

Soho Neighbourhood Development Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

Part 5, Regulation 15

February 2020



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1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1. The Soho Neighbourhood Forum has produced the Basic Conditions Statement to accompany the submission version of the Soho Neighbourhood Plan. It demonstrates how the proposed Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance and conformity with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations (2015) (as amended) and how other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) have been considered to have been met.
- 1.2. The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are:
 - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
 - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3. In addition to the primary legislation listed above, one further Basic Condition is set out within the Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) 2012 (as amended). This is that¹:
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitat sites.
- 1.4. This Basic Conditions Statement, along with the Consultation Statement, support and provide evidence to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#EU-obligations-neighbourhood-planning> (accessed January 2020)

2. Key statements, including Area statement

- 2.1. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted to Westminster City Council by the Soho Neighbourhood Forum. The Neighbourhood Forum is the qualifying body and is entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for the Soho Neighbourhood Area.
- 2.2. The Soho Neighbourhood Area sets out policies that relate to development and the use of land within the neighbourhood area, as shown in Figure 1.
- 2.3. The Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. There are no other adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans which cover the designated neighbourhood area.
- 2.4. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2019-2031.

Area Statement

- 2.5. The Soho Neighbourhood Area was designated by Westminster City Council (WCC) on 17 May 2013 (see Appendix 1 for the WCC designation document).
- 2.6. The Soho Neighbourhood Forum was designated as a Business Neighbourhood Forum for a five-year term by WCC on 25 July 2014. This enabled the Neighbourhood Forum to begin the process of developing a neighbourhood plan for Soho.
- 2.7. The Soho Neighbourhood Forum was re-designated for an additional five-year term on 24 September 2019. Of relevance to this re-designation, Westminster City Council's Statement of Decision² form concludes that "The City Council is required to assess whether the purpose of the neighbourhood forum reflects (in general terms) the character of the area. The application submitted by the Forum for re-designation states that the Forum was specifically established to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Soho Neighbourhood Area (SNF) and exercise any powers which attach to the SNF as set out in the Localism Act 2011". In response to this, Westminster City Council notes that "the Soho Neighbourhood Forum is currently in an advance stage of preparation of a neighbourhood plan and therefore the main purpose for the existence of the Soho Neighbourhood Forum is stronger now than when it was initially designated".
- 2.8. The original Soho Neighbourhood Area application notes that Soho is believed to have "a separate and distinctive character which has been recognised over centuries and decades and this is evidenced in many ways." The Soho Neighbourhood Area is shown on the map below – its boundary is highlighted in red.

²<https://committees.westminster.gov.uk/documents/d1085/Printed%20decision%20Designation%20of%20Soho%20Neighbourhood%20Forum.pdf?T=5>

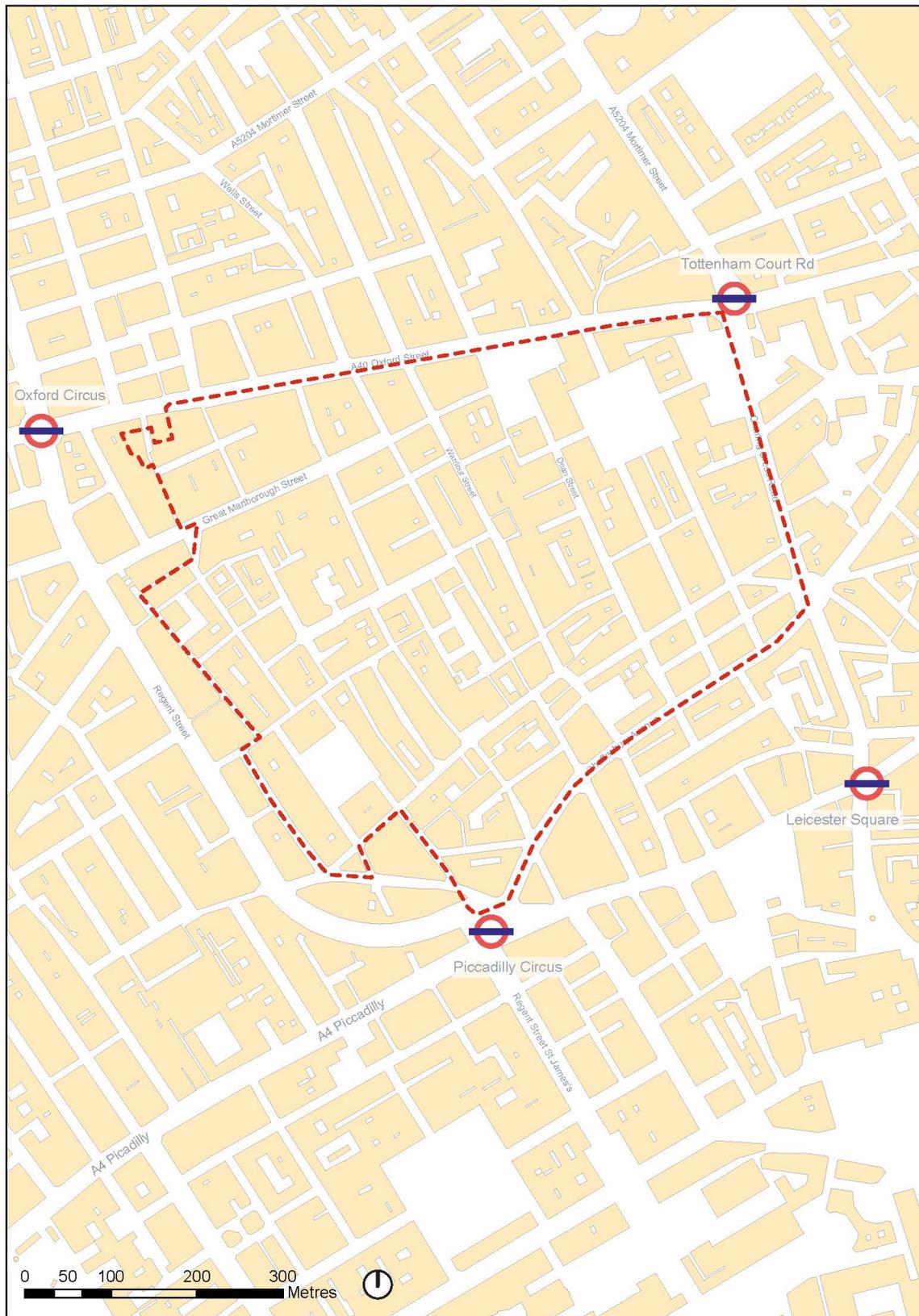


Figure 1: The designated Soho Neighbourhood Plan area

3. National Policies and Guidance

- 3.1. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan is required to be prepared in accordance with national planning policy and guidance. National planning policy is established within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), with supporting guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 3.2. The NPPF (para.29) iterates that neighbourhood planning “gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area”.
- 3.3. The NPPF establishes the framework for developing local and neighbourhood plans. As the principles of the NPPF are based on “a presumption in favour of sustainable development” (Para. 13) it is stated that “the application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning”. Critically, the NPPF (para. 13) stipulates that “neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies”.
- 3.4. In line with the objectives of the NPPF, the Soho Neighbourhood Plan provides positive planning guidance for the area. The policies have been informed by the guidance set out in the NPPF, with the following topics & paragraphs of the NPPF being the most relevant:

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 3.5. The Soho NDP sets out the following policies that aim to deliver a sufficient supply of homes:

Policy 15: Provision of Affordable Housing	NPPF ref. (paras.) 61-65
Policy 17: Residential Space Standards	

- 3.6. In accordance with the new Westminster City Plan (2019-2040), the Soho NDP recognises that affordable housing should play an integral role in all new housing developments (including intermediate and/or social housing) of the required size and scale.
- 3.7. To effectively respond to local identified need, Policy 17 acknowledges that new housing developments should focus on one- and two-bedroom units with unit sizes aligned with guidance contained in the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 3.8. These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by sufficiently accommodating those who require affordable housing, whilst also clarifying the potential types and broad location earmarked for affordable housing.

Building a strong, competitive economy:

- 3.9. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to build a strong and competitive economy:

Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments	NPPF ref. (paras.) 80-82
Policy 6: Premises for Small Businesses	
Policy 7: New Office Developments	
Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments	
Policy 10: Providing Accommodation for the Creative Industries	
Policy 11: Private Members Clubs	

- 3.10. Policy 4 promotes the development of mixed-use development, whilst providing a non-prescriptive list of potential business sectors and activities which may fit within this policy.
- 3.11. Policies 6 and 7 support new commercial developments where proposals demonstrate that they are flexible workspaces suitable for SME's, other small-scale businesses and a wide variety of business occupiers.
- 3.12. The Soho NDP seeks to avoid under-used spaces and accommodation through the implementation of active uses within ground floor accommodation, as set out in Policy 8.
- 3.13. The Soho NDP supports development proposals which ensure the lettable space in commercial and mixed-use developments offers a variety of workspaces for creative industries.
- 3.14. Policy 11 seeks to maintain the number of private members clubs within Soho, unless an active marketing test proves they are no longer viable.
- 3.15. The above policies meet the aims of the NPPF through creating an economic landscape with conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt. Specifically, the policies focus on being flexible enough to accommodate needs not explicitly mentioned within the Soho NDP, such as new flexible working spaces.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- 3.16. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to ensure the vitality of town centres:

Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments	NPPF ref. (paras.) 85-90
Policy 5: Shop Fronts and Ground Floor Frontages	
Policy 6: Premises for Small Businesses	
Policy 7: New Office Developments	
Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments	
Policy 10: Providing Accommodation for the Creative Industries	
Policy 11: Private Members Club	
Policy 12: Live Music Venues	

- 3.17. Policy 4 of the Soho NDP strongly supports mixed-use development with a wide range of occupiers.
- 3.18. Proposals which create new street facing facades are required to avoid uniform shop fronts and repeated facades, as set out in Policy 5 of the NDP.
- 3.19. Policies 6, 7 and 8 support new commercial developments where proposals demonstrate that they are flexible workspaces suitable for SME's, other small-scale businesses and a wide variety of business occupiers, including, where possible, the inclusion of active uses on new ground floor accommodation.
- 3.20. Policy 10 supports proposals which ensure that lettable space in commercial and mixed-use developments is designed to offer a variety of sizes of workspaces for the creative industries.
- 3.21. The Soho NDP also supports proposals for new private members clubs, as well as resisting change of use of existing private members clubs (unless an active market test has indicated that the use is no longer viable), as outlined in policy 11.
- 3.22. Policy 12 supports the protection of existing music venues (class D2). In addition, the NDP supports the development of new live music venues provided they are low impact.
- 3.23. The above policies accord with para. 85 of the NPPF which states that planning policies should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation - this includes allowing a suitable mix of uses (including housing) which reflects distinctive characters.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 3.24. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to promote healthy and safe communities:

Policy 16: Car-Free Residential Developments	NPPF ref. (paras.) 91-95
Policy 18: Maintaining Residential Amenity During Construction Works	
Policy 19: Delivery and Servicing Plans for New Development	
Policy 20: Improving Air Quality	
Policy 24: New Pocket Parks	
Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings	
Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space	
Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals	
Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes	
Policy 30: Cycle Parking	

- 3.25. Policy 16 supports NPPF's aims (para. 91c) through the supporting of healthy lifestyles by promoting car-free residential development. To evidence this, the Soho NDP recognises that car use has an adverse impact on health.
- 3.26. Policies 18 and 19 seek to protect residential amenity through the development of Construction Management Plans and the reduction of deliveries and servicing on vehicles using fossil-fuel.
- 3.27. Policy 20 stipulates that design proposals must maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality.
- 3.28. Policies 24, 25, and 26 encourage the creation of new 'pocket parks', proposals which provide the highest feasible level of greening to a building, the provision of urban greening at Ramillies Street/Place and Dufour's Place.
- 3.29. Policies 27, 28 and 30 stipulate that all development proposals should be designed to facilitate pedestrian movement, including consideration of public access on previously private or inaccessible land. This also supports proposals which provide additional suitable on street cycle stands for cyclists.
- 3.30. The above policies meet the NPPF's aims of creating healthy, safe and inclusive places by supporting the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community; including the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure.

Promoting sustainable transport

- 3.31. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to promote sustainable transport:

Policy 23: Delivery Consolidation Points	NPPF ref. (paras.) 102- 107
Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals	
Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes	
Policy 30: Cycle Parking	

- 3.32. Policy 23 stipulates that development proposals at Brewer Street and Poland Street public car parks must consider and evaluate the potential for adaptation of the buildings as micro-consolidation centres. This meets the NPPF's aims of considering transport issues through the plan-making process. The Soho NDP has achieved this through identifying and assessing the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure.
- 3.33. Policies 27, 28 and 30 stipulate that all development proposals should be designed to facilitate pedestrian movement, including consideration of public access on previously private or inaccessible land. This also supports proposals which provide additional suitable on street cycle stands for cyclists. These policies meet the NPPF's aims, as the Soho NDP provides high quality cycling and walking networks; including supporting facilities such as cycle parking.

Making effective use of land

- 3.34. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to make effective use of land.

Policy 2: Proposals for Tall Buildings	NPPF ref. (paras.) 117- 123
Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments	
Policy 5: Shop Fronts and Ground Floor Frontages	
Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments	

- 3.35. Policy 2 meets the NPPF's aims (para.123) through the avoidance of homes being built at low densities to ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. Policy 2 states that tall buildings will not be permitted where they would have any adverse impact on Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne's Gardens.
- 3.36. The Soho NDP also stipulates that proposal for mixed use developments will be highly supported. This aligns to the NPPF's aims (para. 122), as the policies take into account the following: the identified need for housing and other forms of development, and local market conditions and viability.
- 3.37. Policies 5 and 8 state that uniform shop fronts should be avoided, and that new commercial ground floor accommodation should include active uses. These policies meet the aims of the NPPF (para.118), as both policies encourage multiple benefits from urban land, including through mixed-use schemes.

Achieving well-designed places

- 3.38. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to achieve well-designed places:

Policy 1: Development Proposals in the Soho Conservation Area	NPPF ref. (paras.) 124-132
Policy 2: Proposals for Tall Buildings	
Policy 3: Maintaining Local Character	
Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments	
Policy 5: Shop Fronts and Ground Floor Frontages	
Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments	
Policy 9: Providing Public Art to Reflect Local Culture and Heritage	
Policy 24: New Pocket Parks	
Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings	
Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space	
Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals	
Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes	
Policy 29: Property Numbering and Way finding Storage	
Policy 30: Cycle Parking	

- 3.39. Policies 1, 2 and 3 support proposals which; protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area, only permit tall buildings in areas which do not have adverse impacts on Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne’s Gardens - and proposals should also complement the existing architectural character. These policies accord with para. 127(c) of the NPPF, which stipulates that policies should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).
- 3.40. Policies 4, 5 and 8 support mixed use developments which avoid uniform shop fronts, repeated facades; and promote active uses in new commercial ground floor accommodation. These policies meet para. 127 of the NPPF, which states that policies should ensure developments will function well and will add to the overall quality of an area; and are sympathetic to local character and history.
- 3.41. Policy 9 stipulates that public art required as a condition of planning permission should reflect the culture and heritage of Soho. This aligns to para 125. of the NPPF, which states that design policies should be grounded and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics.

- 3.42. Policies 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 (which focus on optimising the provision of green infrastructure, pedestrian networks and cycle parking) meet the aims of the NPPF (para. 127e), as each policy seeks to sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public spaces).

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 3.43. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change:

Policy 20: Improving Air Quality	NPPF ref. (paras.) 148 - 169
Policy 21: Reducing Energy	
Policy 22: Refurbishment and Retrofitting of Existing Buildings	

- 3.44. Policy 20 and 21 meets the aims of the NPPF (para 151 – increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat), through maximising measures which contribute to improving air quality and ensuring that development proposals incorporated measures designed to conserve heat and energy and reduce carbon emissions.
- 3.45. Policy 22 seeks to improve the sustainability of existing buildings (before considering redevelopment). This aligns to para. 149 which states policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 3.46. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment:

Policy 20: Improving Air Quality	NPPF ref. (paras.) 170- 183
Policy 24: New Pocket Parks	
Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings	
Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space	

- 3.47. Policy 20 and 21 meets the aims of the NPPF (para 181 – opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified), through maximising measures which contribute to improving air quality.
- 3.48. Policies 24 and 26 supports the creation of new green ‘pocket parks’ and enhancement of the provision of urban greening measures at Ramilles Street/Place and Dufour’s Place. Policy 25 states that development proposals should provide the highest feasible level of greening to the building.
- 3.49. The above policies support para. 170 (e) of the NPPF, which states that development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 3.50. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment:

Policy 1: Development Proposals in the Soho Conservation Area	NPPF ref. (paras.) 184-202
Policy 2: Proposals for Tall Buildings	
Policy 3: Maintaining Local Character	

- 3.51. Policy 1 seeks to protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area. This accords with para. 185 of the NPPF, which states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.
- 3.52. Policy 2 - which states that the alteration of existing tall buildings will not be permitted where they have an adverse impact on Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne's Gardens, meets the aims of the NPPF (para. 185a) through sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.
- 3.53. Policy 3 also meets the NPPF's aim (para.185) of setting out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment by stating that development proposals should reflect prevailing character, building heights and townscape of the site.

4. Sustainable Development

Achieving sustainable development

- 4.1. The NPPF promotes sustainable development, stating that the ‘purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’. Sustainable development is defined as ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- 4.2. The NPPF views sustainability as made up of three objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The objectives are:
- *Economic:* to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
 - *Social:* to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.
 - *Environmental:* to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.3. The following tables (Tables 1 - 3) summarise how the objectives and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan contribute toward sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF. This demonstrates that the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals.

Table 1: Neighbourhood Plan contribution to economic sustainability

Economic	
NPPF definition: 'Building a strong, responsive and competitive economy'	
Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support and enhance the range and diversity of businesses in Soho particularly the creative industries and other business clusters by ensuring that there continues to be a continuing supply of flexibly sized accommodation. • To support the continued local of live music venues in the area and ensure good management in all forms of entertainment, leisure and cultural activity which minimises any adverse impacts on residents and other users.
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments • Policy 6: Premises for Small Businesses • Policy 7: New Office Developments • Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments • Policy 10: Providing Accommodation for the Creative Industries • Policy 11: Private Members Clubs
Commentary	<p>The Soho NDP recognises the need to maintain and enhance the vibrant mix of architecture and businesses that gives Soho its character and human scale. Globally regarded as an entertainment and creative hub as well as one of London's important conservation areas, Soho has a rich heritage and spirit/brand. With this in mind, the Soho NDP supports proposals for mixed use development and non-uniform shop fronts, which, as explained within the Plan, will contribute to the area's charm and allure.</p> <p>The Soho NDP also supports proposals which include flexible workspaces that support small scale businesses (with a particular emphasis on creative industries) and a wide variety of business occupiers. Therefore, the Plan seeks to retain commercial and creative activity in Soho.</p>

Table 2: Neighbourhood Plan contribution to social sustainability

Social	
NPPF definition: 'Support strong, vibrant and healthy communities'	
Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To preserve, enhance, and promote the heritage and culture of Soho to keep its underlying spirit. • To support investment which respects the nature of the conservation area, generally retaining its character and human scale • To recognise the demand for and to support growth in the residential community by seeking to ensure that the housing required by WCC is located within Soho wherever possible with an appropriately sized mix of units and to enhance the attractiveness of the area for residents by reducing nuisance, noise, crime and anti-social behaviour.
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments • Policy 10: Providing Accommodation for the Creative Industries • Policy 11: Private Members Club • Policy 12: Live Music Venues • Policy 15: Provision of Affordable Housing • Policy 16: Car-Free Residential Developments • Policy 17: Residential Space Standards • Policy 18: Maintaining Residential Amenity During Construction Works • Policy 19: Delivery and Servicing Plans for New Development • Policy 20: Improving Air Quality • Policy 24: New Pocket Parks • Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings • Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space • Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals • Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes • Policy 30: Cycle Parking
Commentary	<p>The Soho NDP promotes commercial developments which include active ground floor accommodation uses, in addition to a suite of policies which promote the retention of creative industries within Soho, namely through the inclusion of art which reflects the culture and heritage of Soho; resisting the change of use of existing private members clubs and protecting live music venues. These policies seek to enhance Soho's culture, whilst protecting its global reputation as a creative hub.</p> <p>In addition, housing policies (Policies 15, 16 and 17) seek to acknowledge and respond to demand for growth within the residential community through supporting the provision of affordable housing within the vicinity of the Soho Neighbourhood Area. In recognition of the identified local housing need, the NDP supports proposals for new housing which focus on smaller-sized one- and two-bedroom units.</p>

	<p>The Soho NDP also includes a number of policies which promote the health and well-being of the community. Specifically, policies which seek to improve air quality, improve the sustainability of existing buildings and the creation of new 'pocket parks' supports NDP objectives through supporting investment which respects the nature of the conservation area – with particular attention given to retaining its character and human scale.</p>
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Table 3: Neighbourhood Plan contribution to environmental sustainability

Environmental	
NPPF definition: 'Contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'	
Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support investment which respects the nature of the conservation area, generally retaining its character and human scale • To promote sustainable development, improve air quality, increase green infrastructure and improve the public realm. • To support a modal shift towards walking and cycling, promote car free living and freight consolidation to help reduce traffic and congestion. • To reduce the amounts waste left on the street by encouraging better facilities for recycling and waste management within premises and supporting the increased provision of dedicated food waste recycling.
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 1: Development Proposals in the Soho Conservation Area • Policy 2: Proposals for Tall Buildings • Policy 3: Maintaining Local Character • Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments • Policy 5: Shop Fronts and Ground Floor Frontages • Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments • Policy 16: Car Free Residential Developments • Policy 20: Improving Air Quality • Policy 21: Reducing Energy • Policy 22: Refurbishment and Retrofitting of Existing Buildings • Policy 24: New Pocket Parks • Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings • Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space • Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals • Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes • Policy 30: Cycle Parking • Policy 31: Waste and Recycling Facilities in New Developments
Commentary	<p>The Soho NDP makes explicit reference to the Soho Conservation Area, stating that development proposals which protect, respect and enhance the Soho Character Area will be supported. In addition, the Plan seeks to protect the sensitive historic assets within Soho through preventing tall buildings in areas which would have any adverse impact on Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne's Gardens; as well as ensuring that development proposals reflect the prevailing character of the area. All of the above align to the NDP Objective through supporting investment which respects the nature of the conservation area.</p>

	<p>Soho's NDP policies which seek to improve air quality, improve the sustainability of existing buildings and the creation of new 'pocket parks' supports NDP objectives through the promotion of sustainable development.</p> <p>Policies 16, 27, 28 and 30 all contribute towards transport modal shifts (towards walking and cycling) through; the implementation of car free residential development, the facilitation of pedestrian movement and securing of new pedestrian routes, and the provision of additional on-street cycle stands.</p> <p>The Soho NDP states that separate waste and recycling facilities must be provided within the boundary of any new development. In addition, major commercial developments must provide extra waste facilities to generate larger on-site waste capacity and food outlets must also provide sufficient space to store food waste. This policy meets the objectives of the Soho NDP, as it helps to reduce the amount of waste on the streets, as well as encouraging better waste management processes.</p>
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5. The Development Plan

Introduction

- 5.1. For Neighbourhood Plans to meet the Basic Conditions set out in the Neighbourhood Planning regulations they need to demonstrate general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan.
- 5.2. The NPPF (para. 17) states that a development plan should include strategic policies to “address each local planning authority’s priorities for the development and use of land in its area.” Paragraph 28 of the NPPF later iterates that non-strategic policies should be “used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development”. The NPPF (para.20) states that strategic policies should make sufficient provision for:
 - Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure, and other commercial development;
 - Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 5.3. For Soho, the development plan comprises both the Westminster City Plan and the London Plan. The London Plan was adopted in March 2016 (providing a framework for development for the next 20-25 years), and the Westminster City Plan was adopted in November 2016, covering the period 2016-2031.
- 5.4. It should be noted that the London Plan and Westminster City Plan are both in the process of being updated. The draft new London Plan (Intend to Publish version) was published in December 2019. The Regulation 19 draft Westminster City Plan was published in June 2019, covering the period 2019-2040. Where appropriate, reference to draft strategic policies has been made, as outlined below.
- 5.5. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan has been developed in consideration of London-wide and Westminster City planning policies set out in:
 - The London Plan – Prepared by the Mayor of London in March 2015 (the latest published version consolidating alterations made to the Plan since 2011)
 - ‘Intend to Publish’ Draft London Plan (2019)
 - Westminster City Plan (2016)
 - Emerging Westminster City Plan (2019)

- 5.6. This section of the Basic Conditions Statement demonstrates that the Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan.
- 5.7. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan aims to build on the policies contained within both the London Plan and the Westminster City Plan by providing neighbourhood level planning policy where it has been found appropriate.
- 5.8. There are a number of instances where adequate protection is considered to be afforded by the London Plan and City Plan already and these have not been repeated within the Plan.

The London Plan (Adopted version)

- 5.9. Generally, London Plan policies are broadly framed, and are already reflected in the Local Plan (the City Plan) prepared by Westminster City Council. Therefore, the issues of 'non-conformity' with the London Plan are unlikely to arise in relation to neighbourhood plans within London. This Basic Conditions Statement does, in any event, outline how the Soho Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the London Plan.
- 5.10. The Soho Neighbourhood Forum is confident that the policies proposed in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan both support, and generally conform with, those of the London Plan. Table 4 sets this out below.

Table 4: Neighbourhood Plan response to strategic London Plan objectives

London Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
01	A city that meets the challenges of economic and population growth in ways that ensure a sustainable, good and improving quality of life and sufficient high-quality homes and neighbourhoods for all Londoners and help tackle the huge issue of deprivation and inequality among Londoners, including inequality in health outcomes.	<p>The Soho NDP clearly outlines that proposals for mixed use developments which include a mix of occupiers (including residential, retail, light industrial, office and restaurant) and fully apply the 'agent of change' principle as defined in the draft new London Plan will be supported. The NDP recognises that mixed-use development is essential in maintaining and enhancing Soho's character and human scale. Furthermore, the NDP iterates that proposals for new housing developments should focus on smaller one- and two-bedroom units to respond to local identified need.</p> <p>The Soho NDP sets a clear vision of tackling inequality amongst Londoners through its allowance for affordable housing to be built within 'the vicinity' of the Soho Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>The Soho NDP does not seek to allocate housing sites within the neighbourhood plan area.</p>

London Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
02	<p>An internationally competitive and successful city with a strong and diverse economy and an entrepreneurial spirit that benefit all Londoners and all parts of London; a city which is at the leading edge of innovation and research and which is comfortable with –and makes the most of –its rich heritage and cultural resources.</p>	<p>The Soho NDP notes that Soho is globally regarded as an entertainment and creative hub. It is clear within the Soho NDP that Soho’s “tangible and intangible aspects of heritage and spirit/brand” are recognised and responded to, as evidenced by the Plan’s requirement for innovative design within the proposed massing and scale, as a means of retaining local character.</p> <p>The NDP’s support of flexible workspaces in new office, commercial and/or mixed-use major development proposals highlights the Plan’s wish to retain commercial and creative activity in Soho, whilst also ensuring that growth of the area builds on Soho’s existing character, heritage and culture.</p> <p>A key aim of the NDP is for Soho to support and encourage the provision of space for creative sector growth. The Soho NDP seeks to achieve this aim through the support of proposals which ensure that lettable space in commercial and mixed-use developments is designed to offer a variety of sizes of workspace for creative industries, with an emphasis on start-ups. This clearly corresponds with the London Plan’s objective to create a strong and diverse economy through the provision of a range of different workspaces within Soho.</p>
03	<p>A city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods to which Londoners feel attached, which provide all of its residents, workers, visitors and students – whatever their origin, background, age or status –with opportunities to realise and express their potential and a high-quality environment for individuals to enjoy,</p>	<p>Soho has a rich immigrant heritage, having accommodated a diverse array of people including both the Huguenots and Italians. In addition, Soho has long been a liberal place, where new attitudes to sexuality have developed - as reflected by the large LGBTQ+ community within the area today. The Soho NDP recognises the rich history of the area, and as such, seeks to protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Soho NDP supports proposals for mixed use developments which include a mix of occupiers. This will help to enhance the vibrant mix of businesses that help give Soho its character.</p> <p>The Plan includes a broad array of policies, covering culture and heritage, commercial activity, entertainment and night-time economy, housing and sustainable</p>

London Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
	live together and thrive.	development and the environment. Together, these policies will maintain and enhance Soho's sense of place, as well as creating a secure and accessible neighbourhood.
04	A city that delights the senses and takes care over its buildings and streets, having the best of modern architecture while also making the most of London's built heritage, and which makes the most of and extends its wealth of open and green spaces, natural environments and waterways, realising their potential for improving Londoners' health, welfare and development.	<p>The vision of the Soho NDP acknowledges the uniqueness and importance of the rich and vibrant heritage within the Soho Neighbourhood Area. In recognition of Soho's historic and lower- scale environment, the NDP will not permit tall buildings in areas which will have an adverse impact on heritage assets.</p> <p>The Soho NDP requires development proposals to reflect the prevailing character of the area, in order to complement the existing architectural character of the area. In turn, this measure will ensure that all new developments are responsive to the historic fabric of the area.</p> <p>A main objective of the Soho NDP is to promote sustainable development, improve air quality, increase air quality and improve the public realm. This objective will be achieved through a suite of policies. In particular, policies focus on creating new pocket parks, incorporating new green infrastructure on buildings and improving public spaces. These policies will positively contribute to improving the health of Londoners.</p>
05	A city that becomes a world leader in improving the environment locally and globally, taking the lead in tackling climate change, reducing pollution, developing a low carbon economy, consuming fewer resources and using them more effectively.	<p>As highlighted above, a main objective of the Soho NDP is to promote sustainable development, improve air quality, increase air quality and improve the public realm. Recognising that there may be limited opportunities to decarbonise and mitigate climate change effects within the historic area, the Soho NDP places greater emphasis on achieving sustainable development across all new development proposals. Central to this, design proposals are required to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality (such as green infrastructure, delivery and servicing plans and methods of on-site renewable energy generation).</p> <p>Alternative policies; such as those which seek to conserve heat and energy, as well as those which evaluate the potential to improve the sustainability of existing buildings and those which support the greening of</p>

London Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		<p>proposed buildings to the highest-feasible degree and new car-free residential developments, together contribute to alleviating the ongoing global climate crisis. Put simply, the cumulative effect of the above policies will support the London Plan's objectives through tackling localised air pollution via preventative and mitigation measures.</p>
06	<p>A city where it is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities with an efficient and effective transport system which actively encourages more walking and cycling, makes better use of the Thames and supports delivery of all the objectives of this Plan</p>	<p>The Soho NDP proactively seeks to support a modal shift towards walking and cycling, in addition to promoting car-free living. Policies which seek to facilitate pedestrian movement, secure new pedestrian routes and provide additional street-cycle stands are included within the Soho NDP.</p> <p>The shift towards less polluting modes of transport (such as walking and cycling) will help to improve local connections with nearby amenities, thus offering the local community with greater opportunities within Soho.</p> <p>The Soho NDP also seeks to reduce traffic congestion on the roads through stipulating that development proposals for the Poland Street and Brewer Street public car parks must consider the potential for adaptation and reuse as micro-consolidation centres. In turn, this freight consolidation measure will help to meet London Plan objectives through the creation of a more efficient transport system.</p>

The London Plan (Emerging version)

- 5.11. The London Plan is in the process of being reviewed and updated. Following Examination, the Panel's Report and recommended changes (October 2019) has been published and, subsequently, an 'Intend to Publish' version of the draft London Plan was published in December 2019. This Basic Conditions Statement also considers relationship to the 'Good Growth' objectives in the emerging London Plan. This is set out in Table 5.

Table 5: Neighbourhood Plan response to 'Intend to Publish' version of the new draft London Plan 'good growth' objectives

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>GG1 <i>Building strong and inclusive communities</i></p> <p>Good growth is inclusive growth. To build on the city's tradition of openness, diversity and equality, and help deliver strong and inclusive communities, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage early and inclusive engagement with stakeholders, including local communities, in the development of proposals, policies and area-based strategies • seek to ensure changes to the physical environment to achieve an overall positive contribution to London • provide access to good quality community spaces, services, amenities and infrastructure that accommodate, encourage and strengthen communities, increasing active participation and social integration, and addressing social isolation • seek to ensure that London continues to generate a wide range of economic and other opportunities, and that everyone is able to benefit from these to ensure that London is a fairer, more inclusive and more equal city • ensure that streets and public spaces are consistently planned for people to move around and spend time in comfort and safety, creating places where everyone is welcome, which foster a sense of belonging, which encourage community 	<p>Well-known for its diverse and inclusive community spirit, Soho has long been regarded as an accepting community - where new attitudes to sexuality have developed and where people from a diverse range of backgrounds are welcome.</p> <p>In order to protect this rich and diverse culture, the NDP requires public art to reflect the culture and heritage of Soho, and, where possible, ensure Soho-based creatives help create local art.</p> <p>Policies also: seek to create new pocket parks and require development proposals to provide the highest feasible level of greening to buildings. In addition, the NDP supports the enhancement of urban greening measures at Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place. These policies seek to protect and enhance Soho's green infrastructure as a means of improving health and well-being.</p> <p>Measures to improve connectivity and legibility within Soho and the wider area are also included within the Soho NDP. Namely, policies which seek to facilitate pedestrian movement, secure new pedestrian routes, facilitate better wayfinding and</p>

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>buy-in, and where communities can develop and thrive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the crucial role town centres have in the social, civic, cultural and economic lives of Londoners, and plan for places that provide important opportunities for building relationships during the daytime, evening and night time • ensure that new buildings and the spaces they create are designed to reinforce or enhance the identity, legibility, permeability, and inclusivity of neighbourhoods, and are resilient and adaptable to changing community requirements • support and promote the creation of a London where all Londoners, including children and young people, older people, disabled people, and people with young children, as well as people with other protected characteristics, can move around with ease and enjoy the opportunities the city provides, creating a welcoming environment that everyone can use confidently, independently, and with choice and dignity, avoiding separation or segregation • support and promote the creation of an inclusive London where all Londoners, regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, religion, race, sexual orientation, social class, or whether they are pregnant or have children, can share in its prosperity, culture and community, minimising the barriers, challenges and inequalities they face. 	<p>provide additional cycle parking stands all contribute towards the emerging London Plan's aim for all Londoners to move around with ease.</p>
<p>GG2</p> <p><i>Making the best use of land</i></p> <p>To create successful sustainable mixed-use places that make the best use of land, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable the development of brownfield land, particularly in Opportunity Areas, on 	<p>Given the vast proportion of developed land within the Soho Neighbourhood Area, there are limited opportunities to develop on brownfield land. Despite this, the Soho NDP does conform with objective GG2 of the emerging London Plan by protecting London's existing open</p>

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response	
<p>surplus public sector land, and sites within and on the edge of town centres, as well as utilising small sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritise sites which are well-connected by existing or planned public transport • proactively explore the potential to intensify the use of land to support additional homes and workspaces, promoting higher density development, particularly in locations that are well-connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling • applying a design-led approach to determine the optimum development capacity of sites • understand what is valued about existing places and use this as a catalyst for growth, renewal, and place-making, strengthening London's distinct and varied character • protect and enhance London's open spaces, including the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, designated nature conservation sites and local spaces, and promote the creation of new green infrastructure and urban greening, including aiming to secure net biodiversity gains where possible • plan for good local walking, cycling and public transport connections to support a strategic target of 80 per cent of all journeys using sustainable travel, enabling car-free lifestyles that allow an efficient use of land, as well as using new and enhanced public transport links to unlock growth • maximise opportunities to use infrastructure assets for more than one purpose, to make the best use of land and support efficient maintenance. 	<p>spaces and creating new green infrastructure and urban greening. This is achieved through Policies 24, 25 and 26 of the NDP, which support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs, as well as stipulating that development proposals should provide the highest feasible level of urban greening to buildings. The NDP identifies Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place as areas which are suitable for the enhanced provision of urban greening measures.</p> <p>The NDP also includes design policies which help to ensure that developments within Soho can be optimised. In particular, Policy 8 supports active ground floor uses in new commercial developments in order to avoid under used space. Furthermore, Policy 2 supports proposals for tall buildings in areas which will not adversely impact Soho's heritage assets.</p> <p>In accordance with GG2, the NDP also supports sustainable transport modes through a suite of policies which seek to facilitate pedestrian movement, secure new pedestrian routes and support the provision of on-street cycle stands (Policies 26, 27 and 30).</p>	
GG3	<i>Creating a healthy city</i>	The Soho NDP conforms with London's Healthy Street Approach. Policy 27 of the NDP explicitly makes

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>To improve Londoners' health and reduce health inequalities, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that the wider determinants of health are addressed in an integrated and co-ordinated way, taking a systematic approach to improving the mental and physical health of all Londoners and reducing health inequalities • promote more active and healthy lives for all Londoners and enable them to make healthy choices • use the Healthy Streets Approach to prioritise health in all planning decisions • assess the potential impacts of development proposals and Development Plans on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of communities, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts, maximise potential positive impacts, and help reduce health inequalities, for example through the use of Health Impact Assessments • plan for appropriate health and care infrastructure to address the needs of London's changing and growing population • seek to improve London's air quality, reduce public exposure to poor air quality and minimise inequalities in levels of exposure to air pollution • plan for improved access to and quality of green spaces, the provision of new green infrastructure, and spaces for play, recreation and sports • ensure that new buildings are well-insulated and sufficiently ventilated to avoid the health problems associated with damp, heat and cold • seek to create a healthy food environment, increasing the availability of healthy food and restricting unhealthy options 	<p>reference to the Approach, stating that proposals should seek to deliver safe, efficient and inclusive design, under the wider aim of facilitating pedestrian movement in all development proposals.</p> <p>In addition, a suite of policies (24, 25, 26, 27 and 28) of the NDP seek to create new pocket parks on roofs and support proposals which implement the highest feasible level of urban greening measures. In line with the emerging London Plan, the NDP supports proposals which facilitate pedestrian movement and secure new pedestrian routes, thus aligning to the emerging London Plan's objective of planning for improved access to green spaces.</p> <p>To improve health and well-being in Soho, Policy 20 states that design proposals must maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality and Policy 23 requires development proposals for the Poland Street and Brewer Street car parks to demonstrate consideration for the sites to be reused as micro-consolidation centres. These policies therefore seek to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion within Soho and therefore conform with objective GG3.</p> <p>Further consideration has been given to retrofitting the existing buildings in the area to prevent heat loss and improve energy use, as evidenced by Policy 22.</p>

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
GG4	<p><i>Delivering the homes Londoners need</i></p> <p>To create a housing market that works better for all Londoners, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that more homes are delivered • support the delivery of the strategic target of 50 per cent of all new homes being genuinely affordable • create mixed and inclusive communities, with good quality homes that meet high standards of design and provide for identified needs, including for specialist housing • identify and allocate a range of sites to deliver housing locally, supporting skilled precision-manufacturing that can increase the rate of building, and planning for all necessary supporting infrastructure from the outset • establish ambitious and achievable build-out rates at the planning stage, incentivising build-out milestones to help ensure that homes are built quickly and to reduce the likelihood of permissions being sought to sell land on at a higher value. 	<p>The Soho NDP does not allocate housing within the Soho Neighbourhood Area. Nevertheless, the NDP does stipulate that affordable housing should be delivered within 'the vicinity' of the Soho Neighbourhood Area. Furthermore, the NDP iterates that proposals for new housing developments should focus on smaller one- and two-bedroom units to respond to local identified need.</p> <p>In order to achieve mixed and inclusive communities (as set out in objective GG4), the NDP supports proposals for mixed-use developments which include a wide variety of occupiers.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that the above policies will ensure that homes in Soho are of a good quality and are capable of supporting mixed communities.</p>
GG5	<p><i>Growing a good economy</i></p> <p>To conserve and enhance London's global economic competitiveness and ensure that economic success is shared amongst all Londoners, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the strength and potential of the wider city region • seek to ensure that London's economy diversifies and that the benefits of economic success are shared more equitably across London • plan for sufficient employment and industrial space in the right locations to 	<p>In line with the emerging London Plan's aim of diversifying London's economy, the NDP supports mixed-use development proposals which include a variety of occupiers. This policy therefore ensures that Soho remains economically competitive.</p> <p>Central to Soho's success is its 24-hour economy. In accordance with the emerging London Plan, the Soho NDP seeks to protect the night-time economy in the area through protecting existing music venues (D2) and mitigating associated adverse impacts such as street fouling and noise through supporting major</p>

'Intend to Publish' Draft New London Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>support economic development and regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that sufficient high-quality and affordable housing, as well as physical and social infrastructure is provided to support London's growth • ensure that London continues to provide leadership in innovation, research, policy and ideas, supporting its role as an international incubator and centre for learning • promote and support London's rich heritage and cultural assets, and its role as a 24-hour city • make the fullest use of London's existing and future public transport, walking and cycling network, as well as its network of town centres, to support agglomeration and economic activity • recognise and promote the benefits of a transition to a low carbon circular economy to strengthen London's economic success. 	<p>development proposals which provide additional public toilets and ensuring that food and beverage developments do not impact residential amenity.</p> <p>The NDP also promotes sustainable transport modes through the facilitation of better pedestrian routes and the securing of new pedestrian routes. Proposals which seek to provide additional public cycle stands are also supported.</p>

The Westminster City Plan (Adopted version): Strategic Objectives

- 5.12. The Westminster City Plan was adopted in 2015 and a new draft was published in 2019. It sets out the overall spatial strategy and includes planning policies for Westminster and its neighbourhoods, including Soho.
- 5.13. The Westminster City Plan (2015) establishes seven strategic objectives. The Table below demonstrates how the Soho Neighbourhood Plan responds to these:

Table 6: Neighbourhood Plan policy response to Westminster City Plan strategic objectives

Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>01. To accommodate sustainable growth and change that will contribute to Westminster's role as the heart of a pre-eminent world class city, building on its internationally renowned business, retail, cultural, tourism and entertainment functions within the Central Activities Zone; to support the unique economic breadth and diversity of the West End and its fringe areas including the Opportunity Areas; whilst maintaining its unique and historic character, mix, functions, and townscapes.</p>	<p>The Soho NDP fully supports proposals for mixed use developments (which include a mix of occupiers), including residential, retail, light industrial, office and restaurants). The NDP notes that mixed-use small-scale buildings are essential to retaining aspects of Soho's heritage, which, as quoted within the WCC draft City Plan (2019) <i>"has a unique role to play within the wider west end"</i>.</p> <p>The NDP iterates that the following business sectors may fit within mixed-use developments: restaurants, food retailing, street markets, music industry, specialist clothing, tailors, fabric shops, TV and film post-production and advertising, theatre production, galleries, other cultural uses, communications, PR, marketing and other services. The above list demonstrates the diversity and overall economic breadth of the area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Soho NDP regards the Soho Conservation Area as one of London's important conservation areas due to its location and diverse cultural heritage. The need to maintain Soho's unique heritage has been reflected within the policies of the Soho NDP, which state that development proposals must reflect prevailing character and complement existing architectural character. This accords with WCC objectives, as historic</p>

Westminster Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		character and townscapes have been effectively considered.
02.	To sensitively upgrade Westminster’s building stock to secure sustainable and inclusive exemplary design which minimises energy and resource consumption and the production of waste, reduces the impacts of local environmental pollution and meets both today’s needs and those of the future, including the effects of a changing climate; creating attractive places that function well whilst ensuring that the historic character and integrity of Westminster’s built fabric and places is protected and enhanced.	<p>The Soho NDP conforms with this policy, as Policy 22 focuses on retrofitting and refurbishing the existing building stock in Soho. Specifically, the policy seeks to reduce the local environmental impacts of development, including measures which prevent heat loss, minimise fossil fuel use and incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems. All of the above measures help to mitigate climate change effects. In addition, the Soho NDP seeks to reduce energy consumption through the conservation of heat and energy, as set out in Policy 21.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Soho NDP considers the historic character and integrity of Westminster’s built fabric through Policy 1, which states that development proposals which protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area in terms of their size and scale.</p>
03.	To maintain and enhance the quality of life, health and well-being of Westminster’s residential communities; ensuring that Westminster’s residents can benefit from growth and change, providing more employment and housing opportunities, safety and security, and better public transport and local services; to work with our partners to foster economic vitality and diversity, improved learning and skills, and improved life chances in areas of deprivation.	<p>The Soho NDP has set clear objectives which seek to reduce nuisance, noise, crime and anti-social behaviour to enhance the attractiveness of the area. This objective therefore accords with WCC’s objective of maintaining the health and well-being of Westminster’s residential communities through benefitting from safety and security.</p> <p>In addition, the Soho NDP seeks to foster economic vitality and diversity, as evidenced by Policy 6 - which supports development proposals which provide flexible workspaces that are suitable for SME’s and other small enterprises. Plus, the NDP supports the provision of affordable housing within the Soho Neighbourhood Area. In doing so, the Soho NDP recognises that the provision of affordable homes must work towards</p>

Westminster Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		offsetting, mitigating and reducing any impacts to local residential amenity.
04.	To increase the supply of good quality housing to meet Westminster’s housing target, and to meet housing needs, including the provision of affordable housing and homes for those with special needs; whilst ensuring that new housing in commercial areas coexists alongside the business activity and an appropriate balance of uses is maintained.	<p>No housing allocations are included within the Soho NDP. However, Policy 15 states that affordable housing can be provided within ‘the vicinity’ of the Soho Neighbourhood Area in order to meet Local Plan requirements. It is therefore considered that the above policy complies with the WCC’s objectives.</p> <p>In addition, the NDP supports mixed-use developments which include a mix of occupiers (such as residential, retail, light industrial, office and restaurant). This accords with Westminster’s aim to ensure that new housing in commercial areas coexists alongside businesses, which, in turn, ensures an appropriate balance of uses is maintained.</p>
05.	To manage the pressures on the city from its national and international roles and functions, supporting business communities and tourism, and ensuring a safe and enjoyable visitor experience	<p>Soho has earned a its global reputation as a creative hub, as well as being known for its nightlife and as a leading retail destination. Policies 4,5,6,7,8, 10, 11 and 12 help to maintain and enhance Soho’s international role as a number one destination. Particular efforts to provide letting space for the creative industries helps to ensure that this vibrant and well-functioning area continues to support and serve local business communities.</p> <p>The Soho NDP also actively supports the role of existing private members clubs and live music venues, on the grounds that they are economically viable and low impact. It is therefore considered that the Soho NDP complies with WCC objectives through ensuring an enjoyable visitor experience for those who visit the area.</p>
06.	To accommodate the safe and efficient movement of growing numbers of people entering and moving around Westminster by facilitating major improvements to the	A key objective of the Soho NDP is to support a modal shift towards walking and cycling, promoting car-free living and freight consolidation. This will be achieved through

Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>public transport system, improving the public realm and pedestrian environment, managing vehicular traffic, and making walking and cycling safer and more enjoyable.</p>	<p>policies 16, 23, 27, 28, 29 and 30. In particular, policies 27 and 28 prioritise pedestrian movement and securing new public access routes. This complies with the WCC’s objectives of improving the pedestrian environment within the local area.</p> <p>Policy 23 - which proposes to consider the potential for the Brewer Street and Poland Street car parks as micro-consolidation centres will reduce traffic congestion and pedestrian delays, as well as preventing erosion of the physical environment within Soho.</p> <p>It is considered that the cumulative effects of implementing the above policies will achieve the WCC’s objective through the creation of a safe pedestrian-friendly environment in and around Soho.</p>
<p>07. To protect and enhance Westminster’s open spaces, civic spaces and Blue Ribbon Network, and Westminster’s biodiversity; including protecting the unique character and openness of the Royal Parks and other open spaces; and to manage these spaces to ensure areas of relative tranquillity in a city with a daytime population increased every day by over one million workers and visitors</p>	<p>Policies 24 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks and improving public open space at Ramillies Street and Dufour’s Place through implementing urban greening measures and public seating. This accords with WCC’s objective of protecting and enhancing Westminster’s open spaces and will ensure that a wider choice of tranquil open spaces will be available for public use.</p> <p>Policy 2 ensures that proposals for tall buildings will not have any adverse effect on existing open spaces within Soho, including Golden Square, St Anne’s Gardens or Soho Square.</p> <p>The plan also gives consideration to urban greening measures. As iterated in Policy 25, the Soho NDP requires development proposals to provide the highest feasible level of greening to the building and its curtilage.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that policies 1, 24, 25 and 26 comply with WCC objectives, as</p>

Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
	<p>existing open spaces and new public parks have be effectively considered. It should be noted that there are no Royal Parks within the limits of the Soho Neighbourhood Area.</p>

The Westminster City Plan (Emerging version): Strategic Objectives

5.14. The draft Westminster City Plan (2019) establishes ten strategic objectives. The Table below demonstrates how the Soho Neighbourhood Plan responds to them:

Table 7: Neighbourhood Plan policy response to the draft Westminster City Plan (2019-2040) strategic objectives

Emerging Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>01. Increase the stock of high- quality housing and provide variety in terms of size, type and tenure to meet need and promote mixed and inclusive communities, with a clear focus on affordability and family homes.</p>	<p>The Soho NDP does not allocate housing, nor does it define housing figures for the Plan period. The NDP supports proposals for mixed-use developments which include a variety of different occupiers. The NDP also stipulates that affordable housing provision can be located within the vicinity of the Soho Neighbourhood Area. In recognition of identified local need, the Plan also supports proposals for smaller-sized one- and two-bedroom units.</p> <p>The above policies show consideration for local need, whilst also ensuring that housing is of a good-quality and is inclusively available.</p>
<p>02. Enable job growth across a range of sectors vital to the UK economy, and ensure those from disadvantaged backgrounds benefit from the opportunities this presents.</p>	<p>It is clear that the Soho NDP recognises Soho's global reputation as a creative hub for film, post-production, digital media, advertising and theatre. To encourage the continued growth of the creative sector in Soho, the NDP supports proposals which design lettable workspaces of a variety of sizes for the creative industries.</p> <p>Proposals for commercial and mixed-use developments which provide flexible workspaces for SME's or other small-scale businesses will also be supported. These measures will assist in retaining commercial and creative activities in Soho and will enhance Soho as a hub for these activities. Overall, the above policies will ensure that Soho's built environment will support a diverse array of businesses.</p>

Emerging Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
<p>03. Enhance the West End as London’s primary retail, leisure, and visitor destination, and ensure our town centres and high streets can adapt to the challenges they face.</p>	<p>Soho includes dense clusters of retail and commercial outlets. As suite of NDP policies help to ensure that the West End remains an important destination for retail, leisure and tourism.</p> <p>The Soho NDP supports proposals for mixed-use developments – including a mixture of residential, retail, light industrial, office and restaurant. This policy is essential to help retain aspects of Soho’s heritage and spirit/brand.</p> <p>In keeping with local character, the NDP requires developers to avoid the development of uniform shop fronts and repeated facades. Commercial developments will also be supported where the ground floor accommodation includes active uses.</p> <p>The above policies help to maintain interest at street-level, whilst also promoting a bustling streetscape.</p>
<p>04. Broaden the city’s cultural offer, while managing the impacts of clusters of uses, and of the evening and night-time economies on existing residential communities.</p>	<p>Soho is a well-established night-time economy hotspot. To assist in broadening London’s cultural offer, the NDP has made a clear commitment to protecting existing music venues (D2 use). To offset any potential adverse impacts relating to night-time activities, the NDP has enacted a number of policies. Specifically, the NDP requires food and beverage developments to demonstrate that they do not have adverse impacts on residential amenity, whilst also supporting proposals which incorporate additional public toilet provision.</p>
<p>05. Enhance connections by improving options for cycling and walking, prioritising pedestrians, improve interchange between transport modes and incorporate innovative solutions to manage the highway network.</p>	<p>A key objective of the Soho NDP is to promote a modal shift to walking and cycling, promote car-free living and freight consolidation.</p> <p>The Soho NDP includes a swathe of policies which help to meet this objective. Policies</p>

Emerging Westminster Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		<p>seek to: facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, secure new pedestrian routes, facilitate better wayfinding signage, provide additional cycle parking and promote the development of micro-consolidation centres for deliveries. Together, the above policies conform with objective 5 of the emerging City Plan.</p>
06.	<p>Improve quality of life, climate resilience and tackle environmental challenges by protecting, enhancing, expanding our valuable network of parks and open spaces.</p>	<p>The Soho NDP proactively seeks to address the main issues relating to climate change. The NDP seeks to enhance Soho's parks and protect biodiversity through supporting the creation of new pocket parks. The NDP also requires proposals to provide the highest feasible level of greening, including incorporating enhanced urban greening measures at Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place.</p> <p>Alternative policies which seek to reduce energy use and retrofit existing buildings also contribute to this broad emerging City Plan objective through improving the sustainability of existing assets within Soho.</p>
07.	<p>Improve air quality, minimise noise and other polluting impacts, and reduce carbon and water demands by minimising detrimental impacts from development.</p>	<p>A key objective of the Soho NDP is to improve air quality and increase green infrastructure. The NDP requires development proposals to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality, whilst also requiring development proposals to incorporate measures designed to conserve heat and energy.</p> <p>During construction, proposals require a Construction Management Plan to demonstrate how adverse impacts on residential amenity have been considered and avoided, and/or mitigated. This involved evaluating the negative impacts from noise, dirt and air pollution.</p>
08.	<p>Promote quality in the design of buildings and public spaces, ensuring that Westminster is attractive and welcoming.</p>	<p>Soho is well-known for its distinctive architecture, narrow streets and proliferation of small businesses. A key objective of the NDP is to preserve, enhance and promote</p>

Emerging Westminster Plan Objectives	Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
	<p>the heritage and culture of Soho. To achieve this, The NDP requires development proposals to reflect prevailing character, building heights and townscape of the site and surrounding area.</p> <p>With regard to Soho’s streetscape, the NDP requires new development to avoid uniform shop fronts and repeated facades. Creating active ground floor uses in new commercial development is also supported by the NDP to enhance active frontages.</p> <p>Soho is embracing an innovative approach to planning for public spaces. The creation of new pocket parks on roofs is fully supported by the Plan; as are proposals which provide the highest feasible of greening to buildings and curtilages. The NDP also outlines two sites (Ramillies Street and Dufour’s Place) which may be suitable for enhancement – citing that urban greening measures and provision of public seating will improve the public realm of these areas.</p> <p>The cumulative impact of the above policies will therefore promote well-planned good-quality designs of buildings and the public realm is Soho.</p>
<p>09. Making sure our neighbourhoods continue to thrive.</p>	<p>A wide range of policies within the NDP seek to ensure the neighbourhood continues to thrive. At the forefront of the NDP is the aim to promote, protect and enhance the heritage and culture of Soho to keep its underlying spirit. Central to this aim, the NDP supports proposals for mixed-use developments which include flexible workspaces. This will ensure that a wide variety of occupiers and small businesses are located within the area.</p> <p>The NDP also effectively considers the open spaces and sustainable transport modes within Soho. Through supporting the creation</p>

Emerging Westminster Plan Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		of new pocket parks on roofs and facilitating pedestrian movement in new developments, the NDP prioritises the health and well-being of the local community, which, in turn, will help foster a thriving community.
10.	Make the most of our unique heritage and historic environment, while encouraging innovations in building technology and improving sense of place.	<p>The Soho NDP sets a clear vision for the area to continue to be a unique and important part of London with a rich and vibrant heritage. To help accomplish this, the NDP supports proposals which protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area, whilst also restricting tall buildings to areas where they will not adversely impact Golden Square, Soho Square, St Anne’s Gardens or other important heritage assets.</p> <p>The NDP also seeks to retrofit its existing heritage assets through to improve the sustainability of these buildings.</p>

The Westminster City Plan (Adopted version): 'S' policies

- 5.15. Westminster City Council advises that, for the purposes of the Basic Conditions, "General conformity is limited to the 'S' policies in Westminster's City Plan". There are 47 'S' policies in the City Plan. General Conformity with these is outlined in Table 8 below. In addition, there are some other relevant policies in the Westminster City Plan pertaining to Soho. These are also addressed in Table 8.
- 5.16. It is considered that Table 8 makes clear that the Soho Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the Development Plan and will make a positive contribution to wider strategic policy aims and objectives.

Table 8: Conformity of neighbourhood plan policies with 'S' and other relevant policies in the Westminster City Plan

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy S1	Mixed Use in the Central Activities Zone	Yes Policies 4, 5, 7 and 8	<p>The Soho NDP is in general conformity with the aspirations of Policy S1 of the City Plan by supporting proposals for mixed use development which include a mix of occupiers.</p> <p>In keeping with the character of the Central Activities Zone, the NDP requires developers to avoid creating uniform shop fronts and repeated facades.</p> <p>The Soho NDP promotes the creation of new office space and B1 development, where appropriate, to support the Core Central Activities Zone and economy of the area and London. The NDP recognises that offices and B1 floorspace will be directed to the Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area which partly covers the Soho Neighbourhood Area. Policy 8 seeks to avoid under used space and accommodation through supporting active uses in new commercial development ground floor accommodation.</p> <p>The above policies are considered to be in general conformity with the City Plan by accommodating economic functions which contribute to Soho's reputation as a thriving commercial community.</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy S2	Special Policy Areas	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy CM2.1	Harley Street Special Policy Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy CM2.2	Portland Place Special Policy Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy CM2.3	Savile Row Special Policy Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy CM2.4	St James's Special Policy Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy CM2.5	Mayfair Special Policy Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S3	Paddington Opportunity Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S4	Victoria Opportunity Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S5	Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area	Yes Policies 4, 27, 29	<p>A section of the Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area falls within the Soho Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>The City Plan requires A1 retail uses at basement to first floor of all frontages onto Oxford Street and at ground floor level for all frontages onto Tottenham Court Road and Charing Cross Road, whilst later stating that the requirements for residential floorspace as part of new commercial developments may be applied more flexibly. The NDP complements City Plan requirements through strongly supporting proposals for mixed use developments (which include a mix of occupiers such as residential, retail, light industrial, office and restaurant) in Soho.</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
			The City Plan also stipulates that public realm improvements to improve pedestrian circulation and movement (including improving connectivity and wayfinding to the surrounding areas). In accordance with the City Plan, policies 27 and 29 of the NDP support designs which facilitate pedestrian movement and display a street number for each premises.
Policy S6	Core Central Activities Zone	Yes Policies, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12	The Soho Neighbourhood Area falls within the Core Central Activities Zone. The NDP strongly supports mixed use development proposals – including retail, in addition to supporting mixed-use proposals which demonstrate they are mixed use floorspaces. The NDP also supports new commercial development with active uses within the ground floor accommodation. This aligns to the City Plan's prioritisation of retail units within the West End Special Retail Policy Area. In line with the City Plan's policy on the West End Stress Area, the NDP will allow entertainment uses (such as live music venues), provided they are low impact.
Policy S8	Marylebone and Fitzrovia	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S9	Knightsbridge	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S10	Pimlico	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S11	Royal Parks	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S12	North Westminster Economic Development Area	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy S13	Outside the CAZ and NWEDA	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area
Policy S14	Optimising Housing Delivery	Yes Policies: 4, 15	<p>In line with the City Plan, the Soho NDP welcomes proposals for mixed use development in the area, which includes residential developments. In particular, the NDP supports developments which accommodate a range of occupiers by size and type.</p> <p>Policy 15 supports the provision of new affordable homes situated within the vicinity of the Soho Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>Overall, policies 4 and 15 contribute to optimising residential units on new developments. Given that Soho sits within the Central Activities Zone, it is considered that commercial activities are prioritised. Despite this, the NDP does give careful consideration to proposals of mixed-use development and does ensure that affordable housing needs will be met within Soho.</p>
Policy S15	Meeting Housing Needs	Yes N/A	<p>To contribute to Westminster's housing needs, housing developments in Soho will need to provide an appropriate mix of units in terms of size, type and affordable housing provision.</p> <p>The Soho NDP does not seek to allocate housing, nor does it establish a housing quantum/need within the Soho Neighbourhood Area. As such, Policy S15 of the City Plan should be regarded as the primary policy consideration when making planning decisions within the area. Due to this, it is considered that the Soho NDP is in general conformity with the City Plan.</p>
Policy S16	Affordable Housing	Yes	Policy 15 requires affordable housing to be developed within 'the vicinity' of the Soho

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
		Policy 15	Neighbourhood Area. This aligns to policies set out in the Local Plan and City Plan, where the City Plan states that affordable housing should be provided on-site within developments, or, alternatively, off-site within the vicinity.
Policy S17	Gypsies and Travellers	N/A	This policy is not relevant to the Soho Neighbourhood Plan Area.
Policy S18	Commercial Development	<p>Yes</p> <p>Policies 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8</p>	<p>The Soho NDP promotes the creation of new commercial development, where appropriate, to support the Core Central Activities Zone, Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area, West End Special Policy Area and economy of the area and London.</p> <p>Policy 4 supports proposals for mixed-use developments. Policy 5 supports developments which do not detract from local character. Policies 6 and 7 support commercial development and office developments which provide flexible workspaces suitable for SME's and other small-scale businesses. In addition, Policy 8 supports commercial developments which include active uses within the ground floor accommodation.</p> <p>The above policies therefore conform with the City Plan's policy on encouraging commercial development, particularly within the Core Central Activities Zone.</p>
Policy S19	Inclusive Local Economy and Employment	<p>Yes</p> <p>Policies: N/A</p>	<p>Where appropriate, new development will be required by the WCC City Plan to contribute towards initiatives that provide employment and development for local residents to ensure that local people and communities benefit from opportunities which are generated from development.</p> <p>The Soho NDP does not have a direct policy relating to Policy S19 so for the purposes of development management the WCC plan policy should be enacted alongside the NP.</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy S20	Offices and Other B1 Floorspace	Yes Policies 4 and 7	<p>The Soho NDP promotes the creation of new office space and B1 development, where appropriate, to support the Core Central Activities Zone and economy of the area and London. The NDP recognises that offices and B1 floorspace will be directed to the Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area which partly covers the Soho Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>The Soho NDP supports proposals for office development, provided that they are designed to provide flexibly sized workspaces and accommodate a wide variety of business occupiers. The policy adds that large floorplates should be avoided. It is therefore considered that the NDP is in conformity with the City Plan.</p>
Policy S21	Retail	Yes Policies 4, 6, 13	<p>As outlined within the City Plan, Soho includes two international shopping centres – Regent Street and New Bond Street.</p> <p>The Soho NDP supports development proposals for mixed-use developments, where they demonstrate that they are flexible workspaces for SME's and other small-scale businesses.</p> <p>Furthermore, proposals for new A1 use cafes which are in direct physical proximity to residential must fully apply the 'agent of change' principle and must demonstrate that any adverse impacts on residential amenity will be mitigated.</p> <p>With the above policies in mind, it is therefore considered that the Soho NDP aligns with Westminster's aim of protecting existing A1 retail uses within Westminster.</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy S22	Tourism, Arts and Culture	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p>Policies 1, 5, 9, 12, 14. 29</p>	<p>Known globally as a cultural and entertainment hub, Soho is an appealing destination for tourists. A diverse mixture of history, culture and entertainment venues helps create this global appeal.</p> <p>With the above in mind, the Soho NDP aligns to the City Plan's policy on protecting existing tourist attractions. NDP Policy 1 recognises the diverse architectural heritage of the area, stating that development which protects the character of the Soho Conservation Area will be supported. Furthermore, Policy 5 encourages the creation of an aesthetically pleasing environment for tourists and the local community alike through the avoidance of uniform shop fronts. Policy 9 adds to this aesthetic vision by requiring public art to reflect the culture and heritage of Soho. The Soho NDP seeks to continue its reputation as a nightlife hotspot through protecting existing music venues (D2) and supporting new live music developments (provided they are considered low impact). To address problems associated with the nightlife economy e.g. street fouling, the NDP supports development proposals which incorporate additional public toilet provision. Policy 29 eases wayfinding within the area through the facilitation of better wayfinding within Soho.</p> <p>Overall, it can be considered that the City Plan's policy on promoting new art, cultural uses, and tourist attractions within the Core Central Activities Zone fully conforms with the Soho NDP.</p>
Policy S23	Hotels and Conference Facilities	N/A	No policy within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S23 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.
Policy S24	Entertainment Uses	Yes	Soho is well-known for its nightlife. Recognising its place as a main contributor to

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
		Policies 12 and 14	<p>London's 24-hour economy, the Soho NDP seeks to protect exiting entertainment uses.</p> <p>The City Plan makes it clear that new entertainment uses will need to demonstrate they are appropriate in terms of size of use and scale of activity, relationship to existing clusters of entertainment uses. They must also not adversely impact residential amenity, health and safety, local environmental quality and the character and function of the area. Policy 12 of the NDP fully conforms to the City Plan by stating that new proposals for music venues will be supported provided they are low impact. In addition, Policy 14 seeks to reduce street fouling through supporting development proposals which incorporate public toilet provision.</p>
Policy S25	Heritage	<p>Yes</p> <p>Policies 1, 2 and 22</p>	<p>Policy 1 of the Soho NDP supports development proposals which protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area. This policy also states that distinctive features such as public rear yards, courts, back streets and mews must all be protected.</p> <p>The Soho NDP also recognises the sensitivity of the historic environment of Soho through not permitting tall buildings which will have adverse impacts on Soho Square, Golden Square, St. Anne's Gardens or other heritage assets (including listed buildings or local buildings or structures of merit).</p> <p>Where possible, existing buildings will be evaluated to identify potential options for retrofitting. Retrofitting measures will improve the sustainability of existing buildings.</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
			It is considered that these policies are in direct conformity with the aspirations of the City Plan.
Policy S26	Views	Yes Policy 2	In line with the City Plan, views in Soho will be protected from inappropriate development. Specifically, Policy 2 sets criteria which must be met to ensure that proposals for tall buildings do not have adverse effects on key heritage assets, such as Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne's Gardens.
Policy S27	Buildings and Uses of International and National Importance	Yes Policy 1, 2 and 3	<p>Policies 1, 2 and 3 of the NDP support proposals which protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area through resisting proposals for tall buildings which would have an adverse impact on Golden Square, Soho Square or St Anne's Gardens – or other heritage assets (listed buildings or local buildings of merit). In addition, Policy 3 states that proposals should complement the existing architectural character.</p> <p>The above policies conform with the City Plan, through protecting buildings of international and/or national importance (including important uses encouraged within the Core Central Activities Zone).</p>
Policy S28	Design	Yes Policies 20, 21, 22	The City Plan requires development to reduce energy use and emissions and ensure the reduction, reuse or recycling of resources and materials. In accordance with the above, the Soho NDP clearly upholds the principle of sustainable development through policies which seek to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality and ensuring development proposals incorporate measures designed to conserve heat and energy. Policy 22 states that major development must evaluate the potential options to retrofit and improve the sustainability of existing buildings.

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
Policy CM28.1	Basement Development	Yes Policy 3	In line with City Plan regulations set out in Policy CM28.1, Policy 3 of the NDP provides generic policy guidance, stating that development proposals should reflect prevailing character [...] such as the individual 'building by building' plot widths and scale of the building they replace in order to complement the existing architectural character.
Policy S29	Health, Safety and Well-being	Yes Policies 16, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30	<p>A suite of policies from the Soho NDP align to the City Plan's Policy S29 (which seeks to ensure development secures a healthy and safe environment).</p> <p>Policies 16 and 19 seek to reduce air pollutants and carbon emissions through requiring new residential development to be car -free (except for disabled persons parking), in addition to minimising delivery and servicing by vehicles through the completion of a Delivery and Servicing Plan for all major developments. Policy 20 seeks to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality.</p> <p>The impacts of major development will be mitigated through policies which seek to adapt the Poland Street and Brewer Street car parks to micro-consolidation centres.</p> <p>Policies 24, 25 and 26 – which: promote the creation of new pocket parks, require proposals to provide the highest feasible level of greening and enhance urban greening measures at Ramilles Street and Dufour's Place, all conform to the City Plan's aim to support opportunities for healthier lifestyle choices.</p> <p>The Soho NDP also supports the Healthy Street Approach through the facilitation of pedestrian movement, securing new pedestrian routes,</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
			improving way-finding signage and providing additional cycle parking stands.
Policy S30	Flood Risk	Yes Policy 27	Policy 27 requires all development proposals to reduce the risk to flash flooding, whilst ensuring that public realm is well drained using sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs), wherever possible. This aligns with all relevant legislation and, specifically, mirrors City Plan Policy S30, which stipulates that all development proposals should take flood risk into account and new development should reduce the risk of flooding.
Policy S31	Air Quality	Yes Policies 16, 19, 20, 23,	<p>The Soho NDP supports the WCC objective of reducing air pollution. Policies 16 and 19 seek to reduce air pollutants and carbon emissions through requiring new residential development to be car -free (except for disabled persons parking), in addition to minimising delivery and servicing by vehicles through the completion of a Delivery and Servicing Plan for all major developments.</p> <p>Policy 20 requires development proposals to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality and Policy 23 seeks to adapt the Poland Street and Brewer Street car parks to micro-consolidation centres.</p>
Policy S32	Noise	Yes Policies 12, 19, 24	<p>Aspects of noise control have been incorporated into policies 12, 19 and 24 of the Soho NDP. Central to these policies, a key objective of the NDP is to enhance the attractiveness of the area for residents by reducing nuisance, noise [...].</p> <p>Specifically, policy 12 requires live music venues to be low impact and to comply with policy 34C of the draft Local Plan in terms of noise. Policy 19 requires major development to include a Delivery and Servicing Plan to show how noise from deliveries will be mitigated or</p>

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
			<p>avoided. Policy 24 requires new pocket parks to provide a robust management plan to ensure adverse noise nuisances are mitigated.</p> <p>The above policies directly conform with WCC Policy S32 through the minimisation and containment of noise and vibration within developments and the protection of valued open spaces for their relative tranquillity.</p>
Policy S33	Delivering Infrastructure and Planning Obligations	Yes Policies 26 and 30	In line with the City Plan, policies 26 and 30 support proposals for public open spaces and cycle parking facilities which are achieved through CIL or voluntary planning provision. This accords with the City Plan, which states that WCC will identify infrastructure and will ensure that it is funded through CIL or planning obligations - where this complies with relevant legislation.
Policy S34	Social and Community Infrastructure	Yes Policies 24, 25 and 26	<p>The Soho NDP iterates that green infrastructure can promote better health and well-being. The City Plan regards the provision of social and community facilities as integral to supporting sustainable communities.</p> <p>In accordance with WCC, the NDP supports the creation of new pocket parks, requires development proposals to provide the highest feasible level of green to buildings and supports the enhancement of urban greening measures at Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place.</p> <p>As the above policies promote new social and community facilities, as well as protecting and enhancing existing key facilities, it is considered that the NDP accords with the City Plan.</p>
Policy S35	Open Space	Yes	In line with the City Plan, the NDP includes a suite of policies which seek to increase green

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
		Policies 24,25 and 26	<p>infrastructure and improve public realm, in line with NDP objectives.</p> <p>Policies 24, 25 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs, require development proposals to provide the highest feasible level of green to buildings and support the enhancement of urban greening measures at Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place.</p> <p>Together, the above policies conform with Policy S35, as all seek to further protect and enhance Westminster's open space network.</p>
Policy S36	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation	N/A	No policy within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S36 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.
Policy S37	Westminster's Blue-Ribbon Network	N/A	No policy within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S37 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.
Policy S38	Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure	Yes Policies 24,25 and 26	Together with the creation of new pocket parks on roofs (Policy 24), the Soho NDP supports the incorporation of urban greening measures on development proposals (Policy 25), in addition to the enhancement of urban green at two sites – Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place (Policy 26). As such, the Soho NDP conforms with the City Plan, which stipulates that biodiversity and green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced throughout Westminster.
Policy S39	Decentralised Energy Networks	Yes Policy 20	Although decentralised energy networks are not explicitly mentioned within the policy wording, Policy 20 of the NDP does assert that design proposals must maximise opportunities for on-site renewable generation which emit less pollution and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In doing so, the NDP conforms to Policy S39 through the prioritisation and requirement of major development proposals to provide site-wide decentralised energy generation that minimises greenhouse gas emissions – this

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
			applies to cases where major developments cannot link to and extend existing heat and energy network.
Policy S40	Renewable Energy	Yes Policy 21	As set out in Policy 21, all development proposals should be designed to conserve heat and energy and reduce carbon emissions. This accords with City Plan Policy S40, which requires all major development to maximise on-site renewable energy generation to achieve at least 20% reduction of carbon dioxide emissions where appropriate. A key theme of the Soho NDP is to implement measures which contribute to the reduction of the urban heat island effect in Soho and the wider Westminster area.
Policy S41	Pedestrian Movement and Sustainable Transport	Yes Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30	A key objective of the Soho NDP is to create a modal shift towards walking and cycling and promoting car-free living. Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30 seek to facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, in addition to securing new pedestrian routes, facilitating better wayfinding signage and providing additional cycle parking. The above policies directly align to Policy S41 of the City Plan which prioritises pedestrian movement and supports sustainable transport options within Westminster.
Policy S42	Servicing and Deliveries	Yes Policies 19 and 23	Issues relating to deliveries and servicing is a key challenge for Soho. In line with the City Plan, Policy 19 of the NDP stipulates that major developments will reduce deliveries and servicing by vehicles using fossil fuels – adding that a Delivery and Servicing Plan must show how adverse effects from deliveries have been mitigated and avoided. In addition, proposals at the Brewer Street and Poland Street car parks must show consideration for adapting and reusing the sites as micro-consolidation centres.
Policy S43	Major Transport Infrastructure	Yes	Policies 29 and 30, which seek to facilitate better wayfinding signage and provide additional cycle parking align to two specific

City Plan Policy No.	City Plan Policy Title	Is NDP Policy in 'General Conformity'? YES/NO	Comment
		Policies 29 and 30	<p>aspects Policy S43 of the City Plan, which support increases in cycle parking and improving wayfinding within Westminster.</p> <p>No other policies within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S43 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.</p>
Policy S44	Sustainable Waste Management	Yes Policy 31	<p>Policy 31 of the NDP sets out criteria for waste and recycling facilities in new developments. Specifically, criteria within the NDP states that separate waste and recycling facilities must be provided within new developments, and adequate space must be provided for waste and recycling for designated neighbouring small commercial units, as well as for development which includes food and drink retailing.</p> <p>As pointed out within the NDP, the above policies comply with Policy S44 of the City Plan, which requires the minimisation of waste and an increase in recycling and reuse, as part of a wider aim to contribute to the London Plan's waste reduction targets.</p>
Policy S45	Flood-related Infrastructure	N/A	No policy within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S45 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.
Policy S46	Thames Tunnel	N/A	No policy within the NDP seek to add or amend to Policy S46 of the City Plan, nor are they in conflict with the aspirations of this policy.
Policy S47	The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Yes All policies	All policies within the Soho NDP are considered in line with delivering sustainable development for the reasons outlined throughout this statement.

6. Strategic Environment Assessment / Habitats Regulation Assessment

EU Obligations

- 6.1. The Soho Neighbourhood Development Plan does not include any policies or proposals that will result in any significant environmental impacts, and does not allocate land or development, and therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the plan is not necessary.
- 6.2. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan area does not include any designated important habitats or species, as identified in the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives, and so an assessment under these regulations is not necessary.
- 6.3. Other European directives, such as the Water Framework Directive, the Air Quality Directive or the Water Directive, have also been considered in developing the Soho Neighbourhood Plan. As no major development sites have been allocated in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan it has been considered necessary to provide any separate assessments under any other European Directive.
- 6.4. Westminster City Council (on behalf of the Soho Neighbourhood Forum) has undertaken a screening opinion and determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required as the plan will not have any significant environmental impacts. This was confirmed in consultation with the statutory consultees. A copy of the screening is included in Appendix B of this Basic Conditions Statement.
- 6.5. In summary, the Soho Neighbourhood Plan is compliant with EU Obligations.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

- 6.6. Although SEA of the Neighbourhood Plan is not required, it is considered best practice to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan. This is not a requirement and, as such an Appraisal that is proportionate to the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared. This includes commentary against the seventeen objectives established within the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) (August 2013) prepared by WCC in relation to the testing of the Westminster City Plan. This is presented in Table 9 below.
- 6.7. The Soho NDP has taken account of the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in terms of how its policies will deliver a blend of environmental, economic and social benefits for Soho. This assessment clearly demonstrates that the Soho NDP is in conformity with each of these objectives and therefore the Westminster City Plan and London Plan.

Table 9: Conformity of neighbourhood plan policies with Westminster IIA Objectives

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
01.	To create cohesive, inclusive and safe communities.	<p>A range of policies within the NDP seek to promote healthy and inclusive communities in Soho.</p> <p>Policies 3 and 8 require development proposals to reflect prevailing character and encourage active ground floor uses in new commercial developments. These policies help to instill good design principles into all new development proposals, ensuring that streets are legible and safe.</p> <p>Policy 24, 25 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs and the incorporation of urban greening measures on development proposals, in addition to the enhancement of urban green at two sites (Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place). The protection and enhancement of green infrastructure is key in creating a healthy environment for the local community.</p> <p>The local community will also benefit from policies designed to promote sustainable transport modes within the area. Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30 seek to facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, in addition to securing new pedestrian routes, facilitating better wayfinding signage and providing additional cycle parking. The NDP's focus on safer and carbon-neutral transport modes will enhance accessibility in Soho and the wider area, which, in turn, will help create a more cohesive community.</p>
02.	To reduce crime and fear of crime.	<p>Crime is a complex issue which is often influenced by a vast variety of interconnected urban influences. To help create safer places, Policy 8 of the NDP supports active ground floor uses in commercial developments. This will help to promote higher footfall in streets, ensuring eyes on the street at all times. With a particular focus on the adverse impacts associated with Soho's night-time economy, Policy 13 requires food and beverage developments to demonstrate that they will not adversely impact existing residential amenity. It is therefore considered that the above policies will help to drive down local crime rates through the application of good place-making principles within the Soho NDP.</p>
03.	To ensure provision of appropriate housing types to reduce homelessness;	<p>The Soho NDP does not allocate sites for housing, nor does it provide indicative housing figures for the area. The Plan does however recognise the need to accommodate local identified housing needs. This is highlighted in Policy 17, which states that</p>

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
	reduce overcrowded households and meet the demand for affordable housing and family sized units.	<p>development proposals for new housing should focus on smaller one- or two- bedroom sized units.</p> <p>Policy 15 states that affordable housing provision may only be provided within the vicinity of the Soho Neighbourhood Area. It adds that affordable housing provision should align to Local Plan requirements.</p> <p>Given that the NDP’s policies respond to local identified housing need, it is considered that appropriate housing types will be provided in Soho.</p>
04.	To promote and improve health and well-being.	<p>Policy 20 requires design proposals to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality through measures such as green infrastructure, delivery and servicing plans and methods of on-site renewable energy generation. This policy will help to enhance the health and well-being of the local community.</p> <p>The requirements and improvements of policies 24, 25 and 26 to protect and enhance green infrastructure, public spaces and the public realm will create areas of relaxation and tranquillity and will promote better well-being.</p> <p>Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30 seek to facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, in addition to securing new pedestrian routes, facilitating better wayfinding signage and providing additional cycle parking. These policies will encourage the use of healthier transport modes within Soho and the wider area.</p>
05.	To reduce greenhouse emissions and support climate change adaptation.	<p>Policy 21 states that all development proposals should incorporate measures designed to conserve heat and energy and reduce carbon emissions. In addition, a key objective is to increase green infrastructure and improve the public realm within Soho. This will be achieved through policies 24, 25 and 26 which seek to protect and enhance Soho’s open spaces and green infrastructure. Specifically, Policy 25 states that proposals should provide the highest feasible level of greening to the building and its curtilage. Incorporating green infrastructure will help to mitigate the impacts of climate change.</p>
06.	To reduce use of limited natural	In recognition of the urban heat island effect within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), the NDP states that all development

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
	resources e.g. water, fossil fuels, quarried materials, wood.	<p>proposals should incorporate measures designed to conserve heat and energy and reduce carbon emissions. This measure will help to reduce energy waste, which, in turn, will help to reduce Soho's usage of fossil fuels.</p> <p>Policy 22 also states that major development must evaluate the potential options to retrofit and improve the sustainability of existing buildings before considering redevelopment. This has implications for natural resource use in Soho, as retrofitting buildings implies that less natural resources will be used in comparison to those required for a full rebuild.</p>
07.	To reduce flood risk, promote SUDs, protect surface and groundwater quality.	Green infrastructure helps to mitigate potential flood risk. The NDP includes a number of policies relating to green infrastructure. Specifically, Policies 24, 25 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs and the incorporation of urban greening measures on development proposals, in addition to the enhancement of urban green at two sites (Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place). These measures will provide natural drainage which will reduce surface water runoff risks and ground saturation within Soho.
08.	To protect, enhance and create environments that encourage and support biodiversity.	Policies 24, 25 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs and the incorporation of urban greening measures on development proposals, in addition to the enhancement of urban green at two sites (Ramillies Street and Dufour's Place). These policies will help to protect and enhance biodiversity in existing open spaces. Urban greening measures will also help to strengthen existing ecological networks.
09.	To improve Air Quality.	<p>Improving air quality is a key objective of the Soho NDP. This will be directly addressed through Policy 20, which requires design proposals to maximise measures which contribute to improving air quality through measures such as green infrastructure, delivery and servicing plans and methods of on-site renewable energy generation.</p> <p>In addition, a number of alternative policies will also contribute to the NDP's Air Quality objective. In particular, policies which seek to create a transport modal shift to cycling and walking (Policies 27, 28 and 30) will encourage sustainable transport modes which will in turn reduce car dependency within Soho. The implications of these policies are far-reaching and will help yield better Air Quality.</p> <p>A key aspiration of Policy 25 is to implement urban greening. This is considered to contribute to improving air quality.</p>

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
10.	To reduce noise and impact of noise.	<p>Policy 13 states that food and beverage development proposals (uses A1 cafes, A3, A4, A5 and D2) which are in direct physical proximity to residential use must demonstrate that they will not have adverse impacts on residential amenity which cannot be mitigated. Impacts include anti-social behaviour and noise.</p> <p>During construction work, major development is required to protect and enhance residential amenity during the construction and fitting out stages. A Construction Management Plan (CMP) will be required (under Policy 18) to demonstrate adverse impacts on residential amenity have been considered, avoided and/or mitigated.</p> <p>Policy 19 stipulates that major development will protect amenity through reducing and minimising deliveries and servicing by vehicles using fossil fuels. A Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) must be shown on completion of the development to ensure adverse impacts from deliveries (e.g. noise) have been mitigated or avoided.</p>
11.	To reduce need to travel, the use of private motorised vehicular transport as well as encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.	<p>The NDP promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport. Namely, Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30 seek to facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, in addition to securing new pedestrian routes, facilitating better wayfinding signage and providing additional cycle parking. Together, the above policies help to reduce dependency on private motorised vehicular transport, thus promoting healthier means of travel.</p>
12.	To reduce waste production and increase recycling, recovery and re-use of waste.	<p>Soho contains world-renowned food, beverage, hospitality and entertainment businesses. An objective of the Soho NDP is to reduce the amounts of waste left on the streets by encouraging better facilities for recycling and waste management within premises and supporting the increased provision of dedicated food waste recycling. This is supported by Policy 31, which sets out criteria for waste and recycling provision in new developments. Namely, it stipulates that development must: a) provide separate waste and recycling facilities within the boundary of the development, b) requires major commercial development to provide extra waste and recycling storage capacity (within the development) for designated neighbouring small commercial units within a 100m radius (provided it's within the City of Westminster boundary),</p>

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		and c), food and drink retailing units must provide sufficient space to store food waste as a separate recycling category.
13.	To protect and enhance the historic environment and architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage.	Soho is a Conservation Area and is well-known for its distinctive layout and architecture. The NDP recognises the quality and importance of protecting these historic assets through Policies 1, 2 and 3. Policy 1 supports development proposals which protect, respect and enhance the character of the Soho Conservation Area. Policy 2 limits tall buildings to areas which will not adversely impact Golden Square, Soho Square and St Anne’s Gardens, or other heritage assets including listed buildings or structures of merit. Infill development must respect surrounding building heights. Policy 3 stipulates that development proposals should reflect prevailing character, building heights and townscape of the site and surrounding area. The above policies will help achieve the objectives of the NDP, which seek to preserve, enhance and promote the heritage and culture of Soho.
14.	To enhance public realm and street improvements.	<p>A key objective of the NDP is to promote sustainable development and improve the public realm. Public realm improvements can provide multi-beneficial outcomes to the local community, such as improving health and well-being.</p> <p>In recognition of this, Policies 27, 28, 29 and 30 seek to facilitate pedestrian movement in all development proposals, in addition to securing new pedestrian routes, facilitating better wayfinding signage and providing additional cycle parking.</p>
15.	To protect, enhance and seek opportunities to increase open space.	Policy 24, 25 and 26 support the creation of new pocket parks on roofs and the incorporation of urban greening measures on development proposals, in addition to the enhancement of urban greening at two sites (Ramillies Street and Dufour’s Place). It is considered that the above policies help to protect and increase open spaces within Soho.
16.	To ensure equality of opportunities, improve local opportunities and support sustainable economic growth throughout Westminster.	<p>Sustainable economic growth is underpinned by the principles of equality and diversity. This IIA Objective is captured by a suite of policies within the NDP.</p> <p>Policy 4 supports proposals for mixed-use developments which include a mix of occupiers. Policy 6 supports commercial or mixed-use development proposals which demonstrate that they are flexible workspaces suitable for SME’s or other small-scale businesses. Similarly, Policy 7 states that office</p>

Westminster IIA Objectives		Soho Neighbourhood Plan- policy response
		development proposals should be designed to provide flexibly sized workspaces.
17.	To maintain economic diversity and support sustainable economic growth.	<p>Policy 4 supports proposals for mixed-use developments which include a mix of occupiers. Policy 6 supports commercial or mixed-use development proposals which demonstrate that they are flexible workspaces suitable for SME's or other small-scale businesses. Similarly, Policy 7 states that office development proposals should be designed to provide flexibly sized workspaces.</p> <p>The above policies help to accommodate a variety of businesses and individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds. This will help to establish a diverse range of businesses which can drive sustainable economic growth throughout Soho.</p>

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. This document demonstrates that the Basic Conditions, as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Soho Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein.
- 7.2. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Soho Neighbourhood Plan complies with the Basic Conditions and, subject to any modifications recommended by the Examiner, should proceed to referendum.

Appendix 1: Soho Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice and Soho Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice (for re-designation)



City of Westminster

Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice

Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 9 Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011) provides a local planning authority the power to designate an area as a neighbourhood area.

Under The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Part 2 Regulation 7 a local planning authority must publish on their website, and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the designation to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area;

- *the name of the neighbourhood area*
- *a map which identifies the area; and*
- *the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation.*

Neighbourhood area application

Name of neighbourhood area	Soho
Name of applicant	Soho Society
Representation period	25 th June to 3 rd August 2012

Neighbourhood area designation

Notice is hereby given that Westminster City Council, through a decision made on 5 April 2013 by its Cabinet Member for The Built Environment, has refused the neighbourhood area as applied for but has designated the area east of Kingly Street/Warwick Street as the Soho neighbourhood area and has also designated it as a business area. The boundary of the area is shown edged red on the map below.



Reasons for decision:

This decision enables the designation of a more tightly delineated Soho neighbourhood area that does not include the larger-scale street blocks fronting onto Regent Street. This boundary is also commensurate with the western boundary of the Soho Conservation Area. The eastern side of Regent Street is not considered to be characteristic of the Soho neighbourhood. Location within the City Council's designated Central Activities Zone (as designated by the adopted Core Strategy) as well as current land use statistics denote that the area should be designated as a neighbourhood business area.

RAMacQueen

Rosemarie MacQueen
Strategic Director Built Environment

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF DECISION

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF SOHO NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Notice is hereby given that the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

Summary of Decision

That the Soho Neighbourhood Forum be re-designated for a further period of 5 years and a formal designation notice be published under delegated authority by the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications.

Reasons for Decision

The City Council is required to assess whether the *purpose* of the neighbourhood forum reflects (in general terms) the character of the area. The application submitted by the Forum for re-designation states that the Forum was specifically established to "promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Soho Neighbourhood Area (SNF) and exercise any powers which attach to the SNF as set out in the Localism Act 2011". The Soho Neighbourhood Forum is currently in an advance stage of preparation of a neighbourhood plan and therefore the main purpose for the existence of the Soho Neighbourhood Forum is stronger now than when it was initially designated.

Consultation on the re-designation of the Soho Neighbourhood Forum did not attract any objections or competing applications.

**Stuart Love, Chief Executive,
Westminster City Hall,
64 Victoria Street
LONDON SW1E 6QP**

Publication Date: 26 September 2019

Implementation Date: 26 September 2019

Reference: CMfPS&P/4/2019/20

Appendix 2: SEA / HRA Screening Determination

Soho
Neighbourhood Plan
2019-2040

Strategic Environment Assessment
Screening Report
and
Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report
February 2020

Prepared by Westminster City Council for Soho Neighbourhood
Forum



City of Westminster

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1. Introduction

1.1. Legislative background

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations, including under the Habitats Directive and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.

The Habitats Directive is transposed into English law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and seeks to avoid negative impacts on European protected sites.

The SEA Directive has been transposed into English law by the Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (hereafter referred to as the SEA Regulations), and seeks to make sure that the environmental implications of a plan or programme are taken into account.

1.2. HRA requirements for neighbourhood plans

The purpose of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is to identify whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The first step of the appropriate assessment process is a screening assessment, which' purpose is to screen out if any significant effect is likely for any European site, based on objective information. Where there is a risk of a significant effect on a European site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, then there will be a requirement to progress to an Appropriate Assessment.

1.3. SEA requirements for neighbourhood plans

Draft neighbourhood plan proposals are required to be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, which is commonly referred to as a "screening" exercise. If likely significant environmental effects are identified, a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be required in accordance with the SEA regulations.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides examples of when a strategic environmental assessment may be required:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

If the requirement for a Habitat Regulations Assessment is identified, then a plan will normally also require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

2. Summary of the neighbourhood plan

Name of the neighbourhood plan	Soho Neighbourhood Plan ¹
Geographic coverage of the plan	<p>The Soho Neighbourhood Area covers an area in the south east of Westminster, which includes Oxford Street as its northern boundary, the properties east of Regent Street as its western boundary, Westminster's boundary with Camden to the east along Charing Cross Road, and Shaftesbury Avenue to the south.</p> <p>London Underground stations Piccadilly Circus and Tottenham Court Road mark the southern and north-eastern extents of the area.</p>
Vision of the plan	<p>The vision of the plan is as follows:</p> <p>'The Soho Neighbourhood Area is and will continue to be a unique and important part of London with a rich and vibrant heritage. This Plan will support sustainable development, which reinforces Soho's reputation for creativity, diversity and tolerance. These characteristics are demonstrated in many ways, for example: through the range of businesses, from sole trader to multiples and household names; through its varied and strong residential communities and through its diverse cultural and entertainment offer. The Plan will protect this diverse mix and also enable growth, which sustainably enhances what is already a complexly developed area.'</p>
Key issues/objectives	<p>The plan identifies 8 objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To preserve, enhance, and promote the heritage and culture of Soho to keep its underlying spirit. 2. To support and enhance the range and diversity of businesses in Soho particularly the creative industries and other business clusters by ensuring that there continues to be a continuing supply of flexibly sized accommodation. 3. To support investment which respects the nature of the conservation area, generally retaining its character and human scale. 4. To support the continued local of live music venues in the area and ensure good management in all forms of entertainment, leisure and cultural activity which minimises any adverse impacts on residents and other users. 5. To recognise the demand for and to support growth in the residential community by seeking to ensure that the housing required by WCC is located within Soho wherever possible with an appropriately sized mix of units and to enhance the attractiveness of the area for residents by reducing nuisance, noise, crime and anti-social behaviour. 6. To promote sustainable development, improve air quality, increase green infrastructure and improve the public realm. 7. To support a modal shift towards walking and cycling, promote car free living and freight consolidation to help reduce traffic and congestion. 8. To reduce the amounts waste left on the street by encouraging better facilities for recycling and waste management within premises and supporting the increased provision of dedicated food waste recycling.

¹ Draft plan available at: <http://planforsoho.org>

Summary of policies

The plan includes 31 policies set out in 5 sections, which are summarised below:

Section 1: Culture and Heritage

Policy 1: Development Proposals in the Soho Conservation Area encourages development proposals that protect, respect and enhance the character. It seeks to protect and enhance public rear yards, courts, back streets and mews.

Policy 2: Proposals for Tall Buildings seeks to prevent adverse impacts on townscape of three named open spaces, heritage assets and designated strategic views.

Policy 3: Maintaining Local Character seeks to reflect prevailing character, building heights and townscape of individual development sites and the surrounding area.

Policy 4: Mixed Use Developments seeks to provide a mix of occupiers and apply the 'agent of change' principle as set out in the new London Plan.

Policy 5: Shopfronts and Ground Floor Frontages seeks to avoid uniformity in shopfront design and encourage colour and variety.

Section 2: Commercial Activity

Policy 6: Premises for Small Businesses seeks to ensure suitable SME space is provided in commercial and mixed-use development.

Policy 7: New Office Developments seeks to provide flexible office accommodation to support a range of business users and avoid large floorplate single-occupier developments.

Policy 8: Creating Active Ground Floor Uses in New Commercial Developments seeks to create active uses at ground floor level, avoiding under-used space.

Policy 9: Providing Public Art to Reflect Local Culture and Heritage seeks to ensure that, where public art is required, it reflects the culture and heritage of Soho and wherever possible is created using Soho-based creatives.

Policy 10: Providing Accommodation for the Creative Industries seeks to ensure that lettable space in commercial and mixed-use developments is designed to offer a variety of sizes of workspace for the creative industries.

Policy 11: Private Members' Clubs resists the loss of existing facilities and encourages new ones where appropriate.

Section 3: Entertainment and Night-time Economy

Policy 12: Live Music Venues seeks to protect existing D2 live music venues and encourages new facilities where they are acceptable in terms of amenity impact.

Policy 13: Food and Beverage Developments to Protect Existing Residential Amenity seeks to ensure that proposals for A1 cafes, A3, A4, A5 and D2 uses which are in direct physical proximity to residential fully apply the 'agent of change' principle and do not have adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Policy 14: Provision of Public Toilets supports development proposals that incorporate public toilet provision.

Section 4: Housing

Policy 15: Provision of Affordable Housing seeks to define the 'vicinity of development' as being within the Soho Neighbourhood Area. This would be applied where developers cannot provide affordable housing on-site.

Policy 16: Car Free Residential Development seeks car-free development and to restrict the right of occupiers to apply for on-street parking permits.

Policy 17: Residential Space Standards seeks to focus residential development on one- and two-bedroom units, not to exceed 138sq m in size.

Policy 18: Maintaining Residential Amenity During Construction Works seeks to protect amenity during the construction phase and requires Construction Management Plans to address residential amenity issues.

Policy 19: Delivery and Servicing Plans for New Development requires major developments to submit a Delivery and Servicing Plan addressing amenity and environmental issues.

Section 5: Sustainable Development and the Environment

Policy 20: Improving Air Quality seeks to maximise improvements to air quality through design solutions.

Policy 21: Reducing Energy seeks design solutions that conserve heat and energy, reduce carbon emissions and avoid energy waste.

Policy 22: Refurbishment and Retrofitting of Existing Buildings requires major developments to have considered refurbishment and retrofitting of buildings before considering redevelopment. Retrofitting measures are strongly supported.

Policy 23: Delivery Consolidation Points requires any development proposals at two named sites to have considered the potential for adaptation and reuse for all or part of the buildings as micro-consolidation centres.

Policy 24: New Pocket Parks encourages roof gardens provided they have a robust management plan considering amenity issues.

Policy 25: Sustainable Green Infrastructure on Buildings requires development proposals to provide the highest feasible level of greening to buildings and curtilage.

Policy 26: Improving Public Open Space encourages proposals that will contribute to the improvement and greening of two named locations.

Policy 27: Pedestrian Movement in Development Proposals requires all development proposals to be designed to facilitate pedestrian movement and gives a series of suggested design measures.

	<p><i>Policy 28: Securing New Pedestrian Routes</i> encourages public access improvements through new development.</p> <p><i>Policy 29: Property Numbering and Wayfinding Signage</i> requires facades and entrances to clearly display a street number to improve wayfinding.</p> <p><i>Policy 30: Cycle Parking</i> encourages new development to provide on-street cycle stands.</p> <p><i>Policy 31: Waste and Recycling Facilities in New Developments</i> requires development to provide separate waste and recycling facilities within the boundary of the development. Major developments should also provide additional facilities for designated neighbouring users within a 100-metre radius. Development including the provision of food and drink must provide sufficient space to store food waste as a separate recycling category.</p>
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3. HRA Screening

3.1. Potential impacts on European sites from proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan

There are no European sites in Westminster. For this assessment four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and two Special Protection Areas outside of the borough have been identified for consideration in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. These are:

- Wimbledon Common SAC
- Richmond Park SAC
- Epping Forest SAC
- Essex Estuaries SAC
- Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area and Ramsar
- Lee Valley Special Protection Area and Ramsar

Epping Forest SAC is located 11km from the plan area, and the Thames Estuary Marshes SPA and Ramsar site is located 37km from the plan area. These two sites are considered to be too far from the plan area to be given further consideration.

Westminster City Council has conducted a screening exercise for the whole of Westminster as part of the revision of its City Plan which concludes²:

'No likely significant impacts on Wimbledon Common SAC and Lee Valley Special Protection Area and Ramsar have been identified, as Westminster is outside of the core recreational catchment of these sites. No likely significant impacts on Richmond Park SAC have been identified as development in Westminster is unlikely to impact on habitats on the site.'

Overall, no likely significant impacts on any European sites have been identified, either alone or in combination. Therefore, no amendments to the City Plan are required and it will not be necessary to progress to the Appropriate Assessment stage.'

The Soho Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any proposals that impose a potential impact pathway to any European sites. The area is outside of the recreational catchment of the sites identified above and it is unlikely that any policies, plans or projects in the plan will result in an impact on traffic movement to or from any of these sites. The conclusions of the screening for the City Plan 2019-2040 therefore also apply to the proposals in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan.

In terms of further 'in combination' effects, consideration needs to be given to the future arrival of Crossrail at Tottenham Court Road and the transformation of the Oxford Street District. These projects will improve the accessibility of the area from across London and the wider South East, and improve the public realm and movement in the area. Due to the scale and nature of the proposals in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan, it is unlikely that any proposals in the plan result in any significant effects to European sites in combination with these projects.

3.2. Screening outcome

It is concluded that no full HRA needs to be undertaken as there are no likely effects on European sites. This is consistent with the outcomes of the HRA screening for the Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 and the draft new London Plan.

The views of Natural England will be sought in January 2020.

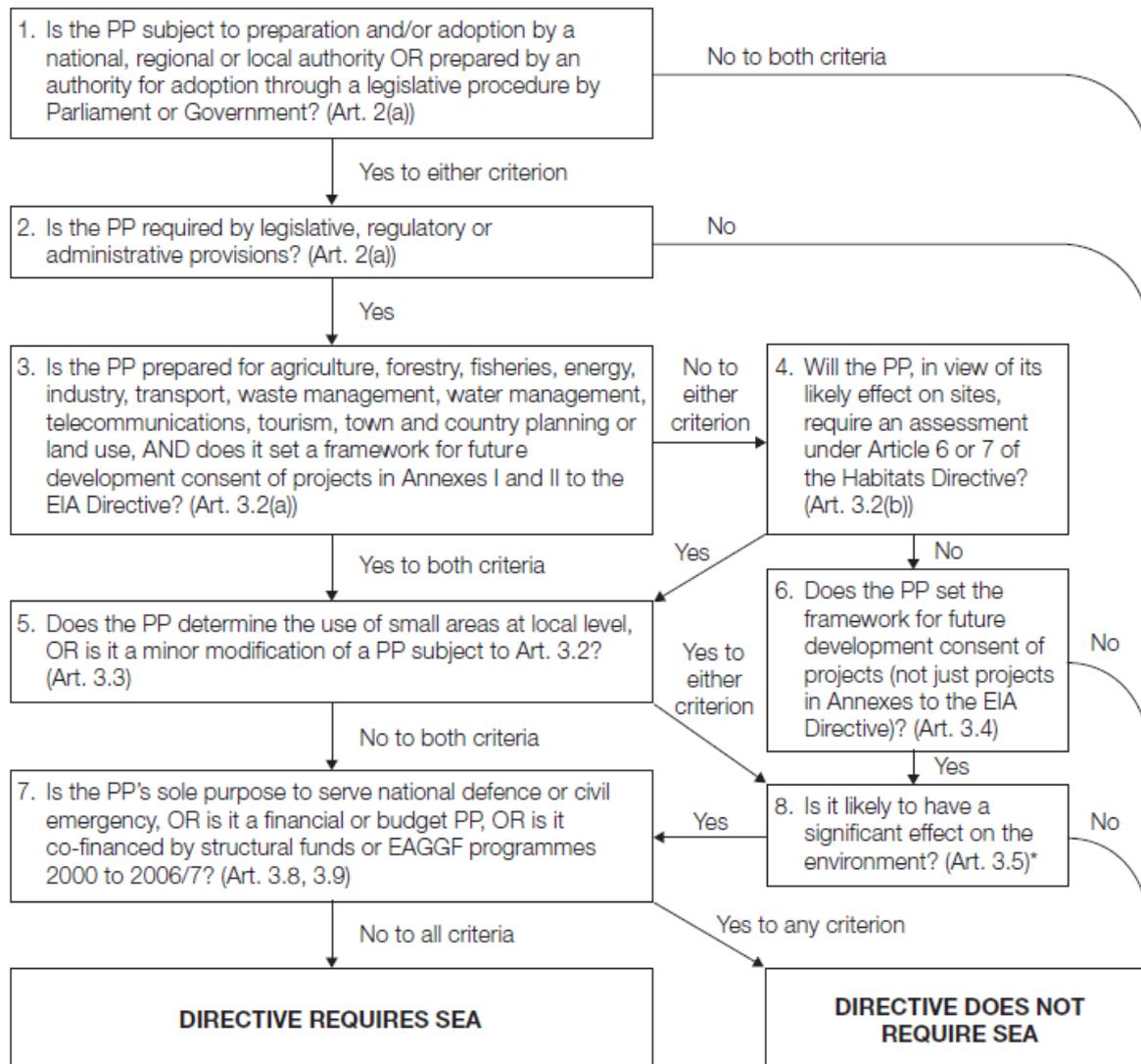
² [HRA Screening Report, Westminster City Council \(June 2019\)](#)

4. SEA Screening

4.1. Establishing the need for SEA

Practical guidance on the application of the SEA Directive published in 2005 by the predecessor of the Ministry of Housing, Communities, & Local Government sets out a flow chart to establish the need for SEA. This flow chart is duplicated below, after which the need for SEA for the Soho Neighbourhood Plan is established.

Figure 1 SEA flowchart



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Table 1 Establishing the need for SEA

Assessment criteria	Assessment	
Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by parliament or government? (Art 2(a))	The Plan is being prepared by the Soho Neighbourhood Forum under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and will be "made" by Westminster City Council under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.	Yes
Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art 2(a))	There is no requirement to produce a neighbourhood plan, however, they are subject to formal procedures and regulations laid down by Government.	Yes
Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for town and country planning purposes, but does not explicitly set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I or II of the EIA Directive.	No
Will the Plan in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have an impact on European protected sites protected by the Habitats Directive.	Yes
Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a Plan subject to Art 3.2? (Art 3.3)	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan seeks to direct and shape future uses, building upon the City Plan and will provide a framework for future development consent of projects in the area.	Yes
Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	See the results of table 2 'Determining the likely significant effects'	No

4.2. Determining the likely significant effects

The likely significant environmental effects of a neighbourhood plan depend on the contents of the plan. The criteria for assessing any likely significant effects on the environment are specified in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.

The table below sets out these criteria, along with a consideration of the likely impact of the neighbourhood plan against each of the criteria.

Table 2 Determining the likely significant effects

SEA Regulations Criteria	Comments	Likely Significant Effects?
1. The characteristics of the neighbourhood plan, having regard, in particular, to:		
1a) The degree to which the neighbourhood plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	Once 'made', the Soho Neighbourhood Plan will set out a framework with which to manage development and change in the area including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conserving and enhancing heritage assets - Protecting and encouraging small commercial units - Providing new housing, including affordable housing - Providing additional green and open spaces by transforming the public realm 	No

	<p>- The sustainable movement of people and goods in the area, including through freight micro-consolidation.</p> <p>However, the Soho Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any development sites in the plan. All the projects outlined above are of a local scale and link in with wider initiatives.</p>	
1b) The degree to which the neighbourhood plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for the City of Westminster and will – together with the City Plan and London Plan – be used to determine planning applications. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with the City Plan. The plan area is affected by the Oxford Street District Place Plan. The public realm aspirations of the plan broadly align with the ambitions for the wider area as set out in the Oxford Street District Place Plan but will need further co-ordination for their implementation.	No
1c) The relevance of the neighbourhood plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework and is one of the basic conditions that Neighbourhood Plans must meet. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan seeks to improve the local environment and policies encourage sustainable development, particularly relating to transport and waste.	No
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the neighbourhood plan	The area is not within Flood Risk Zone 3. The whole area is deficient in play space and parts of the area are deficient in open space and wildlife. Air quality is poor along main roads. Oxford Street in the north and Regent Street to the west are identified by the Mayor as Air Quality Focus Areas. The plan's ambitions to create new green and open spaces, high standards of sustainable design, and ambition to enhance sustainable travel seek to address these environmental problems.	No
1e) The relevance of the neighbourhood plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with Westminster's City Plan, which already is in conformity with such legislation. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any proposals of relevance for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment.	No
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	Improvements to the quality and function of the public realm and the high-quality sustainable design that the plan is seeking to achieve will be long term and permanent, but are dependent on wider initiatives including the delivery of the Westminster City Plan, the opening of Crossrail at Tottenham Court Road and investment in the Oxford Street District.	No
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan will together with the Westminster City Plan and London Plan form part of the development plan for the area. The Westminster City Plan is being revised and includes many similar aspirations to the neighbourhood plan. The public realm aspirations of the Soho	No

	Neighbourhood Plan broadly align with the Oxford Street District Place Plan but further co-ordination in the implementation stages will be required. Any cumulative effects of these plans and policies and the proposals in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have any further significant effects on the local environment.	
2c) The transboundary nature of the effects	The effects of the Soho Neighbourhood Plan will be limited to the neighbourhood planning area, although alignment with further public realm aspirations in the wider Oxford Street District will be necessary.	No
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	The Soho Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a positive or neutral effect on human health as the risk of accidents is likely to decrease due to changes to movement patterns resulting from the plan's policies.	No
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	There are approximately 3,500-4,500 people living Soho (approximation based on GLA Population Projections). Although the area has strong geographical links with neighbouring areas including Fitzrovia, Covent Garden, Chinatown and Mayfair, proposals in the Soho Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to affect areas beyond the neighbourhood planning area.	No
2f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use	There are no significant natural assets in the area. Most of the area is a designated conservation area, with various listed buildings. The plan seeks to maximise environmental standards, whilst recognising the challenges around historic buildings. The plan also seeks to protect heritage assets and important architectural features.	No
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	The area is covered by the Great Estates Archaeological Priority Area. Three protected vistas identified in the Mayor's London View Management Framework cover the area. Proposals in the plan are not expected to significantly impact on these areas and designations.	No

4.3. Screening outcome

Having reviewed the Soho Neighbourhood Plan against the requirements in the SEA Directive, it is concluded that the Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and accordingly should not be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

4.4. Next steps

The screening determination is subject to consultation with the statutory consultation bodies. The consultation bodies are specified in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and are as follows:

- Historic England;
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England.

Consultation responses from the consultation bodies will be included in Annex 1.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

The HRA screening assessment concludes that there are no likely significant effects in respect of European sites. Further stages of Appropriate Assessment are therefore not required.

5.2. Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

The SEA screening assessment concludes that the Soho Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan therefore does not need to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The outcomes of these screening exercises are subject to the views of Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

Annex 1 Consultation responses



Historic England

Ms Mollà Bolta
Policy, Performance and Communications
Westminster City Council
64, Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

Our ref: PL00604526

By email: neighbourhoodplanning@westminster.gov.uk

6th February 2020

Dear Ms Mollà Bolta

Soho Neighbourhood Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (December 2019) consultation

Historic England is the Government's advisor on all matters relating to the historic environment and a statutory consultee on a broad range of applications including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of plans. Accordingly, we have reviewed your document in the light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with particular regard to the NPPF's core planning principle that heritage assets be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. Having done this Historic England is pleased to offer the following advice.

On the basis of the information provided, namely that the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate new sites and does not contain policies that are likely to have significant environmental effects, we agree with the City Council's conclusion that SEA would not be required. Please note that this advice is based on the information that has been provided to us and does not affect our obligation to advise on, and potentially object to any specific development proposal which may subsequently arise from this Neighbourhood Plan, and which may have adverse effects on the environment.

Yours sincerely,

David English
Development Advice Team Leader
E-mail: david.english@HistoricEngland.org.uk
Direct Dial: 020 7973 3747



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Please note that Historic England operates an access to information policy.
Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available.



Date: 13 January 2020
Our ref: 304743
Your ref: SEA & HRA on draft Soho Neighbourhood Plan



Ms M Mollà Bolta
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BY EMAIL ONLY

neighbourhoodplanning@westminster.gov.uk
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Dear Ms Mollà Bolta

SEA & HRA on draft Soho Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 6th January, 2020.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are **unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.**

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Sharon Jenkins
Operations Delivery
Consultations Team
Natural England



Thu 09/01/2020 16:48

HNL Sustainable Places <HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk>

RE: SEA&HRA on draft Soho Neighbourhood Plan

To Neighbourhood, Planning: WCC

Dear Marina,

Thank you for consulting us on the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) report for the draft Soho Neighbourhood Plan.

Based on a review of environmental constraints for which we are a statutory consultee, there are no areas of fluvial flood risk or watercourses within the neighbourhood plan area. Therefore we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to these environmental constraints or other environmental sensitivities of interest to us.

Your Surface Water Management Plan will indicate if there are any critical drainage areas from local sources of flood risk (e.g. surface water, groundwater and sewerage) which coincide with the neighbourhood plan area.

We encourage the neighbourhood forum to use the plan to improve the local environment. For your information, together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint guidance or neighbourhood planning, which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/consider-environment-neighbourhood-plans/>

Kind regards,

Demitry Lyons

Planning Advisor | Sustainable Places | North London

Environment Agency | 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF

0207 7140 578

✉ Team email account: HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk

Soho Neighbourhood Forum

Soho Neighbourhood Plan
Submission Version: Basic Conditions Statement

February 2020