected? 	Index of Deprivation	For Halton to become less deprived and to move outside the 40 most deprived districts in England by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton is ranked 21 st , out of 354, in the average of ward scores where rank 1 is the most deprived. (Source: Indices of Deprivation 2004, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)
Environmental	13. To protect, improve and where necessary, restore the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the quality of controlled waters? 	Water quality (chemical & biological) classification of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters and percentage lengths in different classes	To increase the % of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters that classified as either good or fair year on year.	Halton: Biology 2004 Good – 0% Fair – 13.18% Poor – 79.39% Bad – 7.4% Chemistry 2004 Good – 11.0% Fair – 60.43% Poor – 20.55% Bad – 8.02% (Source: Environment Agency)
Environmental	14. To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity	Biodiversity, Fauna & Flora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it protect sites and habitats of nature conservation value from inappropriate development? Will it improve the number and diversity of sites and 	Number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	To maintain the number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	1 RAMSAR – 918.7ha 3 SSSI – 923.99ha 61 SINC – 742.65ha The RAMSAR site is also designated as a SSSI site therefore 918.7ha of the SSSI sites is also contributed as a RAMSAR. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental			diversity of sites and habitats of nature conservation value in the Borough?	Condition of SSSIs	95% of SSSI land should be in favourable or recovering condition by 2010. (Public Service Agreement (PSA) target)	Flood Brook Clough SSSI - 100% unfavourable recovering (01/04/05) Mersey Estuary SSSI - 99.95% favourable, 0.05% unfavourable recovering (Various 08/02- 03/04) Red Brow Cutting SSSI - 100% favourable (06/01) (Source: English Nature)
	15. To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it result in a reduction in the amount of waste requiring treatment and disposal? 	Level and % of household recycled	Waste Strategy 2000 set national recycling targets To recycle or compost at least 30% of household waste by 2010, and 33% of household waste by 2015.	During 2004/05, 8885.57 tonnes (13.65%) of household waste arising was sent for recycling. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)
	16. To reduce the need to travel and improve choice and use of sustainable	Air, Human Health, Climatic factors		Total annual amount of municipal waste generated and % recycle or composted.	Ensure 30% of waste is recycled or composted by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Total municipal waste(04/05) – 65,083 tonnes Total municipal waste recovered – 8885 (14%) Total municipal waste composted – 5957 (9%) Total municipal waste landfilled – 50240 (77%) (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it minimise the need to travel? Will it reduce car use and encourage the use of integrated 	Number and total area of Air Quality Management Areas and population living in AQMAs	To maintain 0 AQMAs	0 AQMAs (2005) (Source: Local Air Quality Management website)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental	transport modes, whilst protecting, and where necessary, improving local air quality		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and public transport? Will it improve air quality? 	Travel to work by mode	To reduce the number of people travelling to work by car or van by 10% by 2011 and by 20% by 2021.	<p>Percentage of people in Halton aged 16 - 74 in employment who usually:</p> <p>Work at or from home – 6.16%</p> <p>Travel to work by:</p> <p>Underground, metro, light rail, Tram or Train – 1.31%</p> <p>Bus, mini bus or coach – 7.12%</p> <p>Motorcycle, scooter or moped – 1.07%</p> <p>Driving a car or a van – 62.42%</p> <p>Passenger in a car or van – 9.06%</p> <p>Taxi – 0.65%</p> <p>Bicycle – 2.03%</p> <p>On foot – 9.78%</p> <p>Other – 0.41%</p> <p>(Source: 2001 Census)</p>
	17. To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of cultural and built environment and archaeological assets	Cultural heritage and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it safeguard sites of archaeological importance? Will it preserve and enhance buildings which contribute to Halton's heritage? 	<p>Number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas</p> <p>Number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal</p> <p>Number of buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments 'at risk'.</p>	<p>To maintain the number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas</p> <p>To increase the number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal</p> <p>To reduce the number of buildings 'at risk' to 0 by 2016.</p>	<p>Halton has 122 Listed Buildings 2 of which are Grade I listed, 17 are Grade II* listed and the remaining are Grade II listed.</p> <p>Halton has 10 Conservation Areas and the total area is 92. 78ha.</p> <p>(Source: English Heritage and Halton Borough Council)</p> <p>Currently there are 0 Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal</p> <p>(Source: Halton Borough Council)</p> <p>There are 2 buildings 'at risk' in Halton these are Daresbury Hall which is Grade II* Listed and the Undercroft of West Range at Norton Priory which is a scheduled monument.</p> <p>(Source: English Heritage, Buildings 'at risk' Register, 2005)</p>

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental	18. To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources	Water and soil, Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enable development to reuse brownfield land and convert existing buildings? • Will it encourage prudent and efficient use of energy? • Will it use water efficiently and with care? • Will it encourage the development of appropriate types of renewable energy resources? 	Proportion of housing built on previously developed land per year	PPG3 set a target of 60% of dwellings on PDL by 2008.	<p>61% of new and converted dwellings on PDL in 2004/05</p> <p>42% in 2004</p> <p>49% in 2003</p> <p>28% in 2002</p> <p>(Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p>
				Proportion of energy generated from sustainable and renewable sources	Energy White 2003 set a national target that 10% of the UK's electricity supply comes from renewable sources by 2010, 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020.	<p>Halton has capacity for the generation of 6.5MW from renewable sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomass: PDM (2.10MW) • Co-firing of Biomass: Shell Green Generation Plant (4.20MW) • Sewage Gas: Runcorn CHP (0.26MW) <p>(Source: renewables northwest)</p>

Appendix B: Statement of Consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Assessment (SA) process

Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - Statement of Consultation

SA Pre-production Scoping Report (incorporating SEA screening statement): Thursday 6th April 2006 to Thursday 11th May 2006

Date of consideration of representations: 1st June 2006

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
English Heritage	04/05/06 by post	For the purposes of the SEA consultation, English Heritage will confine its advice to the question, 'Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?' in respect to our concern, cultural heritage. Our comments are based on the information supplied in the Scoping Report. The Screening Statement indicates that the Council considers the SPD 'is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect.' On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of SEA Directive], English Heritage concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.	No changes required.
English Nature	No comment made		
The Countryside Agency	10/04/06 by post	The topic covered by the SPD would be unlikely to affect the Agency's environmental interests. The Agency does not wish to comment on the document. We should explain that the absence of comment is simply an expression of our remit and priorities, and should not be taken as implying a lack of interest or indicating either support for, or objection to, the plan.	No changes required.
The Environment Agency	11/05/06 by email	We agree with the Council (pg15) that the document is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore is unlikely to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.	No changes required.

Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response	
The Environment Agency continued . .		<p>In developing the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) the Environment Agency would urge the Council to consider the issue of flood risk. Where an extension is located in flood zone 2/3 we would refer the applicant/Council to the national flood risk standing advice. This can be found at www.pipernetworking.com and recommends that floor levels are set no lower and provides guidance on flood proofing measures.</p>	To be considered during the preparation of the

Appendix C: SA of House Extensions SPD - Statement of Determination

C1 Requirements of the SEA Regulations

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004 (from now on referred to as 'the regulations'), places an obligation on the Council to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on land use and spatial plans. Part of this process includes a screening exercise to determine the need for a SEA to be undertaken, by assessing if the proposed plan is likely to have any significant environmental effects. This screening process stage is particularly relevant where the plan being proposed can be considered to be small scale. The House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) can be considered to be a small-scale land use plan.

C2 Screening Process Methodology

The regulations provide a set of criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment of land use and spatial plans. These criteria are derived from Annex 2 of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and are set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations and can be summarised as:

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
 - b The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
 - c The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
 - d Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
 - e The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - b The cumulative nature of the effects;
 - c The transboundary nature of the effects;
 - d The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
 - e The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - f The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
 - iii. Intensive land-use; and
 - g The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status.

These criteria will form the framework of the screening process

C3 Screening Process for Supplementary Planning Document (Draft): House Extensions

The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

The intended geographical coverage of the SPD is Borough wide. Using the criteria in Schedule 1 of the regulations as a framework, the requirement for a need to carry out an SEA on the intended House Extensions SPD can be determined.

C4 House Extensions SPD - Statement of Determination

(as required by Regulation 11 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)

Halton Borough Council in consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies (the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency) has determined that the House Extensions SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects and, accordingly, an environmental assessment will not be carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

The SA Scoping Report, (Incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement), for the House Extensions SPD was available for consultation between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006.

Reasons for this Determination

Using the criteria, detailed in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment the following assessments have been made.

I. The characteristics of proposed House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(a) The degree to which the SPD sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD is intended to be supplementary and complementary to the adopted planning policy contained in the UDP.
(b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	It is intended that the scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process.

I. The characteristics of proposed House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	By seeking to improve the design and quality of all new house extensions and alterations this SPD will help promote the image of the Borough, promote the use of more sustainable materials and hopefully improve the well being of residents.
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	The intended SPD is primarily concerned with improving the quality of the design of the built and local environment. However, promoting the use of more sustainable materials and construction methods is likely to improve the environmental quality of the development.
(e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	There are no direct linkages with the implementation of European Community legislation.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	<p>The probable effect of the intended SPD will be to improve the design of the built environment within the Borough.</p> <p>Once adopted as part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF), the short to medium term effects of the intended SPD will be incremental. It is intended that in the longer term the guidance will become incorporated into the mainstream design thinking of planning and design professionals operating within the Borough.</p> <p>As part of the LDF the intended SPD will be subject to annual review and its relevance and effectiveness will be monitored. The LDF system allows for the SPD to be amended, replaced or deleted relatively easily if required.</p>
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The likely cumulative nature of the effects from the intended SPD is improving the quality of the built environment within the Borough to create a safe, secure and pleasant environment for people to live within.
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	There are no transboundary effects from the SPD due to the intended scope of its purpose and the geographical coverage it will have.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant or likely risks to human health or the environment from the intended SPD.
(e) The magnitude and spatial	The intended SPD is not site specific or time constrained.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed House Extensions SPD

Criteria	Assessment
extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Effects from the SPD will therefore be incremental and Borough wide, although the impact of this guidance will be concentrated in existing and new residential areas.
<p>(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii. Intensive land-use. 	<p>The intended SPD is not site specific. It will not impact upon areas of value or vulnerability as identified in i - iii.</p> <p>The SPD will provide guidance to existing planning policies and be seen with the context of part of the LDF and not part of the Development Plan, which contains policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing the built and natural environment.</p>
<p>(g) The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The intended SPD is not site specific and would be supplementary to adopted planning policy. The practical guidance it will contain will be considered in the context of planning policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. Therefore the SPD is not likely to have a negative effect on such areas, but will seek to provide additional guidance on enhancing such areas, i.e. through acknowledging local distinctiveness in the design of new development.</p>

In accordance with Part 2(9) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the Council, as the responsible authority consider that the intended Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

This determination has now been subject to consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies, none of the bodies have disagreed with the Council's determination.

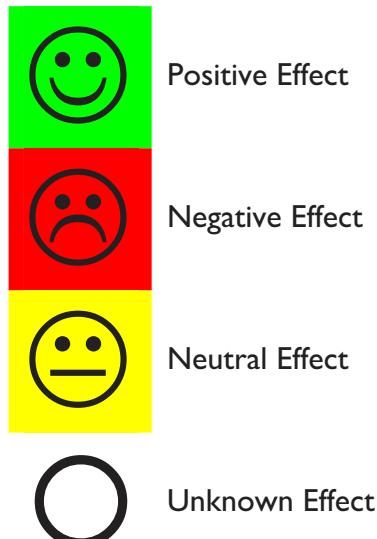
Further Information

A copy of this determination and the accompanying statement of reasons may be inspected at each of the following locations Runcorn Town Hall; Widnes, Halton Lea & Ditton libraries; Runcorn Tourist Information Centre; and Halton Lea & Widnes Halton Direct Links and can be viewed or downloaded free of charge from the Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk

If you require any further help or information, please feel free to contact the Spatial Planning Team on 0151 907 8300 or at forward.planning@halton.gov.uk

Appendix D: Testing the Purpose of the House Extensions SPD against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

Key



Objective		Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Economic	1. To continue towards reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increasing the economic activity rate		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the unemployment or economic activity rate in Halton.
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning in Halton.
	3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business development		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on sustainable economic growth and business development in Halton.
	4. To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on the competitiveness and productivity of business within Halton.
	5. To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on the vitality and viability of the three town centres.
	6. To improve and promote the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.		The improved design and quality of house extensions should improve the perception of the residential areas of the Borough and should help to improve the overall

Objective		Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
			image of the Borough.
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities		The improved design, layout, and quality of house extensions will improve the perception of residential areas, improve residents living environments and will help to increase feelings of well-being.
	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime		The improved design, surveillance and security of new house extensions will help to provide places that will contribute to reassuring communities and reducing the fear of crime.
	9. To provide good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing		The improved quality and design, and the greater consideration of residential amenity will help to provide good quality housing.
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on access to basic goods, services and amenities.
	11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace in Halton.
	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities in Halton.
Environmental	13. To protect, improve and where necessary, restore the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters.
	14. To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity		The direct / indirect of this SPD on biodiversity is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that any negative impacts on biodiversity would be mitigated by the use of other policies from within the UDP.
	15. To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.		The direct / indirect of this SPD on the production of waste and the increase reuse, recycling and recovery of waste is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that this will be managed through the use of other policies from within the UDP.

	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Environmental	16. To improve air quality by reducing the need to travel and improving choice and use of sustainable transport modes and reducing air pollution from other sources		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on air quality or the need to travel.
	17. To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the cultural and built environment and archaeological assets, whilst maintaining and strengthening a local distinctiveness through the enhancement of the character and appearance of the local landscape, townscape and coast		The improved quality, layout and design and the greater consideration of residential amenity and local characteristics will help to improve the built environment and maintain local distinctiveness.
	18. To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources		The direct / indirect of this SPD on land, energy, and water resources is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that this will be managed through the use of national guidance and other policies from within the UDP.

Appendix E: Options Considered

Extract of Pre-Production Scoping Report

As a Local Planning Authority, it is important to consider the options available for meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. The options considered are:

Option 1: Do nothing

This approach relies on existing policy within the UDP and government advice, such as that contained within 'Better Places to Live: A companion guide to PPG3: By Design' or the 'Urban Design Compendium', produced by English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, to help inform planning decisions and applications. Alternatively another agency or function of the Council could produce guidance we can subsequently adopt.

In seeking to achieve sustainable forms of development, it is important that practical guidance is produced that will have sufficient weight to promote better design within Halton. This can only really be achieved if a SPD is adopted. It would be difficult for another agency or function of the Council to lead on the production of what is essentially a planning document. Therefore although this option is rejected, it is necessary to ensure that all relevant agencies and functions of the Council are closely consulted throughout the production of the SPD, as their knowledge relating to housing and house extension in particular will assist in creating an effective SPD.

Option 2: Adopt government documents as SPD

Another option is to seek adoption of Government documents as SPD. There are four documents which each (in part) contributes to meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. These are: Planning – A Guide to Householders; Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3; the Urban Design Compendium, and; Places, Streets and Movement: a companion guide to Design Bulletin 32.

It is possible to adopt these documents as SPD for Halton, but firstly it would be difficult to amend them after a consultation exercise; secondly, the combined length of the documents would be difficult to digest by those involved in the planning and design of development, and; thirdly, the documents would not have the flexibility to respond to local circumstances. Therefore, it would not be the most effective means to deliver more sustainable places. It is clearly important that these four documents are used as a basis for developing a specific tailored document for Halton.

Option 3: Produce a House Extensions SPD

This option is to produce a House Extensions SPD. This would be produced to meet the specific purpose and objectives of the need for its production.

This is the most likely option to create more sustainable places, although the SPD must take into account national documents that relate to housing and house extensions.

The intended SPD must be shaped throughout by those who are involved in seeking to meet the same objectives as those set out in the intended purpose of the proposed SPD. It is therefore proposed to progress with option 3.

Appendix F: Further Information

Further information relating to the purpose of the intended SPD:

To access a downloadable copy of the Planning Policy Guidance notes or Planning Policy Statements detailed in Section 2, or for further general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/> or for a hard copy contact the Department of Communities and Local Government by phone on 0870 1226 236.

To access a downloadable copy of ' Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3' and 'Safer Places', documents relating to urban renewal, urban design and creating sustainable communities, and general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>.

For information relating to urban design there are several documents available. Design at a Glance: A quick reference to national design policy, Design Review and The Value of Good Design can be downloaded free of charge from the CABE website at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/> and The Urban Design Compendium produced by English Partnership and the Housing Corporation can be ordered online free of charge from English Partnerships at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk. Urban Design Guidance: urban design frameworks, development briefs and masterplans, produced by the Urban Design Group, and From Design Policy to Design Quality, produced by the RTPI, can be purchased from Thomas Telford Ltd.

Further information on the Secured By Design initiative, including details relating to the standards required for a development to receive Secured By Design accreditation may be found at www.securedbydesign.com

For information regarding any development affecting a historic building or conservation area 'Building In Context' will be able to provide advice. It is available from English Heritage and the CABE and can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.cabe.org.uk> or for a hard copy contact English Heritage at: Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2YP, Tel: 0870 333 1181, Fax: 01793 414 926

You can find out about the planning system and how it works at www.planningportal.gov.uk

Further information regarding Sustainability Appraisals and the Strategic Environmental Assessment can be found in the following documents:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities (for land use and spatial plans), October 2003
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, September 2005
- Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, November 2005

Are available via the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>. This website also contains a general introduction to SEA and SA. The Department of Communities and Local Government can be contacted on 020 7944 4400.

- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Biodiversity: Guidance for Practitioners, June 2004; and
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners, May 2004

Are available via the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 08708 506 506



REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee

DATE: 20th July 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health & Community

SUBJECT: Homelessness Prevention Fund

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval for up to £10,000 of DCLG Homelessness Grant funding to be utilised annually to provide a 'Homelessness Prevention Fund'. This Prevention Fund will be managed by Halton Housing Trust (HHT) to avert homelessness, thereby reducing the number of homelessness applications in the Borough.
2. **RECOMMENDED: that the Board agrees to the implementation of a Prevention Fund as outlined in this report and agrees that the Council's Standing Order (Contracts) 4.1 is waived accordingly.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Prevention is high on the Government's agenda. Homelessness can often be prevented with appropriate and effective intervention at crucial key times leading up to a homelessness presentation. Councils are starting to rethink traditional service delivery models in relation to homelessness. Where organisations have adopted a proactive approach to homelessness rather than a traditional reactive fire-fighting approach, impressive reductions in homelessness presentations have been seen.
- 3.2 Alongside evaluating staffing structures and functions, Council's are being encouraged to develop a range of housing options or preventative measures which can be considered prior to a homelessness application being processed. In this way 'inappropriate homelessness applications' may be filtered out.
- 3.3 An innovative approach to homelessness prevention also relies on frontline staff being able to make timely interventions (with the minimum of bureaucratic delay) to prevent homelessness from occurring. Spend to Save schemes, as sometimes prevention funds are labelled, work on the premise that usually a relatively small sum of money, for instance to pay for a rent deposit, saves more money long term as the cost of accommodating a household in temporary accommodation is expensive.
- 3.4 The Appendix attached highlights the proposed criteria relating to the

Prevention Fund. HHT will have delegated authority to utilise the Prevention Fund, in accordance with set criteria. A monitoring arrangement whereby HHT report to the Council will be put into place to ensure that the Prevention Fund is being appropriately applied.

3.5 Although the annual value of this work is limited to £10,000, the cumulative value over several years means that its procurement is subject to Standing Orders (Contracts). The rationale for seeking a waiver of Standing Order 4.1 is as follows:

- Compliance with Standing Orders is not practicable as the Council's requirements can only be delivered by HHT given that HHT provides the Homelessness and Housing Advice service on behalf of the Council (under contract), following LSVT in December 2005.
- The Prevention Fund criteria and proposed monitoring arrangements are transparent and HHT will be accountable to the Council for use of the Prevention Fund.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This initiative is consistent with Government good practice guidelines as exemplified in documents such as 'Developing Positive Outcomes' and is consistent with the aims and objectives of the Borough's Homelessness Strategy.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Housing Agency Agreement with HHT has been drawn up largely on the basis of the service that had hitherto been provided by the Council. Like most Councils Halton operated on the basis of dealing with homelessness as it arose and traditionally little has been done to set up housing options to help prevent homelessness. This is something that will need to be addressed within the context of the contractual arrangement with HHT to ensure that service delivery in respect of homelessness fits with the national 'prevention agenda'.

5.2 Funding for the scheme can be met from the £23,000 Homelessness Grant currently provided annually by DCLG to prevent homelessness.

6. RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The Prevention Fund criteria may be inappropriately applied. Risk control measures to ensure effective monitoring of the Prevention Fund will reduce this risk. A significant opportunity exists for improvement to the homelessness service. It is anticipated that the level of homelessness recorded in Halton will reduce as a result. Homelessness BPIs measuring temporary accommodation usage and prevention are contributory factors in the overall CPA assessment, therefore it is important that the Council scores well in this service area.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

8. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

<u>Document</u>	<u>Place of inspection</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None		

PREVENTION FUND CRITERIA

1. General criteria

The PF should only be used where there is reason to believe the household is homeless, or threatened with homelessness, in priority need and unintentionally homeless. However consideration may be given in exceptional circumstances to households with children found to be intentionally homeless if this prevents placement in temporary accommodation.

- No cash payments will be made.
- Maximum payment will be £500 (payment may be increased in exceptional circumstances e.g. to accommodate large families).
- Payments will usually be 'one offs' and restricted to one per household.

In the event that funding becomes restricted or limited, funds will be targeted in the following order:

- Households with children.
- Where a member of household is pregnant.
- Couples.
- Single Person households.

The Homelessness Manager at HHT will make any decision regarding restriction, or prioritisation of funding in conjunction with the Service Development Manager (Homelessness) at HBC.

2. Preventative Options that may be considered

Officers may consider any of the following options:

- Rent in advance payments – private sector landlords usually require a months rent in advance, upon the signing of a tenancy agreement.
- Bonds – relate to an agreement that a payment will be made to a private landlord *if the need arises* to cover any damage made by the tenant. Landlords normally require a bond equivalent to the value of a months rent to cover the cost of any damages to the property.
- Damage deposits – in this instance a payment is made to a private landlord at the start of a tenancy to cover any damage that a tenant may cause to a private rented property. Landlords normally require a

deposit equivalent to the value of a months rent to cover cost of any damages to the property and its contents. The Government is considering setting up independent schemes whereby the deposit is held in trust in case of a dispute between tenant and landlord. If these schemes are implemented, HHT will also deal with the administrators of such schemes as the need arises.

- Rent 'top ups'- these may be payments made in respect of rent shortfalls where tenants are struggling to make the full rental payment. Hardship may happen for example if a tenant's income changes, or if they are on a low wage and have an unexpected financial crisis or event to pay for. Payment will only be made if it is considered that the tenant can otherwise meet rent payments in the future.
- Payments in respect of delays in Housing Benefit payments. Delays in HB can mean that a landlord is waiting for their rent. Payment in advance of HB payments being made can keep relations between the landlord and tenant harmonious and prevent worry and anxiety for the tenant. Payment would be direct to the Landlord subject to agreement that it will be repaid when HB payments are received.
- Rent arrears payments to RSLs and Private Landlords. In certain situations it may be pragmatic to clear rent arrears, or to make a gesture to clear some of the arrears. If a household becomes homeless there may be a duty to re-house, or at least to provide emergency accommodation for a reasonable period of time. In financial terms the cost of providing emergency accommodation or re-housing is usually well in excess of making a payment towards rent arrears.
- Agency fee payments - Private letting agencies normally charge an administrative fee to cover the cost of providing tenancy agreements and processing an application. This is usually about £50 -£75.
- One off payments for furniture removals and house clearance. This type of payment may help a household to move from a property that is unsuitable (so they are homeless in terms of the legislation), or may help a household that is threatened with homelessness to move to a suitable available property. If removal expenses have to be saved for, or borrowed from other sources, a property that is vacant could be let to someone else, as an RSL or private landlord will not keep a property empty until a household is in a position to move.
- Rent Guarantees for RSLs. See explanation for private landlords above, although this would only normally apply where an applicant was under 18 years of age and legal address for rent arrears may not be as easily available as for older clients.
- Court costs for RSLs and private tenants. Private landlords and

RSLs may be persuaded to retain a tenant even following Court intervention, if Court costs are covered. (Normally some agreement regarding any rent payments due would also have to be made.)

- Travel costs - Clients may wish to view or take up properties in other areas and may need help with travel costs.

N.B. payments to RSLs and private landlords can only be made where there is an undertaking not to evict the tenant and allow the tenant to return to the property.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive. There may be other circumstances where it is expedient to utilise the PF.

3. Monitoring

Quarterly monitoring reports will be sent to the Service Development Manager (Homelessness), detailing any authorised expenditure, number of cases and reasons for expenditure. Any exceptions to the general criteria will also be highlighted. This information will feed into the BVPI 213 regarding the monitoring of the success of the housing advice service in the prevention of homelessness.

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