



## In-depth review of sustainable communities policy

Report on the Area Based Assessment of London  
Thames Gateway – London Borough of Barking and  
Dagenham

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# Introduction

CAG Consultants were appointed by the Sustainable Development Commission to undertake an in-depth review of sustainable communities policy (the SCP and subsequent linked policy). The aims of the review were to: -

1. Investigate if and how the delivery of sustainable communities policy has helped to make communities more sustainable.
2. Learn lessons about how delivery of sustainable communities policy could better support the achievement of more sustainable communities.
3. Learn lessons about how to absorb the aims of the UK sustainable development strategy into government policy and practice more generally.

The review focuses on two proposals at the heart of the SCP – Housing Market Renewal Areas (HMRAs) and Growth Areas. It had two components:

1. A review of national policies on the Sustainable Communities Plan (SCP) and any existing performance assessments of sustainable communities policy by Government Departments and independent bodies.
2. Four area based assessments. Two in Growth Areas (Barking & Dagenham and South Cambridgeshire) and two in Housing Market Renewal Areas (East Lancashire and Newcastle / Gateshead).

This document is one of four reports on the area based assessments and presents our findings for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham which falls within the London Thames Gateway Growth Area.

There is a separate report which draws together the conclusions from the area based assessments and national policy research.

# The area

The Thames Gateway Growth Area, focusing on Barking and Dagenham was chosen for study because it is an example of delivering significant housing growth within an urban conurbation characterised by infill housing within a wider regeneration project. This is in contrast to our other growth area based assessment of South Cambridgeshire. (See separate report).

The Thames Gateway is a funnel shaped area that runs along both banks of the Thames, from London Docklands to Southend in Essex and Sheerness in Kent, and constitutes one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe.<sup>1</sup> The Thames Gateway is identified as one of England's growth areas in the Sustainable Communities Plan (2003), which until this week required that 120,000 new homes be built in the Thames Gateway *by 2016*. It was reported on Wednesday that London's 33 boroughs will be given new housing targets from 2007, increasing the original London Plan target. Of the new target of 306,500 for the 33 boroughs by 2017 it is reported that "the vast bulk will be built in the Thames Gateway".<sup>2</sup>

Its regeneration is intended to address a number of issues including economic growth, environmental improvement, urban renewal and transport enhancement to enable the development of sustainable communities.<sup>3</sup> The area covers over 3,000 hectares of brownfield land requiring £16 billion of infrastructure funding<sup>4</sup>.

Delivery structures involve dozens of local authorities, government departments, quangos, development agencies and regional organisations.<sup>5</sup> Among the most critical are English Partnerships, the Environment Agency, British Waterways, the Housing Corporation, the GLA, LDA, Thames Gateway NHS Trust, the London Thames Gateway Partnership and its delivery arm the Thames Gateway Urban Development Corporation (one of two Gateway development corporations) which has planning powers over significant parts of the areas and large scale projects (although not Olympic sites).

As the London Thames Gateway Partnership says "Major improvement to London's infrastructure is essential to maintain and further exploit London's attractiveness to inward investment. Investment in Thames Gateway is critical to this improvement, because Thames Gateway is the only part of the capital able to sustain the massive scale of growth required in housing and jobs if London is to retain its pre-eminence. Thames Gateway is London's safety valve and its opportunity. No other part of London

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<sup>1</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November 2005: p.4.

<sup>2</sup> Ken Livingston, London Evening Standard, 20 September, 2006, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/thamesgateway>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November 2005.

offers the scope to absorb the new growth in housing and jobs and to ease the pressures on London's social fabric".<sup>6</sup>

As its website notes, "the London Thames Gateway UDC was established in May 2004 as a delivery vehicle to provide the single-minded focus and clout necessary to get things done. The overriding objective of the UDC will be the regeneration of the London Thames gateway area. In all, parts of six London boroughs will benefit - Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham and Waltham Forest.

The UDC is currently working on its overarching strategy for these areas along with finalising the regeneration frameworks for the Lower Lea and London Riverside".<sup>7</sup>

By 2005, ODPM (now DCLG) had pledged £850 million funding for the Gateway up until 2008 however infrastructure costs have been estimated at £16 billion<sup>8</sup> so a large funding shortfall remains, and is considered a major threat to successful implementation.<sup>9</sup>

Thus far few practical implementation actions have occurred. Rather various development structures and funding arrangements have been put in place. These include:

- Sustainable Communities Plan published (2003)
- Thames Gateway Delivery Unit established
- London Thames Gateway Partnership established
- London Thames Gateway Urban Development Corporation established (May, 2004)
- Government cites Greenwich Peninsula's Millennium Community as an example of the kind of design it is looking for in the Gateway<sup>10</sup>
- Barking Riverside applies for Outline Planning Permission (December 2004). Note that planning permission has not yet been granted and it is unclear when this will occur.
- The publication of the London Plan (February 2004) and now its reported revision including a higher housing target for the Thames Gateway<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.thames-gateway.org.uk/about-content.asp?id=2>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.thames-gateway.org.uk/about.asp?id=159>

<sup>8</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November 2005: p.5

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November 2005: p.5

<sup>11</sup> Ken Livingston, London Evening Standard, 20 September, 2006, p.2.

- Development of the East London Sub Regional Development Framework (May 2006)<sup>12</sup>, the GLA's Housing In London Strategy (2005) and the LDA's Economic development strategy, Sustaining Success (2005)

It is worth noting, as discussed in more detail in the report that most of the planned housing development in LBBB will happen on key large scale development sites. However proposals for these are still in planning stages. For example, the major development at Barking Riverside for which Maxwan are developing a master plan has not yet received planning approval. As Regeneration and Renewal explain, "developers are awaiting a decision on outline planning permission with progress on Section 106 agreements and detailed applications dependent on this ruling. Site remediation is ongoing."<sup>13</sup> Interviewees were unable to tell us when the application would be approved. They did note that if major public transport proposals such as the East London Transit were delayed in funding terms this would delay the development.

It is further important to be clear that very little actual sustainable communities policy linked development has happened yet, thus substantial aspects of this report, especially in relation to new mixed use development areas, is based on proposals rather than actual delivery.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/planning/srdf/docs/east-srdf.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November 2005: p.9

# Main findings

The overall regeneration vision for Barking fits well with the Sustainable Communities Plan. Presented under the heading “Building Sustainable Communities, Transforming Lives” the Borough’s vision is for “a well educated, highly skilled population, able to access new jobs, from the varied opportunities available within the Borough and elsewhere. People will choose to live, work and invest here because Barking and Dagenham provides excellence and choice in the big things in life - work, education, health, housing and recreation - for individuals and for the family”.<sup>14</sup>

They note a number of specific aspects that fit the SCP:

- “A vibrant local economy
- A diverse and cohesive community
- A safe and attractive public realm and environment
- Excellent retail, leisure, cultural, community and social facilities
- A full range of housing choices
- Accessible and affordable public transport, and
- First class education and lifelong learning services will provide the basis for greater personal wealth and a better quality of life for all our residents, including those who are not economically active”.<sup>15</sup>

The relationship to the Sustainable Communities Plan is further defined in a discussion paper prepared on “what are sustainable communities?”<sup>16</sup> where it is noted that the ODPM (now DCLG) identified a range of key features of sustainable communities and outlines these in detail. In then considering how to create sustainable communities in Barking, it notes that the primary aim of the Local Development Framework (the main planning framework for the Borough) will be to achieve sustainable development.

The proposals in the Borough’s regeneration and land use planning frameworks therefore appear wholly in line with the SCP provisions.<sup>17</sup> This assessment looks more closely at how well these aspirations are being achieved.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/5-work/regeneration/policy/regen-vision.html>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 1, Vision for Planning our Borough, 2005: p.8).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



Our comments are ordered according to the DCLG / DEFRA definition of sustainable communities that was agreed in 2005.

## Active, inclusive and safe

### Community cohesion and identity

Community cohesion and identity is being affected in a number of ways. LB Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) is the 7<sup>th</sup> most deprived Borough in London and scores highly on a number of indices on the Index of Deprivation. While the Borough has a young population, life expectancy for its residents is ranked in the lowest 20% of the country, other indicators such as levels of teenage pregnancy are high, and long-term illness is the highest in London.<sup>18</sup> One local interviewee describes LBBD as a community that has traditionally been white and working class, until the last 5 to 10 years when BME groups began to appear. They noted that the population is more mixed in nearby boroughs such as Tower Hamlets and Newham “so this increasing mix is a big issue for the existing population. People in Barking tend to identify with Essex rather than London”.

In this context of deprivation and community transformation, Barking interviewees point to issues of community cohesion being raised by both the pace and scale of housing development in the Borough. It is argued that the whole regeneration agenda is led by the housing growth agenda. “That is good and bad. There are local political issues. The Council is now 39 Labour, 12 BNP and one Tory. Subregional housing policies have been made play of.” Another points out that over the last four to five years “there has been a step change - there will be 30,000 new homes in the next 15 years. The downside is that lots of residents are concerned and the BNP got in as a result.” An interviewee noted that the BNP have produced literature saying that a Barking tower block would be used by Tower Hamlets for ‘problem families’. “This kind of thing means we have to fire-fight such claims”.

While our stakeholder interviewees argue that the racially based concerns around the allocation of housing are groundless, (and local resentments appear to have been stirred up by BNP activists), they also accept that there is some truth in the view that the pace and scale of development must be carefully managed so that the Local Authority can deal effectively with the perception that incomers - either from other parts of London or further afield - are receiving all the benefits of regeneration. As noted below the Borough is spending a substantial amount of officer time ‘firefighting’ against such unfounded claims.

### Community safety

Evidence collected by the borough suggests that recorded crime levels are increasing, although recently proposed initiatives may have a positive effect. LB Barking

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<sup>18</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 4, Community, November, 2005; pp.4-9.

undertook a survey, reported in 2005<sup>19</sup>, that showed crime and safety are major concerns for many Barking residents. 68% of people surveyed said they felt threatened by crime. An Audit of Crime, Disorder and Drugs<sup>20</sup> showed that, between 2001-2004, recorded crime increased in the Borough by 7.8%. As one regional interviewee points out, issues are not just about actual crime committed: "It's about both the reality and massively about perception ie fear of crime versus actual crime".

The Borough has proposed a range of measures to tackle perceived and actual crime and disorder, which are described in its Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy (2005 to 2006). All fit well within the thrust of the Sustainable Communities Plan. They include promoting better design for streets, parks and buildings; better lighting; encouraging different housing types; bringing in a mix of different people to reduce concentrations of social disadvantage; ensuring land is available for community facilities and youth centres; promoting responsible management of night time uses and venues; and regenerating run-down areas where there is more than average amounts of crime.<sup>21</sup> These are in the realm of proposals rather than completed actions so it is not yet possible to judge their success in developing actual places.

## Well run

### Community engagement

A review of documentation on the LB Barking website suggests that local communities are being engaged in decisions in a number of ways. Substantial consultation appears to be occurring in relation to both topic-based strategies and major development proposals such as for Barking Riverside, Dagenham Dock and Barking Town Centre Regeneration. The Council asks for feedback on key strategic and other documents prior to finalising policy. Documents include translated information to allow non-English speaking residents to make their views known. This highly consultative approach appears to be confirmed through the interviews with regional and local stakeholders. However, asked about areas where they may be struggling to deliver the SCP, there remain anxieties in terms of community engagement. One local interviewee says that "The public sector should step in. It's about not leaving people here behind...I'm concerned about the people: regeneration with the existing population."

As noted above, opinions articulated by political lobbies such as the BNP - which say that they are representing local residents' views - are largely in opposition to current development proposals made within the context of the SCP. Local interviewees take the view that these interventions substantially misrepresent the development situation, and thus local opinions (based on BNP leaflets etc) may need to be better informed in order to be in a position to influence decisions.

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<sup>19</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 4, Community, 2005: p9.

<sup>20</sup> Barking and Dagenham Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy, 2005 to 2006, LBBD.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Our reading of the situation is that the local authority is engaging positively with the community in a difficult situation where new development may be misrepresented for political reasons.

### Delivery partnerships and structures

Views and evidence about the success of delivery partnerships in delivering sustainable communities are mixed. The Borough is a 'supporting authority' to the London Gateway Thames Partnership, a private-public sector partnership, whose role is a strategic and lobbying one, aiming to promote regeneration in east London. The Partnership describes itself as focusing on the whole of the Thames Gateway London area. It says it is "articulating at London and national levels the opportunity which Thames Gateway presents and the pressing needs which it must address to be able to live up to its potential".<sup>22</sup>

Delivery is undertaken through the London Thames Gateway UDC, which was established in May 2004 as a delivery vehicle to "provide the single-minded focus and clout necessary to get things done". Its overriding objective is the regeneration of the London Thames Gateway area and this will benefit parts of six London Boroughs. These are Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham and Waltham Forest. The UDC explains on its website that it is currently working on its overarching strategy for these areas along with finalising the regeneration frameworks for the Lower Lea and London Riverside.<sup>23</sup> Barking interviewees note that the Borough is working with the Urban Development Corporation in partnership.

Interviewees at regional and local level have questions about whether the models for delivery for overall strategy and for the delivery of particular sites are necessarily the most effective. For instance, one asks in relation to the proposed major development at Barking Reach: "Is English Partnerships' work in equity partnership with Bellway on Barking Reach the right way to do it? The jury is out. There are lots of models on how you can partner with the private sector. If we are to make this really comprehensive the government would need to get more directly involved in the process. A model like the London Docklands Development Corporation could do things we can't do now, like capped prices. We can't or don't do that now". Another interviewee meanwhile says that an area of struggle in delivery is the number of agencies involved.

One interviewee explains that the Thames Gateway London Partnership have a task group "all about information on what's going on, it's also an information sharing forum. They also undertake studies for us such as green grid stuff and flood risk assessment". However notwithstanding this activity, another interviewee feels that there is a need to be more holistic and "there is not enough sharing of ideas".

The partnership and delivery vehicle evidence in our view suggests a reasonable level of partnership working has already been achieved. However doubt remains whether the structure of the delivery vehicle is sufficiently comprehensive and powerful to deliver

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.thames-gateway.org.uk/about-content.asp?id=2>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.thames-gateway.org.uk/about-content.asp?id=159>

the objectives. It may be that a development corporation with stronger powers would be better able to deal with the structural issues and barriers that the partnership will have to grapple with in developing this part of the Gateway.

## Environmentally sensitive

The LBBD has proposed a strengthening of the environmental standards in developments within Issues and Options papers published as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF). These are discussed below. The LDF has not yet been adopted as a formal planning framework - it appears that will happen in a rolling programme as each of the documents in the framework are finalised over the next couple of years<sup>24</sup> - and therefore we can not be certain that these proposals will be taken forward in LDF policies.

## Climate change

A number of policy documents make commitments to reducing energy consumption in housing. However, it is difficult to say to what extent these have or will be implemented.

LBBD's Sustainable Energy Strategy<sup>25</sup> notes "The key means of reducing the borough's carbon dioxide emissions is to focus on reducing heating requirements in housing through improvements in energy performance". It includes a number of key objectives with a specific or indirect relationship to housing design:

- To reduce Barking and Dagenham's CO2 emissions through increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy
- For the Council to lead by example in implementing best practice in sustainable energy throughout its activities
- To improve the energy efficiency of all Barking and Dagenham's housing to the highest possible level
- To increase local power generation in Barking and Dagenham through renewable energy and combined heat and power
- For the growth and regeneration of the Borough over the coming decades to be low carbon
- To promote the Sustainable Energy Strategy to all stakeholders and ensure the Strategy is implemented through all Council activities.<sup>26</sup>

The Council states in its Energy Strategy that it will "aim for the highest feasible energy efficiency standard for the borough's housing". To this end, "it will undertake a study

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/pdf/local-development-scheme.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.lbdd.gov.uk/6-living/envir-protect/envir-sustainability/energy-strategy.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

to calculate the highest practicable energy rating that is achievable for the borough, and then develop an action plan for delivering this standard".<sup>27</sup> It also notes a series of related actions to support energy efficiency and warm homes. Whether any of the actions proposed have actually been undertaken is not clear from written sources.

Meanwhile, among the proposals set out in the *Local Development Framework Options Paper 3 Environment*<sup>28</sup> (which are expected to be included in the LDF when adopted) are that new developments should use energy efficient design measures to reduce the need to heat and cool buildings; have green roofs; ensure building materials are recycled, have a long life and have a low environmental impact in their production; use non-reflective surfaces; and use plantings to reduce temperature.

Barking also asks those making planning applications to fill in a sustainability statement in line with the guidance on Delivering Sustainable Communities<sup>29</sup> and the London Plan Policies that cover aspects of energy and resource efficient design. Among questions asked are whether developers are making use of any grants for the incorporation on energy and resource efficient design of up to 50% available through the Energy Saving Trust; whether the development goes beyond the minimum energy efficient standard specified in Part L of the Building Regulations to achieve the EST's Energy Efficiency Best Practice standard for new build; and whether site orientation and design allows for retrofitting of solar devices such as photovoltaics or solar water heating where these have not been fitted initially. Other parts of the sustainability statement cover a range of aspects of the energy efficiency and energy conservation of new and existing dwellings including meeting BREEAM standards, natural ventilation systems, energy efficient sources of power, and low energy fittings. There is a specific focus on following the hierarchy for heating and cooling established by the Mayor and incorporating sustainable heat and power into new developments.

These initiatives are of quite recent date and planning applicants are not obliged to respond to them. Rather, "the questions are for guidance but may be a material consideration when dealing with the planning application".<sup>30</sup> It is not clear from available monitoring documentation such as the LBBD Annual Monitoring Report (the latest available is 2004-2005) to what extent planning applicants have responded to the request for a sustainability statement or how far these features have been built into new developments and housing refits.

Turning to the question of how much renewable energy has been or will be installed, the Council refers to the percentage of energy to be generated from renewable resources as one of its "minimum acceptable sustainable design benchmarks".<sup>31</sup> The Energy Strategy meanwhile points out that "Although renewable energy currently contributes only a tiny fraction to London's energy needs, there is great scope for using

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<sup>27</sup> Page 26.

<sup>28</sup> 2005.

<sup>29</sup> 2005.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/plan-sustainable.html>

<sup>31</sup> Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005: p11.

renewable energy more in Barking and Dagenham. For example, solar water heating, solar electric and mini wind turbines can all be included in the design of homes and offices".<sup>32</sup> Current proposals for the Local Development Framework are that new developments will in future be required to provide a proportion (in the range 10-20%) of energy from renewable sources.<sup>33</sup>

Expert interviewees tend to view the current and proposed performance on energy as one of the successful areas for the Borough in relation to planning for sustainable communities. One notes that the mixed-use area of Barking Town Centre has been designated by the GLA as an Energy Action Centre and the borough is working on its implementation. It is also "encouraging developers to come forward, and guiding developers on how to make development more energy efficient".

We did not find any mention of housing design taking into account the need for adaptation to climate change, although the general provisions for sustainable construction discussed below, should support more robust performance during storm surges.

Our judgement in the area of energy (as a response to climate change issues) is that at a strategic level the council is making good progress on achieving more sustainable energy consumption. It is focusing attention on reducing carbon dioxide emissions through reducing heating requirements in its housing, in turn through better design and performance measures implemented through its planning and building system. At a borough level it is also proposing to increase the sustainability of supply through CHP and renewables. Local commentators tend to see this as a successful policy area although very few of these excellent proposals appear to have been implemented as yet. An exception is the Barking Town Centre designation as an energy action centre.

### Water supply

The water efficiency standards of new or refurbished housing are included within the Borough's proposals for sustainable design within the LDF Issues and Options papers. It is proposed that housing design should include measures for minimising water consumption, collecting rain water and installing systems for water re-use (grey water).<sup>34</sup> The Borough's 'sustainability statement' (as described above) asks applicants for planning approval whether development includes rainwater harvesting opportunities, greywater recycling systems for use on sewage systems or in the grounds of developments. However we could find no hard evidence that higher water standards are being achieved in new housing.

There is also a question mark over whether (plans for new) water supplies will be able to meet the increased demand from new housing, and without causing damage to

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/6-living/envir-protect/envir-sustainability/energy-strategy.html>

<sup>33</sup> Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005: p11.

<sup>34</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005: p11.

water reserves and biodiversity.<sup>35</sup> The Borough is committed to reducing its environmental footprint including reducing water use as part of creating sustainable communities but the degree to which these aspirations will be realised is unclear. The Mayor of London is currently producing a Water Plan for London and is opposing Thames Water's proposed desalination plant as an unsustainable method for increasing London's water supply, especially in the context of poor infrastructure and maintenance regimes leading to high levels of leakage, and poor water management practice leading to high levels of wastage and overuse.

Overall the picture is of very good aspirations for future development but little evidence of these being reached currently or certainty that they can be achieved in future.

### Flood risk and drainage

It appears that some new and refurbished housing, and proposals for further housing developments, are in areas of flood risk. There are proposals described below for overcoming or at least mitigating the risk but also some concerns raised. According to recent monitoring information<sup>36</sup> and based on the Environment Agency's Flood Zones Map, approximately the lower third section of the Borough is potentially at risk from flooding at certain intervals. As the Borough notes, being close to waterways is a major natural feature of Barking and Dagenham. It therefore has to carefully plan the location and design of new development to "create a safe environment which gives priority to the development of land where there is a lower risk of flooding".<sup>37</sup> It uses a sequential test<sup>38</sup> to determine where it is possible to develop, while minimising possible flooding impacts. At the same time it is acknowledged at Borough and regional level that there is a potentially high risk of flooding in a number of areas of the Borough.<sup>39</sup>

In terms of policy for the future, the Borough argues that it could use drainage and flooding problems as an opportunity to provide environmentally sustainable design and improve access to waterways. As well as the potential for planting areas for surface drainage (and the previously noted green roofs idea) open space and river restoration can provide floodwater storage areas.<sup>40</sup>

Local interviewees present a positive picture of the Borough's actions in relation to flood risk, which they say they are tackling. "We have land being raised through spoil, and green roofs for surface run-off." At regional level interviewees are less sanguine, especially about decision-making from government (central and London) on developing floodable areas. "Flood risk? If anything the government is not helping. There is no Czar in government looking at how to do the Gateway. All new sites proposed for waste disposal are in the floodable areas. High density residential is one of the better uses [*in flood risk areas*] yet government recently extended the Mayor's powers to impose these

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<sup>35</sup> The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November, 2005: p.5G

<sup>36</sup> Local Development Framework: AMR for 2004-2005

<sup>37</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005; pp6-7.

<sup>38</sup> Defined in *Planning Policy Guidance 25: Development and Flood Risk*.

<sup>39</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005; p7.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

waste sites on boroughs who were resisting like hell”.

One regional level interviewee is particularly concerned about future planning for flood risk saying that: “We used to rely on the Thames Flood Defence, then on ‘fill’, but that beggars your neighbour. No-one is seriously looking at how to deal with flood issues both for existing housing and new housing”. This interviewee sees central government as needing to lead on this area: “We would need a big government programme and we need some clarity. Government has been too timid. There is no real guidance on what is/what is not permitted and there is confusion. Given increasing public knowledge the issue is being ratcheted-up. We should do work on design to minimise loss of life, and property given say a 1 in 2,000 year flood. We are working with Defra on this. The government could lead - showing transparency and clarity. It will all be sequential testing [rather than transparent advice]. The same is true on transport. The government backs away from this”. This appears to imply that sequential testing could still result in developments in flood risk areas where no alternative is available.

There are also concerns from stakeholders about sewerage and drainage capacity in the development areas. Regionally, sewerage treatment upgrades are planned by Thames Water, the sole provider in East London, to deal with expected increased loads due to new development. Three major waste water treatment centres at Beckton, Crossness and Riverside (Rainham) are planned for upgrade in the coming years. Local sewerage treatment may also be developed for areas of the London Thames Gateway. In Barking and Dagenham it is difficult to determine from available information whether planned sewerage treatment upgrades will be sufficient to cope with the planned growth.

At regional level, the guidance suggests that sustainable urban drainage (SUDs) should be installed with all new or refurbished housing.<sup>41</sup> This suggests that “All surface water run offs should be managed as close as possible to their source”. It says that the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems is “desirable for developments unless there are practical reasons for not doing so (for example, local ground conditions). Retro-fitting of Sustainable Drainage Systems for existing development should be implemented when opportunities arise”.<sup>42</sup>

At the Borough level it is argued that it is important to use sustainable drainage systems to reduced the amount, and improve the quality, of storm water.<sup>43</sup> “For new developments such as Barking Riverside, sustainable drainage design can provide landscape areas or green roofs which will help water seep naturally into the ground.”<sup>44</sup> Appropriate sustainable drainage systems and management are also seen to be important to reduce water pollution (a problem in the River Roding and River Beam) and protect the biodiversity of riverine and other habitats. We understand that SUDs will be used at the Barking Riverside development, and as it is a question in the sustainability statement (ie “Is there use of permeable paving material/sustainable

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<sup>41</sup> The London Plan, GLA, 2006: p.76.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3 Environment, 2005: p7.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



urban drainage systems on site?") it seems that it is proposed for broader use in Barking, although to what extent it will be implemented remains uncertain.

Our judgement is that in a particularly difficult policy area, where effects will be exacerbated by climate change, it is not surprising that there are significant concerns about the future. It is clear that some proposed developments are in flood risk areas just as some existing housing areas are already. The need to plan a safe environment in a context of increasing flood risk is particularly pertinent to the borough. There is interesting thinking around the use of flooding risk as a basis for providing environmentally sustainable design and thus to minimise and mitigate impacts. At the same time there are evidently some areas of conflict in relation to the kinds of land uses proposed for flood risk areas. Regional stakeholders may be right to suggest that stronger central government guidance is needed (beyond the sequential test) to avoid locating inappropriate land uses in floodable areas. There is a laudable focus on developing SUDs in new areas of development but the anxieties about regional capacity of sewage and drainage systems remain.

### **Greenfield land, greenbelt, biodiversity & countryside**

505.9 hectares (less than 14%) of Barking is greenbelt land and as far as we can determine from the documentation and interviews no housing has been built in LBBDD in recent times or is proposed on greenbelt or greenfield sites.<sup>45</sup> The Borough has a number of policies about greenbelt and open land protection and improvement, understood in both ecological and recreational terms, with a commitment that inappropriate development will be refused.<sup>46</sup> The Big Green Map meanwhile "provides information about organisations and projects in the borough, and information about how people can make small changes to their lifestyles to improve the environment."<sup>47</sup>

According to local interviewees all the housing built (timeframe not given) and planned to meet LBBDD current and future housing targets is on brownfields sites. The Council is focusing its development on "realising the strategic regeneration opportunities that exist in the Borough at Barking Riverside, South Dagenham and Barking Town Centre".<sup>48</sup> As one regional interviewee explains; "CPRE think we've been the bees' knees as we are building nearly 100% on brownfields. It takes the pressure off the green belt. It is one of the big wins". A local interviewee meanwhile notes that at a regional level "Within the London boundary something like 95% of new build of houses is on previously built on land. We still need to be vigilant. However, compared with growth areas outside London including parts of the London Stansted corridor then Thames Gateway is better. We are working as much as we can be in the Thames Gateway to achieve this".

The density of developments (completed and proposed) varies. The Borough argues

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<sup>45</sup> LBBDD Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report for 2004-2005

<sup>46</sup> Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/park-country/pdf/parks-green-spaces-strategy.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/environment/greenmap/greenmap-main.cfm>

<sup>48</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 5, Housing, 2005: p9.

that the Mayor of London “will expect new developments in Barking and Dagenham to achieve densities of as much as 275 homes a hectare on sites within 10 minutes walking distance of a town centre”.<sup>49</sup> Statistics cited in the London Plan show that the density of new residential development in LBBD averaged 47 dwellings per hectare from 1995-98, and rose to 70 dwellings per hectare for 2001-2004.

As the Borough notes, the Local Development Framework will determine which parts of the Borough are suitable for building housing at higher densities in line with the London Plan policies. These policies do not propose a density for the Gateway, instead it is argued in the Sub Regional Development Framework that Local Authorities (including LBBD) will need to decide on densities depending on local circumstances but in line with defined housing capacity and a density matrix developed by the GLA. “Boroughs are asked to include detailed proposals for appropriate densities in their LDFs, in accordance with the SRQ matrix (a density matrix) and other London Plan policies, (including masterplans for larger sites)”.<sup>50</sup>

We were not able to obtain specific density proposals for large scale sites like Barking Riverside and South Dagenham but would expect to find density pyramids around centres and densities overall in line with the SRQ matrix as described above.

Recent work and future proposals in relation to biodiversity are designed to reverse the loss of, or changes to, designated biodiversity sites or valuable landscapes. However, these problems do not appear to be as a result of the SCP but rather the historic result of previous rounds of development that were less sensitive to overall sustainability requirements. Barking historically has been an industrial area focused on the car industry and the site for many polluting industries, leaving behind numerous brownfield sites and areas of contaminated land and water. It is this heritage rather than sustainable communities policy that provides a relatively poor environmental context. The effects of sustainable communities policy on biodiversity are likely to be largely positive ones.

A number of actions are being proposed to enhance biodiversity. The Borough is predominantly urban but has important habitats, plants and animals needing protection, including some nationally rare species, and some nature conservation sites of metropolitan importance.<sup>51</sup> There are specific measures for biodiversity protection and enhancement<sup>52</sup> in response to a background of habitat loss, decline and destruction, and damage due to factors including intensive drainage practices, lack of management of wood and grasslands, diseases, pests etc. As the Biodiversity Action Plan notes, a whole range of areas were set aside under the 1995 UDP as being of environmental importance including greenbelt, metropolitan open land, protected open space, green chain (public rights of way), landscaping improvement areas, nature conservation areas, wildlife corridors, riverside walks and the Thames Chase

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<sup>49</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 5, Housing, 2005: p. 10

<sup>50</sup> Sub Regional Development Framework, East London, 2004, p81.

<sup>51</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3, Environment, 2005: p7.

<sup>52</sup> Barking and Dagenham Local Biodiversity Action Plan, January, 2005.

community forest.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, specific proposals relating to issues such as the need for tree planting and for river restoration will have a positive effect on biodiversity by creating a diversity of natural habitats. We did not find evidence that the Biodiversity Action Plan objectives are being achieved, nor does the AMR say anything about the impact of development. We did not find evidence as to whether there are proposals for developments on or adjacent to important biodiversity sites.

Our view in the area of greenfield land, greenbelt, biodiversity and countryside is that Barking has demonstrated a good performance in protecting greenfield land, if largely due to its industrial history and thus the availability of brownfield sites for development purposes. The likely focus on high-density development according to the SDQ matrix should also help it to avoid spilling over into greenfield land in the future. It has a good policy framework for protecting biodiversity and improving greenspaces in the Borough but again due to its heavy industry background, issues of contaminated land and biodiversity loss in the past are evident and these need to be addressed in the future through its BAP and other instruments.

## Waste

Planning applicants are asked to record whether demolition waste will be reused/recycled within the 'sustainability statement'. It asks whether sites intend to reuse 80% of their construction and demolition waste and re-use 60% of this waste for aggregate use. There is also a policy noted in the AMR (it is not clear if it appears in any other local planning document) to encourage the re-use and recycling of building materials and the renovation or adaptation of existing buildings.<sup>54</sup> The AMR does not say anything about what has actually been achieved.

Given the paucity of information in this area it is difficult to make a clear judgement about performance. The few references found are largely positive but it appears more attention could be given (or at least work being done documented) in this area.

## Cleaner and greener

The Borough has a number of policies in place or proposed to make the area cleaner and more attractive. A number of the policies relating to biodiversity also have clean-up implications, for instance for riverine environments. The Borough reported in 2005 it plans to produce an Urban Design Framework which will set out design principles to guide future development and a Public Realm Strategy to guide future improvements to public spaces and streets. These strategies and the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy all connect up with this agenda.

The Parks and Green Spaces Strategy<sup>55</sup> documents the Borough's proposals to ensure that there is good access to public parks, green spaces and biodiversity sites. Barking has given each of its parks and open spaces a score, in part relating to distance from

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Annual Monitoring Report, 2004-2005

<sup>55</sup> Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, 2004

homes, facilities and general quality. Few have rated well. The Council intends to pursue its Strategy and introduce a Landscape Plan but we have no evidence as to whether it has in fact done so. In the medium term it reports it has “set aside £5 million to spend between 2005 and 2008 to deliver the strategy.”<sup>56</sup> It points out that “although this is a significant commitment, we will not be able to make all of the improvements that are needed. So, to make the best use of this investment, we will prioritise funding to:

- match funding from outside grant-giving bodies;
- support partnership improvement programmes; and
- directly pay for improvements”.<sup>57</sup>

The council explains that it has “also prioritised the improvements to the 25 parks and green spaces in the borough”.<sup>58</sup> We note that the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is listed as one of the strategies which will form the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (although as previously noted, the actual date the LDF will be adopted is not given).

Again, as for a number of other policy areas, policy that is being developed or has been recently adopted is very good. It is harder to make a judgement about actual performance however as there is little information available that deals specifically with outcomes from the relevant strategies and other policy instruments.

### **Eco Homes / Sustainable Buildings Code**

The Annual Monitoring Report does not record what proportion of new and refurbished homes is built to EcoHomes’ good, very good, or excellent standard or another eco-design standard. However the ‘sustainability statement’ refers to the need for development to meet BREEAM standards of very good through to excellent in terms of energy efficiency. There is no evidence either way as to whether the delay in the Code for Sustainable Homes has impacted on the environmental standards of buildings, or whether local standards and policies have compensated. Local interviewees have been unable to clarify this point. At Barking Riverside it is suggested that “All homes...will have to reach high sustainability standards which balance environmental performance with the need for a high quality of life and a healthy environment”.<sup>59</sup>

As noted for policy areas above, the aspirations in recent or developing policy are good but actual performance is difficult to judge given lack of evidence.

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/pdf/local-development-scheme.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Barking Riverside, Public Exhibition.

## Well designed and built

### Design

The Council says that it is working on providing the appropriate skills and expertise to deliver good design. For example it has an Enterprise Plan, funded through a Local Enterprise Growth Initiative which “aims to make us the best prepared of all the London boroughs when it comes to supplying the skilled labour and expertise needed to build the Olympic Village for London”.<sup>60</sup>

According to DCLG, high quality design is a particular focus in mixed use developments such as Barking Riverside. It notes that approval has been given to the establishment of a joint venture between Bellway and English Partnerships to bring forward Barking Riverside for comprehensive development, “in a form that delivers Government objectives of affordability, sustainability and high quality design”.<sup>61</sup> DCLG further explains that a masterplan has been commissioned from “internationally renowned Dutch urbanists Maxwan”.<sup>62</sup> A regional interviewee says in relation to housing quality, “the quality of the build itself is definitely going up while dimensions are getting smaller. There are eco standards etc. Because the market is strong there is a demand for high quality design. Complex inner urban sites require architects to be involved. There has been a ‘regs beating’ tendency for a while”.

Within LBBB, there is commitment to exploring the use of modern methods of construction (MMC). We understand that modern methods will be used at Barking Riverside (as this is noted on the DCLG website<sup>63</sup>) but we could not find any details about the proposals for this major site.<sup>64</sup> Elsewhere, LBBB says that it has secured funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) “for a public-private partnership to develop what will be London’s first off-site manufacturing facility to train residents in modern building methods”.<sup>65</sup> The implications of MMC for the quality of design are uncertain, with one interviewee suggesting that “this can be environmentally sustainable but it depends on materials, low energy housing construction methods etc”.

The claims made are that high quality design and building methods will be used to plan and construct major new developments proposed for Barking. It is also suggested that for smaller developments now coming through the planning system there is a ‘regulations beating’ tendency that reflects good architectural quality. At this stage however there is little external evaluation of design quality either for these existing developments or for the proposed major developments in Barking as the latter are yet to be built. For the latter too, detailed information about master plans is unavailable so design details cannot be scrutinised. It is therefore difficult to make a clear judgement about whether what is being built or is planned to be built is well designed and whether

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<sup>60</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/5-work/business/local-enterprise/legi-main.html>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1140003>

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> [www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1140003](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1140003)

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/2-news-events/olympics/gateway-to-games-part4.html>

modern methods of construction will achieve the built quality outcomes that are predicted.

### Character and heritage

LBBB demonstrates concern for local character and heritage at a policy level. Dealing with heritage first, its policy proposals for the Local Development Framework for example are very supportive of protection for both housing and industrial heritage. It notes that as well as a number of listed heritage buildings the Borough has existing heritage conservation areas: Dagenham Village, Barking Town Centre and Town Quay, Abbey Road, and Chadwell Heath Anti-Aircraft Site.<sup>66</sup> The Council has written a Heritage Strategy<sup>67</sup> where it states that “The overarching priority of this strategy is to transform the view of the borough’s heritage to one which is overwhelmingly positive and to increase the numbers of the community using and deriving pleasure from, the heritage services, sites and resources in the borough”.<sup>68</sup> It also founded a Community Heritage Forum in 2001 whose remit is to “provide an opportunity for local groups and individuals to give their views on the Borough’s heritage projects”<sup>69</sup> at twice yearly sessions.

In its discussion documents for the planned Local Development Framework, the Council does imply that current levels of heritage protection are inadequate to a degree. It says that not all areas of local heritage interest are protected through the planning system and suggests that planning policies need to be prepared which will help decide the factors the Council will take into account when determining neighbourhood conservation areas and deciding on types of land uses that are appropriate for historic buildings and conservation areas.<sup>70</sup> The intention appears to be towards more comprehensive protection and enhancement of both buildings and areas. It should be noted that neither interviewees of public opinion research participants mentioned any heritage issues in relation to the delivery of sustainable communities.

Turning to neighbourhood character, under the heading of “telling the story of the Borough” LBBB argues that Barking and Dagenham’s neighbourhoods each have their own unique character, and that “residents will often highly value certain aspects of their immediate area, whether it be the architectural style, the history of the areas, or the landscape”.<sup>71</sup> They go on to say that “we need to make sure that new development in existing residential areas related to its surroundings by including design features which show a connection with the valued character and history of the neighbourhood”.<sup>72</sup> Local character as a topic is also picked up in a number of other places in strategic and policy terms such as in the forthcoming Urban Design Framework for the Borough, its Public Realm Strategy and in improving “image and identity” through design for a cleaner, greener and safer Borough. Issues of local

<sup>66</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3, Environment, 2005: p.13.

<sup>67</sup> People, Time and Place, 2001.

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/4-heritage/pdf/her-strategy-01-11.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 3, Environment, 2005: p.13-14

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

character and identity are also reflected in work underway through the Borough for specific locations. One example is London Riverside where the aim is to “help create a visual identity and assist in creating a sense of place for London Riverside’s employment areas as a whole whilst also creating distinct variations for each specific employment area.”<sup>73</sup>

Our judgement in this area is that, as for so many other policy areas, aspirations set out in recently adopted policy or policy in development are excellent on both heritage and character but evidence on actual performance is scant in both cases. The council does admit that heritage protection (of areas as opposed to items) in the borough may be inadequate and this needs to be redressed in the LDF through more comprehensive protection and enhancement. Likewise in the area of character and the public realm there is an implied deficit in current practice contained in the council’s view that the image and identity of the borough need improvement. It appears therefore that both heritage and character need to be better protected and enhanced in future.

### Meeting housing need

From the most recent data available, it appears that dwellings are currently being built/refurbished at about the rate intended in the Sustainable Communities Plan<sup>74</sup>, as reflected in regional targets<sup>75</sup> and local plans<sup>76</sup>. The Borough reports that in 2004 the GLA’s London Plan set LBBD a target of 510 dwellings per year and council data shows a shortfall of just 9 units for the 2004-05 year.<sup>77</sup> It points out that the Council can only grant planning permissions, not force completions by developers, so that at the end of the financial year 2004/05 836 units had been granted planning permission and completed?. A further 800 dwellings have permission to be built (it seems prior to the 2004-05 period) though no work has started.<sup>78</sup>

Future projects are also in line with national and regional requirements. The AMR reports that 10,800 dwellings are due to be built at Barking Riverside over the next 20 years and other documentation<sup>79</sup> refers to ‘capacity’ in this location of between 10-12,000 dwellings while a local interviewee says that “Barking Riverside is expecting 10-11,000 new homes”. Other sites with housing potential are Barking Town Centre (4,000 homes) and South Dagenham (5,000 homes). Added to other opportunities in the Borough there is a potential for around 25,000 additional dwellings in the next 20 years to 2025.<sup>80</sup> According to local interviewees, the number of new dwelling is likely to be even higher than the official forecasts. One notes that “In my time (4/5 years) there has been a step change - there will be 30,000 new homes in the next 15 years”. It is not clear from either available figures or projections against housing targets whether

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<sup>73</sup> <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/5-work/regeneration/riverside/signage/signage-menu.html>

<sup>74</sup> Sustainable Communities Plan, 2003.

<sup>75</sup> London Plan, Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy.

<sup>76</sup> Draft policies in support of the forthcoming Local Development Framework

<sup>77</sup> LDF Annual Monitoring Report, 2004/05.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 5, Housing, 2005.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

the number of new dwellings likely to be realised is sufficient to meet demand.

Although housing in Barking and Dagenham is characterised by the lowest average house prices in London and the lowest average incomes, in line with London's housing market, average prices are higher than national averages.<sup>81</sup> The median house price in Barking and Dagenham increased from £52,000 (1996 First Quarter) to £162,500 (2005 First Quarter). This compared with the outer London median change from £70,000 to £211,000 over the same period.<sup>82</sup>

Of the 501 units completed in 2004-05, 221 units (nearly half) were affordable housing. This far exceeds the Borough's affordable housing target of 25% of all dwellings approved over what is described as "the plan period" although the length of the period is not specified.<sup>83</sup> The approach reflects the Council's strategic policy to "consider how to ensure that supply meets real needs, given the problems associated with low cost housing and the inability of the housing market to provide access to accommodation for lower income groups".<sup>84</sup>

A regional interviewee believes this is a very positive story for East London as a whole, saying that affordable/social/key worker housing "is one of the big but hidden successes through Section 106. There has been a gigantic step change in affordable housing, as a condition of development. The Mayor has required 50% affordable dwellings based on his Affordable Housing Strategy". However, the delivery mechanism for affordable housing is, conversely, considered a problem by another interviewee who argues that developing affordable housing "through Section 106 isn't the best way. It needs to be through the building regulations. Pepper potting is happening in new developments". This interviewee makes the interesting related lifetime costs point that "some social rented landlords are asking for greater segregation as they can't handle service charges for higher finishes and services".

LBBDD says that there is a shortfall of 1994 affordable units per annum, especially for one and two bedroom units.<sup>85</sup> It also forecasts a worse affordability situation and a higher proportion who are only able to afford social rents over the next two years.<sup>86</sup> Action on this front is contemplated. The Council estimates it can make up about half of this shortfall through intermediate housing and a local interviewee reports that "we are keen to do shared ownership/key worker housing".<sup>87</sup>

The AMR does not include data on homelessness, the numbers in temporary accommodation, or whether numbers on housing waiting lists have been reduced. We found that over the year from April 2004 to March 2005, there were a total of 775 homeless people in Barking and Dagenham. Of these 381 were white, 136 were African

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<sup>81</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 5, Housing, 2005: p6

<sup>82</sup> [http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/156/Table582Excel169Kb\\_id1156156.xls](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/156/Table582Excel169Kb_id1156156.xls)

<sup>83</sup> Annual Monitoring Report, 2004-05: p.17

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Based on data collected through its Housing Needs Survey of 2005.

<sup>86</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 5 Housing, 2005: p7

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.



Caribbean, 40 were Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi and 18 were of other ethnic origin, while the ethnicity of 200 was unknown.<sup>88</sup> However Barking has produced both a Homelessness Strategy covering 2003-2008 and a review about homelessness in the Borough (a requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002). The review found that the scale of homelessness had increased in the Borough in recent years, with BME overrepresentation (homelessness was sometimes as a result of racial harassment), and more homeless people asking for help. The Strategy proposes ways to eliminate the need to sleep rough, reduce the reliance on temporary bed-and-breakfast accommodation, and increase opportunities in the private rental and RSL sectors among other strategies.

There are also qualitative assessments from interviewees on this topic. For instance, there is a concern that the borough could make better use of existing housing stock (by reducing empty properties) to reduce homelessness and numbers in temporary accommodation. As one interviewee notes in relation to the Thames Gateway, “we have only scratched the surface of better use of existing homes. We are generally quite efficient. There are not very high vacancy rates, it’s more efficient in the social rented sector. The government’s new announcement to pressure private landlords of empty properties is interesting”. It was suggested by the same interviewee that “homelessness might be reduced as more supply absorbs demand. The health of the economy affects this. It allows private rental”.

In LBBDD, in terms of overall strategy, as well as policy for specific sites like Barking Riverside and South Dagenham, the aspiration is that in the medium to longer term, communities will be created with mixed land use, mixed tenures, various levels of housing affordability, different housing sizes, and housing ages. The ‘vision’ for the Borough includes the proposal for “a well integrated mix of good quality homes to support a range of household types, sizes, ages and incomes”.<sup>89</sup> A local interviewee argued that in regard to creating mixed communities: “The Sustainable Communities idea is trying to give people opportunity and choice, with Barking as a ‘place of choice’ rather than just the cheapest housing area. Housing needs to be a good offer with jobs, transport, and social infrastructure in place”.

It is noted though by a regional interviewee that in the short term the regional market demand is more for housing than other uses, making mixed use difficult to achieve. They say that while planning permissions are all reasonably mixed, commercial developers would rather develop schemes that are all housing. “All the live/work units will be occupied by residential demand. Even if you can’t get mix in the current market, things change. But it is healthy to build in flexibility in design terms. This is an excellent part of urban form. Future proofing is quite useful”.

Within the housing market, there appear to be specific areas of shortage of certain housing types. Barking reports that in 2004-05, 97.7% of all units approved were one

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<sup>88</sup> [http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/312/Table627\\_id1156312.xls](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/312/Table627_id1156312.xls)

<sup>89</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 1, Vision for Planning Our Borough, 2005: p7

and two bedroom units. Exacerbating this situation, it also notes that there is a tendency for existing larger houses to be subdivided into small flats.<sup>90</sup> An interviewee suggested that locally, "What is actually needed is more private, larger housing. We still identify a chronic need for housing but we need mix. We [in Barking] have been majoring on 4 bedroom, long life units". Another (regional) interviewee supports this view, pointing out that returns are higher on smaller units. Thus a mix of housing sizes "is a relatively easy problem to solve in the social rented sector. But there is clear resistance in the for-profit sector to do larger houses. The most recent indication from the GLA is not to bother. No-one knows how far to push it. The profit yield is 20% lower".

At a policy level provision for special needs (single person households, large families, elderly, or disabled) is certainly given prominence in Barking. Whether that translates into adequate provision is less clear as the discussion of larger housing above demonstrates. Meanwhile, the Borough has identified that some 17.2% of all its households include individuals who have special needs, and the largest proportion of these (10.7%) are people with physical disabilities.<sup>91</sup> It notes that these households are disproportionately of older people. It also notes that consultation for its *Community Strategy* made clear a local desire for "private and social housing that meets the needs of the community and will contribute towards building sustainable communities".<sup>92</sup>

The council has identified as a priority ensuring that all new homes meet Lifetime Homes Standards.<sup>93</sup> A review of Planning Briefs written by the Borough<sup>94</sup> show that Life Time Homes assessments have been made as a part of the process of developing planning briefs. As these requirements are used as part of the processes of designing new developments more homes will be built to Lifetime Homes Standards in the Borough. We found no specific data on the number of units now incorporating the standards or the numbers projected to do so in the future.

Our judgement in the area of meeting housing need reflects that this is a complex policy area. It appears that current rates of housing approval and future projections are in line with national and regional requirements. There also appears to be a substantial level of housing refurbishment underway. Barking is dealing with issues of housing quality and area image. It is trying to shift from the cheapest housing option for people, with an over abundance of social rental, to a place people would choose to live. It wishes to retain a good level of affordable and key worker housing but within a more mixed tenure environment. There are strong claims that it is succeeding in doing most of these things but again evidence is partial in support of the contention that this is a regional success story. In specific areas such as levels of affordable housing provision and the provision of larger homes for families it is falling short but the context of the

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<sup>90</sup> Annual Monitoring Report, 2004-05: p.19.

<sup>91</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 5 Housing, 2005: p7

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.4.

<sup>94</sup> Such as the Tanner Street Gateway Brief for Barking Town Centre, 2003.

extremely expensive London housing market is a background to an affordability/housing size problem shared with the rest of London.

## Well connected

Policy proposals for the forthcoming Local Development Framework include Maximising Accessibility. Thus in preparing the LDF it says that, “local services should be highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and also accessible for those with disabilities. Focusing major facilities and transport services in town centres will assist in improving accessibility”.<sup>95</sup> There is a stress on integrating land use and transport and development at key train and light rail stations and town centre transport hubs. As one local interviewee explained this relates to the provision of housing and jobs in local centres: “LBBD is very well connected into London so the reality is that people will be commuting. We’re trying to fight that in part by asking for family homes. We are trying to entice industries/employers to Barking Town Centre”.

A number of major public transport projects are proposed for the future including the extension of the Docklands Light Rail linking Beckton to Barking Riverside; construction of Crossrail; East London Transit (originally a tramway now a high quality bus service; implementation of the Barking Town Centre Movement Strategy, the Thames Gateway Bridge linking Beckton to Thamesmead as well as the A13/Renwick Road junction improvements as part of the Barking Riverside development.<sup>96</sup> The funding situation is complicated, but as far as we can judge, all schemes are in planning stages and funding for completion has not been received for any of them. As noted below delays in transport infrastructure have already been cited in the AMR as delaying development at Barking Riverside.

Walking and cycling facilities are built into design briefs for the master planning of new communities so there is less concern that these will not be funded. However, there are anxieties that proposals for public transport facilities will not be funded in a timely way so that they can happen in tandem with mixed use housing developments. Thus an interviewee says that timeliness “is needed specifically on transport infrastructure investment. The problem is in being co-ordinated with housing. Transport comes in *after* housing development. Then there is a particular problem with getting people to use public transport and not use the car”. This interviewee commented that such issues meant “we need to think about other ways to evaluate public transport. Currently cost evaluation doesn’t capture the cost of people not using public transport. It is a straight funding problem with new development, there is a gap in the revenue stream to support public transport”. The interviewee explains: “As an example the DLR through Beckton operated at a loss - as the forecast development rates didn’t happen soon enough so there was not sufficient patronage to make it commercially viable. TfL (DLR) picked up the cost. Subsidies to public transport are much more transparent than to other road users”.

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<sup>95</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005: p5

<sup>96</sup> Local Implementation Plan, p.iv.

Already, the record shows that major developments have been delayed because facilities were not funded. As the AMR reports, at Barking Riverside, “the large scale development that was [originally] planned did not take place because the necessary social and physical infrastructure to serve additional homes and people had not been developed”.<sup>97</sup> An interviewee noted that planning approval for Barking Riverside in future depends on the provision of a major light rail extension: “For the planning application to be approved it will have to demonstrate good performance ie commitment to the Docklands Light Rail as a basis for the development”. While transport infrastructure can be part of planning conditions through Section 106 contributions from developers, as a local interviewee pointed out, this isn’t necessarily sufficient for the big transport infrastructure items that are needed. “Section 106 isn’t that useful as local land values are low. Infrastructure provision needs commitment from Treasury. That is beginning to slowly happen. This reflects what’s in the public arena with a focus on housing”.

There is a strong commitment to achieving modal shift, (although we found no specific target in percentage terms between any particular modes). Transport policy overall promotes alternatives to car use through improvements to public transport services, walking and cycling facilities, managing travel demand and ensuring traffic management schemes do not increase road capacity.<sup>98</sup> It is argued that walking and cycling should be encouraged through the design of direct, safe, accessible routes and complimentary facilities; and car parking regulated to encourage use of more sustainable modes.<sup>99</sup>

In practice, the Borough like the rest of the country has a legacy of less sustainable road design and transport planning based on the system of road hierarchy that make modal shift harder to achieve. Where new developments are designed in a hierarchical rather than gridded pattern this exacerbates the problem of lack of connectivity. A key issue is the way major roads act to sever local road connections. For example, as one local interviewee points out “The A13 was launched as a sustainable road network but it cut the borough in half. It has only 5 footways across it. It needs mitigation”. The aforementioned delay in the provision of major transport infrastructure could also undermine aspirations towards modal shift as car dependence in new development becomes a habit, maintained even after public transport becomes available. In the meantime, car ownership levels are rising, the Borough already has London’s 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of journeys to work by car and the expectation is that this could be exacerbated by the advent of some 60,000 new residents “many of whom will be living in areas where currently there is little public transport, such as Barking Riverside”<sup>100</sup> unless proposed public transport is developed.

We did not find figures at Borough level on the number of residents commuting into

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<sup>97</sup> 2004-05: p17.

<sup>98</sup> LDF, Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005: p4

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005: p9

central London to work, in either the AMR or the Local Implementation Plan of the Local Transport Plan. However, from discussion with local interviewees it appears commuting is a dominant travel trend that is set to continue, but may be mitigated by policies which help draw the 'centre of gravity' for economic activity eastwards back towards the Borough's own local centres.

A local interviewee commented "Barking Riverside is expecting 10-11,000 new homes with the Docklands railway a key link. People will look at it as a place with good connections but also with jobs etc. People are also attracted by family (larger) housing. It's about combating the central London obsession (centre of gravity) by decentralising activity". Another interviewee suggested "the debate in London is about polycentric development plans. T2025 supports the City and Docklands as employment centres. But will they continue to be the engine of growth? If that is the jobs offer - how does that match skills base locally? So we need a more diverse pattern of growth of types of jobs/location jobs. LB Barking raised these issues. We need to spread commuting flows. Orbital flows need to be linked in. There is a need for Crossrail. We support this but whether or not the centric argument should be sustained is another issue."

As noted above, roads are still managed as a road hierarchy rather than as a connected network (in line with Space Syntax analysis).<sup>101</sup> The AMR reports on the completion of A13 "improvements" at Movers Lane and in Dagenham, and proposed road realignment and grade separated junctions at certain key points.<sup>102</sup> (The LIP notes that major roads such as the A13 are the responsibility of TfL). The LIP also explains that highway maintenance is a high priority for the Council and is important for meeting accessibility and safety objectives.<sup>103</sup> We did not find data on the number or location of new roads being planned (obviously there will be new roads in major development sites such as Barking Riverside) but the Borough says at a policy level that new local access roads should be designed so that they "limit car speeds and create an environment where the car less important than the pedestrian".<sup>104</sup>

Also as noted above it is proposed to limit speeds on certain 'residential' roads. The Council also notes in the LIP that it is fully supportive of creating streets for people through the introduction of home zones. "In these areas traffic becomes secondary to the needs and presence of pedestrians. These home zones can be implemented not only in new developments but also in established residential areas. The Council has geared its home zones programme to the more deprived parts of the borough where car ownership is comparatively low".<sup>105</sup> There appears to be the implication (inherent in the whole 'home zones' strategy) that while certain areas are for pedestrian primacy, these can be treated separately from other busier areas, where, by implication, the needs of drivers are prioritised. The thinking seems to assume that both home zone and non-home zone areas will not be highly mixed use (note the use of the term

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<sup>101</sup> <http://www.spacesyntax.com/>

<sup>102</sup> 2004-05: p.32.

<sup>103</sup> Local Implementation Plan, Undated: p.vii.

<sup>104</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005: p9

<sup>105</sup> LIP, Undated: p.viii

residential areas) which seems to be in contradiction to the thrust of the Sustainable Communities Plan. However, our view is that this is fundamentally a problem with the whole Homes Zones strategy, not simply a shortcoming in LBBB's delivery.

Car parking policy is increasingly predicated on finding ways to reduce the need to drive to work or for other purposes. The Borough says it is encouraging car free developments in town centres.<sup>106</sup> It is also seeking to minimise the levels of car parking provided on-site to remove incentives for car use. Travel plans for employees and safe walking routes to schools are expected to help encourage modal shift, thus reducing the need for parking provision. It is not stated when Travel Plans are required. However, as the previously noted sustainability statement for new dwellings asks the applicant to consider whether "the site generates or reduce car journeys and traffic levels?" this would seem to imply such changes are expected to be made in the short to medium term. For new housing developments car parking standards are based on those outlined by the Mayor of London, which in turn are based on the site's public transport accessibility.<sup>107</sup>

Again this is a difficult policy area. Our view is that in some ways the Borough is already 'well connected', for example, economically due to its relative proximity to the City of London, to which it has good public transport and road links. However, to be more sustainable in future it needs - as it acknowledges - to shift the centre of gravity eastwards, developing mixed use areas that focus jobs and services within its own town centres. It is clear that major new developments are dependent on timely provision of major transport infrastructures such as the extension to the DLR. Delays in public transport infrastructure provision have already adversely affected the development timetable for Barking Riverside. The funding issues causing such delays are primarily for national government to resolve. Despite a commitment to modal shift, plans for trunk road improvements seem likely to emphasise commuting, car dependence and the continued severance of some parts of the borough from others. The emphasis on home zones too can be criticised for assuming the need for a road hierarchy rather than a permeable grid in which some streets are for people while others are for cars. Car parking policy statements are encouraging as a way of reducing travel demand and encouraging mode shift but largely remain in the realm of policy thus far. The stress on walkable catchments is also good but less convincing than it might be given all the elements above that are likely to reinforce car-based movement.

## Thriving

In principle both new and refurbished housing - and proposal for these - should have easy access to centres of employment. There are also proposals for job creation close to these areas. This is in line with the London Plan which suggests that mixed use (housing and employment land uses) is likely to become more prevalent in the sub-region. The Plan refers to development of a compact city, with higher densities in

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<sup>106</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005: p.9.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, p9.

appropriate locations to accommodate growth, shaped with density gradients focused on activity centres, however, East London's relatively high level of deprivation and joblessness are a challenging regional context for creating thriving communities along SCP lines.

Barking has a strong background in heavy manufacturing which is now in decline although some 21.4% of the workforce is still engaged in manufacturing, compared with 6% in London and 13% nationally.<sup>108</sup> "As heavy industry has continued to shrink, a range of lower density manufacturing, transport, storage and communication operations have moved to the borough" with the southern part of the Borough particularly well located for employment due to existing road links.<sup>109</sup> Although there are some large employers (ie Ford, Aventis) present in the Borough, the majority of jobs come from SMEs. The challenge is described as to "create a vibrant local economy through supporting business growth, retention and competitiveness, ensuring that businesses are able to find the sites, training and advice that they need to thrive within our Borough".<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile, the Annual Monitoring Report suggests that new and refurbished housing (and proposal for these) should in future have as easy as possible access to centres of employment. It argues that barriers to development of employment land are being overcome in conjunction with the LTG Urban Development Corporation.<sup>111</sup> It appears likely that these proposals will be reflected in the Local Development Framework as they argue that "in our new LDF, we have the opportunity to identify and allocate sites for specific uses and development".<sup>112</sup> The Paper sets out the factors the Borough will take into account when deciding on the location of development which includes being well located in relation to services and facilities. Such moves are augmented by proposals in the Issues and Options Papers for the LDF for job creation in mixed use areas and close to housing areas to reduce commuting distances and assist in modal shift. Improvements to public transport are also intended to help provide more access to East London employment opportunities.

Barking and Dagenham is linked into wider regeneration schemes that include job creation and skills development, through the London Thames Gateway Partnership and its delivery arm, the UDC.<sup>113</sup> We were not able to discover the amount being spent on regeneration expenditure in LBBD.

At Borough level, through the LDF it is intended to use local labour agreements to ensure local jobs are provided by major new developments. It is also proposed that the LDF should require major new developments to contribute towards adult learning/local labour and construction programmes to raise the general skills level in the Borough. Barking is also eligible for funding from the Local Enterprise Growth

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<sup>108</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 6, Employment, 2005: p.2.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, p.2.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> AMR, 2004-05: p.23.

<sup>112</sup> Local Development Framework, Issues and Options Paper 2 Site Allocation, 2005: p.5

<sup>113</sup> [http://www.lsx.org.uk/news/urbandevcorporation\\_page1672.aspx](http://www.lsx.org.uk/news/urbandevcorporation_page1672.aspx)

Initiative (LEGI) to support enterprising activity and the creation of sustainable communities.<sup>114</sup> The Borough is currently producing an Enterprise Plan which will “consider the best ways to secure local economic growth and support future LDF policies encouraging enterprise growth” and has proposals for specific locations including a creative industries quarter in Barking Town Centre.<sup>115</sup>

Our judgement is that this policy area needs to be considered in conjunction with the points made about being ‘well connected’ above. Barking has a long-term context of deprivation as the backdrop to its attempts to create sustainable communities. Issues leading to social exclusion such as a local heavy industry based economy in decline and lack of local jobs on one side and low educational attainment levels, lack of skills, high unemployment and high rates of sickness and disability on the other are a continuing problem. While the aspirations to create highly mixed areas focused on local training and employment are good in themselves there is little evidence yet of how successfully Enterprise strategies are being pursued on the ground.

## Well served

As was noted in the previous section, proposals for new and refurbished housing are that they have good access to local facilities. This would include shops, health centres, schools, community, sports and leisure facilities. Town centres policies support this and are explicitly related to the Government’s requirement that Borough’s work towards creating sustainable communities. Thus, “healthy and vibrant town centres are considered essential to building sustainable communities”.<sup>116</sup>

A local interviewee is particularly concerned about what they perceive to be an unbalanced relationship between housing and the delivery of social infrastructure. “There is a heavy concern that the SCP is about housing numbers first, other things after that. Housing at any cost? At least senior levels of DCLG are linking with Treasury. There’s the spending for physical infrastructure but also the recurrent cost to be taken into account. We are doing work on a social infrastructure framework to join up different agencies that share the same objectives but don’t necessarily sit down together. Treasury and broader government commitment is needed. The whole of central government has to put its money where its mouth is”.

Section 106 contributions are being used to help fund services and facilities. For example a complex Section 106 agreement is currently being drawn up with Bellway Homes - joint venture partners for the development of Barking Riverside. But as one regional interviewee notes, the Section 106 approach can have some (perhaps unintended) implications for financing, governance and the roll out of a spatial infrastructure programme. To take one example in relation to the creation of park

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<sup>114</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 6, Employment, 2005: p.7.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, p.6.

<sup>116</sup> Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 7, Town Centre and Retail Issues, 2005: p4



space: "What's really happened is an enormous centralisation in the sector. We are getting the largest planning applications in the UK. Mega applications create their own public realm and park space within the development envelope so they cross subsidise this. These are private sector initiatives so there is a transfer of responsibility; privatisation of the creation of public space. The Olympics are an exception (to an extent). I see the green grid as massively underfunded. The strategy is to make the grid as individual developments by 106. There is no serious institutional structure".

In principle, proposals for new facilities will be funded and happen in tandem with housing development but as in the case of transport infrastructure noted above, a local interviewee suggests that "There is an issue around mix - social facilities following housing. There is a question of how joined up social infrastructure is". As noted above the scale of development at Barking Riverside was delayed due to inadequate provision of social and physical infrastructure. The AMR cites this example but does not describe what this infrastructure was except to say it was "necessary".<sup>117</sup> It is more than possible that future developments will be delayed if facilities are not funded (or not funded in a timely way) although such commitments are to varying extents part of planning conditions.

We did not find direct evidence of services, e.g. schools, health related, not being funded. However, a local interviewee says that social infrastructure is in fact the biggest concern. "There is a heavy concern that the SCP is about housing numbers first, other things after that. Housing at any cost? At least senior levels of DCLG are linking with Treasury. There's the spending for physical infrastructure but also the recurrent cost to be taken into account. We are doing work on a social infrastructure framework to join up different agencies that share the same objectives but don't necessarily sit down together. Treasury and broader government commitment is needed. The whole of central government has to put its money where its mouth is".

Our view is that there are a number of issues in the 'well served' area that may limit the capacity to provide adequate services and facilities to new developments and to maintain them over time. There is a perceived imbalance between planning for large amounts of new housing and for related facilities, in which residential development is thought to take primacy. Direct evidence for this claim is scant but it is clear that funding for some infrastructure items is being done in a piecemeal way through individual Section 106 agreements and it would seem likely that there could be gaps in provision and delays if agreements on costs are hard to reach. The transfer of financial responsibility to the private sector to create the public realm in developments for example may suit short-term government financing constraints but is unlikely to produce the most coherent long-term public space outcomes.

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<sup>117</sup> Annual Monitoring Report, 2004-05: p.17.

# Conclusions

## Strengths

A number of areas appear to be working well in the way LBBB, as part of the Thames Gateway Growth Area is responding to the Sustainable Communities Plan and sustainable communities policy. Many of these constitute examples of good practice that might be recommended to other Growth Areas.

Barking is strenuously pursuing the overall objectives of the Sustainable Communities Plan and the regional guidance that has flowed from this through the GLA, and then reflecting this locally in a wide variety of key strategies, planning framework documents and other guidance. It appears to have wholeheartedly taken on board the SCP message and is seeking to explain this clearly to its residents and to implement its key themes over time in new developments and in the regeneration of existing areas.

Barking is and will in future deliver a substantial step change in the provision of new housing, through a series of major development sites such as Barking Riverside and South Dagenham, and windfall opportunities throughout the Borough.

The Borough is exploiting the possibilities for strategic regeneration to pursue a number of Sustainable Communities agendas. So, for example, through a development such as Barking Riverside it is able to work towards meeting its housing targets, develop much needed public transport and social infrastructure, improve its economic performance and degree of social cohesion while enhancing environmental quality.

There are a large number of good specific policy proposals (although these are as yet aspirations) relating to different aspects of sustainable communities including (but not limited to) energy conservation and renewables; sustainable housing and public space design; mixed use, mixed tenure brownfield development using where possible modern methods of construction; the intensification of town centres as hubs for transit oriented development; diversifying the employment base; and focusing on accessibility by promoting walking and cycling backed up by substantially improved public transport, among others.

Equally, a number of the planning and engagement processes being employed appear to be very well designed, including development of sustainable communities focused planning briefs for major redevelopment sites within a regeneration framework, and the overall stress on community and stakeholder engagement in this context.

The Borough's website provides a useful portal through which detailed information about its work towards sustainable communities can be explored. Among other documents, a useful set of Issues and Options Papers provide proposals for the forthcoming Local Development Framework in considerable depth using clear language.

Various other strategies for energy, waste, transport, housing, community etc explain policies and progress towards implementation in key Sustainable Communities areas.

## Areas of concern

There are also areas of concern for a number of reasons.

As touched on in the previous section, many of the policy proposals that are most in line with the SCP are at the level of aspirations and have not yet been realised in adopted policy or reflected in actual development. The SCP is a long term framework and much that the Plan will influence is only in beginning stages.

The success in achieving a step change in housing brings with it some issues, around community identity in particular, among the host community which has been challenged by the scale and pace of development. Extremists have been able to exploit community concerns to exacerbate resentments along racial lines and reinforce the false perception that all the benefits of regeneration - but especially the best housing - is flowing to incomers from other parts of London and overseas. This means, as interviewees note, there is a need to be very careful to manage the process sensitively.

Barking is a place that has suffered and continues to suffer substantial deprivation and social exclusion. The laudable aim of making it a place people chose to live rather than one simply picked because it has low cost housing, brings with it the challenge of 'taking the local community along' (as one interviewee describes it) as the social mix shifts due to factors including greater tenure mix, house price range and the development of new mixed-use communities which will include incomers as well as indigenous Barking residents.

A major area of concern is perceived in relation to delays in funding and building the major transport and social infrastructure needed to make the SCP derived proposals work on the ground. Local and regional interviewees are particularly concerned about how long it will take to secure funding and commitment to build schemes including the Docklands Light Rail extension, the East London Transit and the Thames Gateway Bridge (to name three key projects). They fear that failure to provide these in a timely way will undermine the sustainability if not the existence of proposed new major community building. There are also fears expressed about the timeliness of social infrastructure and its funding although we were unable to pin down with any exactness specific facilities that are felt to be at risk.

Other specific areas for policy concern are around flooding and energy issues. As we have learned, much of the Gateway and substantial areas of Barking are prone to flooding. One view is that the sequential guidance approach leaves the decision making about how to develop in response to worsening flooding conditions (exacerbated by climate change) too open and weak. Rather its felt that central government should take

on a stronger, clear guidance, decision making and leadership role about how to deal effectively with flooding.

There is also concern about the perceived piecemeal nature of developing sustainably across the Gateway. As one example, a regional interviewee considers there to have been a wholesale transfer of responsibility for development of the public realm from the public to the private sector. Thus 'mega developments' take responsibility for their site's public spaces (such as developing the green grid) but there is "no serious institutional structure" to guide regional implementation of this landscape strategy across the whole Gateway so it risks failing to be comprehensively developed.

Equally, as was noted in the text, piecemeal development of facilities by way of individual Section 106 agreements may result in gaps and delays in social infrastructure provision so that the area is not uniformly well served.

A number of interviewees point to governance issues arising from all these implementation concerns. There is a perception that there are at once too many delivery agencies, processes and funding regimes at play and that these lack sufficient leadership and funding capacity to deliver the SCP vision. This situation makes the redevelopment and regeneration trajectory confusing for both development stakeholders and the wider community. The problem might be mitigated in part by better information sharing and clarity about roles and responsibilities, but as one local interviewee says "it is a question of scale of investment and investment coming on stream and the number of agencies involved". It is further argued that the delivery partnership model is simply too hands-off to provide a comprehensive structure for sustainable communities. Instead, it is suggested that the government should get more directly involved and show stronger leadership on the most difficult issues.

# Appendices

## 1. People interviewed

Will Lochhead, Government Office for London

Anna Malos, Scrutiny Manager, Greater London Authority

Stephen Joseph, Deputy Director, London Thames Gateway Partnership

David Higham, Group Manager, Transport Planning, London Borough Barking and Dagenham

Gordon Glenday, Manager of Spatial Planning and Environmental Sustainability, London Borough Barking and Dagenham

Joe Baker, Environmental Sustainability Team Leader, London Borough Barking and Dagenham

There was no response from two further invited interviewees: Councillors Sidney Kallar and Milton Mackenzie, London Borough Barking and Dagenham

## 2. Documents and other material reviewed

Barking Riverside Public Exhibition

Barking and Dagenham Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy, 2005 to 2006

Barking and Dagenham Local Biodiversity Action Plan, January, 2005

Barking and Dagenham Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, 2004

Consultation Paper on a New Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing, ODPM, December 2005

House of Commons ODPM Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee, *Affordability and Supply of Housing, First Report of Session 2005–06 Volume 1*

House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee *Housing: Building a Sustainable Future, First Report of Session 2004–05 Volume 1*

LBBB Economic Development Strategy, 2003

LBBB Energy Strategy, 2005

LBBB Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report for 2004-2005

LBBB Local Implementation Plan (undated)

LBBB Sustainability Statement for Planning Applicants

Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement (<http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/local-dev-framework/plan-ldf-sci.html>)

Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 1, Vision for Planning our Borough, 2005

Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 2, Site Allocation, 2005

Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 3, Environment, 2005

Local Development Framework issues and Options Paper 4, Community, 2005

Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 5, Housing, 2005

Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 6, Employment, 2005

Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 7, Town Centres and Retail Issues, 2005

Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 8, Transport, 2005

Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper 9, Your Neighbourhood, 2005

The London Plan, GLA

The London Plan, Sub Regional Development Framework, Eats London, GLA, May 2006

Making it Happen, ODPM Progress Report on London and Growth Areas

Memorandum by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Select Committee on ODPM, Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions

People, Time and Place, Heritage Strategy, LBBD, 2001

Sustainable Communities: Home for All, A Five Year Plan from the ODPM, January 2005

Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future, ODPM, 2003

Sustainable Energy Strategy, 2005 (<http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/6-living/envir-protect/envir-sustainability/energy-strategy.html>)

Tanner Street Gateway Brief for Barking Town Centre, 2003

The Thames Gateway, Regeneration and Renewal, 18 November, 2005

Transportation Planning, Borough Spending Plan 2006-2010 (<http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/plan-borough-spending.html>)

Urban Design Guidelines (<http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/8-leisure-envir/planning/pdf/borough-spending-a-c.pdf>)