

Foreword

Foreword

This draft Scoping Report marks the start of the development of a Village Design Statement (VDS) for Cookham Parish. If, as is intended, the VDS is to be adopted by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead as a Supplementary Planning Document, it will need to be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal.

The Sustainability Appraisal will encourage sustainable development by ensuring that environmental, social and economic considerations are taken into account throughout the preparation of the VDS. The purpose of the Scoping Report is to decide the level of detail that should be included in the Appraisal.

The draft Scoping Report is being consulted on for a period of 8 weeks—from Friday 31st July to Friday 25th September.

The three statutory agencies with environmental responsibilities in England (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) are required to be consulted on this draft. Other organisations with a particular interest are being contacted directly.

There are five questions, distributed at various stages throughout the document and the VDS Group would appreciate your replies together with any other comments you may have. For your assistance a response form is included at the end of the document. Responses, which should be in writing, should be made to:

Mrs Janet Wheeler, Council Offices, High Road, Cookham Rise, Berks, SL6 9JF,

or by e-mail to vds@cookham.com, no later than midday on 25th September 2009. A report on the responses will be published in due course.

Cookham VDS Group
30th July 2009

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Introduction

1 Introduction to the Village Design Statement and the Scoping Report

1.1 The Village Design Statement for Cookham Parish

1.1.1 Village Design Statements are an initiative promoted by the former Countryside Commission which, in 1993, published “*Design in the countryside*” focusing on the themes of ‘...local distinctiveness and the harmony between buildings, settlements and the wider landscape setting.’

1.1.2 The Village Design Statement for Cookham Parish is being prepared as the result of concerns expressed by local residents that new built development has been occurring in a manner which has insufficient regard to the inherent character of the three settlements¹: Cookham village, Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean. The intention behind the VDS is to try to ensure that in future any new development is carried out in a manner which respects its surroundings, acknowledges the special nature of the three parts of the village and mitigates any harmful effects it may cause.

1.1.3 It is intended the VDS should become a Supplementary Planning Document. (SPD). Such a document is a ‘material consideration’ and will carry significant weight when planning applications are being considered.

1.1.4 In order to become a Supplementary Planning Document the VDS will need to comply with the requirements of the Royal Borough as local planning authority and adhere to policies set out in the statutory development plan. It will also require a Sustainability Appraisal.

1.1.5 The area to be covered by the VDS is shown on the map on page 5, which corresponds to the administrative boundary of Cookham civil parish.

1.1.6 The VDS is being prepared by a group of local volunteers and is sponsored by Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society. Details of the composition of the VDS Group and minutes of its meetings are available from the Cookham Parish Office.

1.1.7 One of the basic premises of Village Design Statements is a high level of community involvement. The VDS Group has already organised a series of workshops and has solicited visual material from local people. This draft Scoping Report is being put out for public consultation and there will be further stages of public participation as the preparation of the VDS proceeds. A report on the results of this consultation will be published in due course.

1.2 The Scoping Report.

1.2.1 The procedure for sustainability appraisals of planning policies and documents has been set out by the government. Its various stages are laid out in Table 1 on page 7 and this draft Scoping Report covers Sustainability Appraisal Stage A and its components, A1 to A4. The Table relates to all Supplementary Planning Documents and the VDS will have to comply with it even though it is very much a ‘lower tier’ document whose application is only limited. As a result, the appraisal process is more complicated than seems necessary in this instance.

1. For the sake of convenience only these are sometimes referred to in this document collectively as ‘the Cookhams’.

Introduction

1.2.2 The VDS Group has reviewed the existing policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives and these are set out on pages 8 to 13. For the most part they are derived from documents published by the government and other public bodies, but various items of more local relevance are listed on page 13. At the foot of that page readers are invited to say whether they consider the items listed are the correct ones to be used for the Sustainability Appraisal of the VDS.

1.2.3 On pages 14 and 15 are set out the Baseline Data that appear to be appropriate in this instance and you are asked to give your views on their relevance.

1.2.4 The sustainability issues and problems the VDS Group has identified are discussed on pages 17 to 19. Please let us know whether you consider this is a comprehensive list or whether there are any other issues you consider should be taken into account when the Sustainability Appraisal is prepared.

1.2.5 The Royal Borough has developed a list of twenty-three Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, which are set out in full in the Appendix and which reflect the sustainability objectives for the South East Region. The VDS Group has taken the view that only the following Objectives are relevant for the Village Design Statement for the Cookhams:

5,6,7,8,10,13,14,15,17,18,19,20

1.2.6 These Objectives are shown in Table 2 on pages 20 to 23 together with the relevant Indicators and Targets, which have been established by the Royal Borough for each one, and notes on current trends. You may consider some of the Objectives the VDS Group has selected are not relevant for the Village Design Statement or that others from the full list in the Appendix should be added and Question 4 on page 24 invites your input. The intention is to try to ensure that when the Sustainability Appraisal of the VDS is undertaken it tests the VDS using the most relevant sustainability objectives.

1.3 Note on the 'Plan-led System'

1.3.1 Current legislation stipulates that when planning applications are considered they should be determined in accordance with policies set out in the statutory development plan, unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise. At present the statutory development plan comprises the South East Plan and the 'saved'² policies of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan.

1.3.2 The Royal Borough is currently preparing its Local Development Framework. The LDF will guide future development within the district and deal with spatial issues³. The Royal Borough is seeking to protect its area's important environmental and social assets, whilst at the same time providing a framework in which necessary development can take place. It will replace the current Local Plan, but rather than being a single document, it will consist of a number of documents, which will be published at different times. When adopted, the LDF together with the South East Plan will form the new statutory development plan for the Royal Borough.

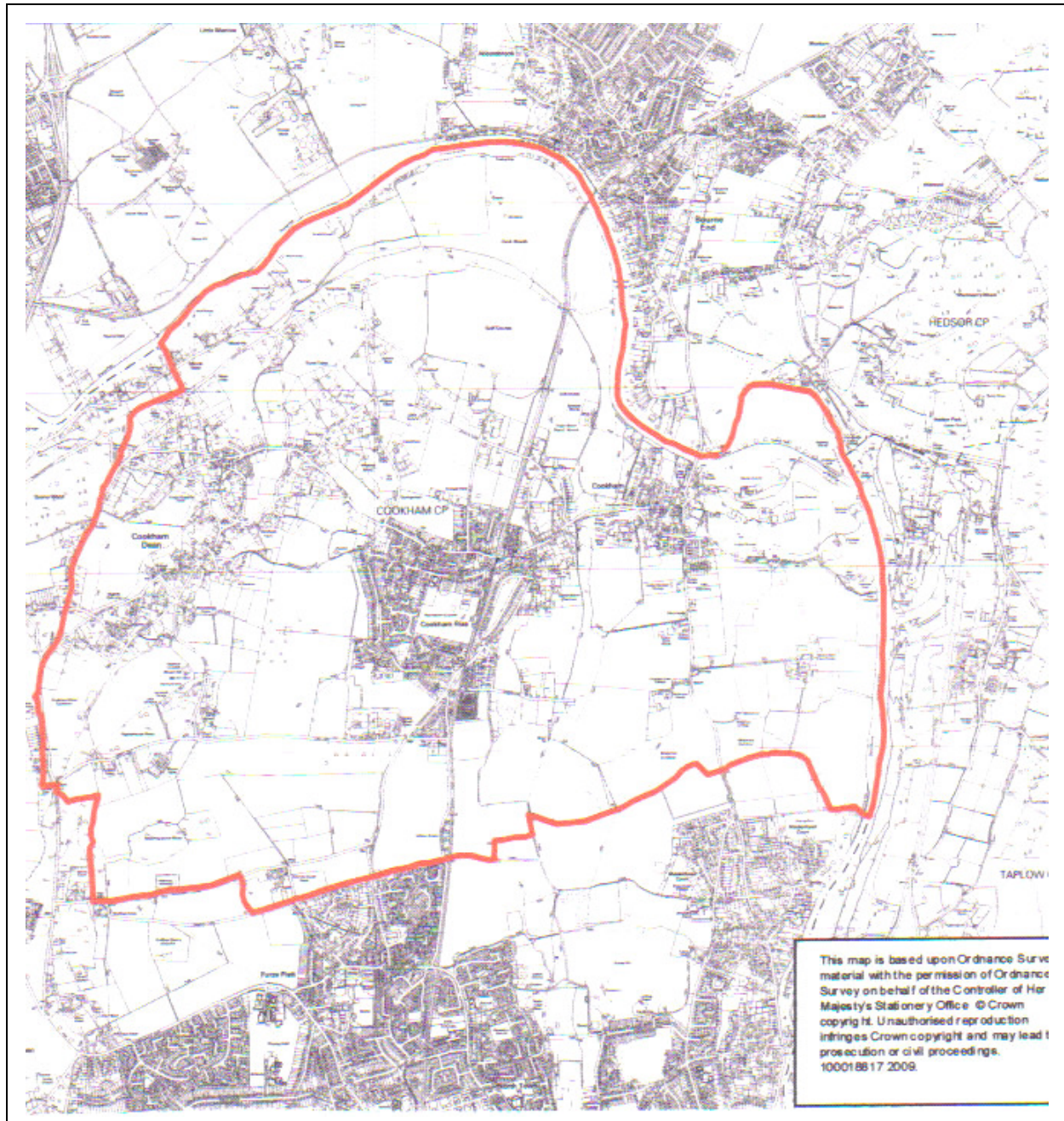
1.3.3 The Royal Borough's Core Strategy will not be in a position where it can be adopted for a considerable time yet. In December 2007 the Council took the decision to withdraw its first Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Documents (parts of the LDF) following the results of an Examination in Public and it is currently working on their replacement. A further public examination will be necessary in due course.

2. Those policies which remain in effect pending their replacement.

3. Issues which involve the use of land or the movement of people and access to opportunities.

Introduction

Map of the area to be covered by the Village Design Statement



The Sustainability Appraisal Process

2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

2.1 Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal and the Scoping Report

2.1.1 If the VDS is to be adopted by the Royal Borough as a Supplementary Planning Document it will require a Sustainability Appraisal.

2.1.2 The aims of the Sustainability Appraisal are:

- to try to ensure the VDS is as sustainable as possible by integrating the principles of sustainable development into the preparation process;
- to secure a high level of environmental protection and a balance of environmental, economic and social considerations in the preparation of the VDS; and
- to use consultation to challenge and confirm the judgement of the authors of the VDS.

2.1.3 The main stages in the Sustainability Appraisal process and how they are aligned with the production of the VDS are shown in Table 1 overleaf. The material contained in this document reflects the work the VDS Group has carried out under sections A1 to A4 of SA Stage A in the table and the consultation on this document comprises section A5.

2.2 Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive

2.2.1 UK regulations³ stipulate that Sustainability Appraisal of Local Development Frameworks should meet the requirements of the SEA Directive⁴. This Scoping Report incorporates SEA requirements and guidance on the implementation of the SEA Directive has been used to inform it⁵.

2.3 The Sustainability Appraisal Team

2.3.1 The Sustainability Appraisal for the Village Design Statement will be undertaken by the VDS Group, with the assistance of officers in the Royal Borough's Planning Policy Team.

3. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004. (S.I. 2004, No. 1633)

4. European Directive 2001/42/EC: 'On the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment'. The purpose of the SEA Directive is to provide for a high level of protection for the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. It also aims to promote sustainable development, by ensuring that an environmental assessment is carried out for certain plans which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

5. A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive; ODPM, September 2005.

The Sustainability Appraisal process

Table 1: Stages of Sustainability Appraisal within the SPD⁶ process

SPD STAGE 1: PRE-PRODUCTION – EVIDENCE GATHERING
SA Stage A – Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on scope.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1: identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. • A2: collecting baseline information. • A3: identifying sustainability issues and problems. • A4: developing the SA framework. • A5 consulting on the scope of the SA.
SPD STAGE 2: PRODUCTION – Prepare Draft VDS/SPD
SA Stage B – Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1: Testing the SPD objectives against the SA framework. • B2: Developing the SPD options. • B3: Predicting the effects of the draft SPD. • B4: Evaluating the effects of the draft SPD. • B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects. • B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the SPD.
SA Stage C – Preparing the SA Report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1: Prepare the SA Report.
SA Stage D – Consultation on the draft SPD and SA Report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D1: Public participation on the draft SPD and the SA Report. • D2: Appraising significant changes.
SPD STAGE 3: ADOPTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D3: Making decisions and proving information.
SA Stage E—Monitoring the significant effects of the SPD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring. • E2: Responding to adverse effects.

6. Supplementary Planning Document

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

3.3 Relevant plans, policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives (PPPSIs)

3.3.1 It is necessary to take account of a series of PPPSIs when producing documents such as the VDS, since they will help identify external social, environmental and economic objectives which should be taken into account. They may also influence the options to be considered.

3.3.2 It is also important that any proposals in the VDS do not conflict with policies in the statutory development plan.

3.3.3 A full PPPSI Review has been undertaken for the Council's Local Development Framework and can be found in Background Paper A on the RBWM website at—http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_sustainability_appraisal_.htm. PPPSIs specific to the VDS are set out below.

PPPSI	Key aims, Relevant objectives or Targets and Indicators,
Policies, Plans, Programmes and Initiatives	
The South East Plan (May 2009)	<p>The main policies which may have a bearing on the VDS are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC1: Sustainable development. • CC10a: Green Belts. • CC10b: Strategic Gaps. • CC12: Character of the environment and quality of life. • NRM4: Conservation and improvement of biodiversity. • NRM5: Woodlands. • C3: Landscape and countryside management. • C4 Countryside access and rights of way management. • BE5 The role of small towns (defined as having populations between 3,000 and 10,000 people) • BE6: Village management • BE7: Management of the historic environment. • TSR2: Rural tourism. • TSR4: Tourism attractions. • TSR6: Visitor management.
RBWM Local Plan Incorporating Alterations (Adopted June 2003)	<p>Some saved policies in the Local Plan are relevant to the VDS. Policy DG1 and its supporting text (paras. 2.3.1 to 2.3.8) seek to: '...promote standards of design which provide a high quality, varied and stimulating...environment.'; to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas (paras 2.3.10 to 2.3.23 and Policies CA1 to CA6); to preserve and find alternative uses for listed buildings, where appropriate (paras 2.3.24 to 2.3.35 and Policies LB1 to LB3; and to preserve archaeology and Ancient Monuments (paras. 2.3.37 to 2.3.45 and Policies ARCH1 to ARCH4).</p>

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

PPPSI	Key aims, Relevant objectives or Targets and Indicators,
<p>Planning Policy Statement (PPS)1: Delivering Sustainable Development (January 2005)</p>	<p>Sets out the government's objectives for the planning system. Para. 13(vi) notes:- 'Community involvement is an essential elements in delivering sustainable development and creating sustainable and safe communities.'</p> <p>Para 33— discusses design and notes (inter alia): Good design should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the connections between people and places by considering the needs of people to access jobs and key services; • be integrated into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments; • be an integral part of the processes for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities; • create an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society; and • consider the direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment.
<p>Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG 2): Green Belts (January 1995)</p>	<p>Sets out national planning policy in relation to the creation of Green Belts and the establishment of their boundaries and how settlements which are affected by Green Belts should be differentiated. Paras. 3.1 to 3.10 provide guidance (i) as to the types of development that are considered appropriate within Green Belts and (ii) how the re-use of existing buildings in Green Belts should be considered.</p>
<p>PPS3: Housing (November 2006)</p>	<p>This policy states: "Good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities." It sets out clear points to consider when assessing design quality, such as the extent to which the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly; • provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies; • is well integrated with, and complements, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access; • facilitates the efficient use of resources, during construction and in use, and seeks to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change; • takes a design-led approach to the provision of car parking space, that is well-integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly;

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope.

PPPSI	Key aims, Relevant objectives or Targets and Indicators,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creates, or enhances, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity; • provides for the retention of re-establishment of biodiversity within residential environments. <p>Para. 17 states: ‘...Local Planning Authorities should draw on relevant guidance and standards...alongside urban design guidelines, village design statements, site briefs and community participation techniques.’</p> <p>Councils may set out a range of densities across their areas, when preparing plans; however, until this has been done, 30 dwellings per hectare should be set as an indicative minimum. Densities below this level will have to be justified in the plan-making process.</p> <p>PPS3 advises that the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form and, if done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to the more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment. Successful intensification, the PPS says, need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space. (para. 49).</p>
PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas. (August 2004)	<p>The purpose of this document is to promote the government’s policies for sustainable development in rural areas through the planning system. Among the issues covered are: location of development, community services and facilities, housing, design and character of rural settlements, countryside protection, re-use and replacement of buildings, agricultural development and farm diversification, equine-related activities, tourism and visitor facilities. The Statement notes: ‘Many country towns and villages are of considerable historic and architectural value, or make an important contribution to local countryside character. Planning authorities should ensure that development respects and, where possible, enhances these particular qualities’. (para 12.) and ‘Local authorities should prepare policies and guidance that encourage good quality design... utilising tools such as Landscape Character Assessments and Village or Town Design Statements, and the design elements of Village or Parish Plans prepared by local communities.’</p>
PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (August 2005)	<p>Aims to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing biodiversity in green spaces and among developments so that they are used by wildlife and valued by people, recognising that healthy functional ecosystems can contribute to a better quality of life and to people’s sense of well-being; and ...

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope.

PPPSI	Key aims, Relevant objectives or Targets and Indicators,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.
PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment (September 1994)	Sets out national planning policy in relation to (a) buildings which are Listed as being of architectural and historic interest and (b) Conservation Areas. It lays out the main criteria used to decide which Buildings should be included in the statutory lists and provides guidance to local authorities about how to deal with works proposed to them. s.71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposal for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and the Guidance emphasises that: 'It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas.'
PPG16: Archaeology and Planning (November 1990)	Gives advice to local planning authorities and developers on how to address archaeological issues through the planning process.
PPS25: Development and Flood Risk (December 2006)	The principal objective of the policy is to reduce risk from flooding by establishing criteria for the location of new development. It sets out to achieve this through a risk-based approach to planning applications in those areas where flooding or the potential to increase flooding elsewhere occur.
Environment Agency: Flood Maps.	The Agency publishes maps on a regular basis, which show the areas which are affected by potential flooding.
Natural England: information about SSSI at Cockmarsh.	An area of 18.34 hectares at Cockmarsh has been registered as a Site of Special Scientific Interest under Unit Identification No. 1002631. A Condition Summary compiled by Natural England on 1 st February 2009 was favourable.
RBWM: Conservation Area Statements	<p>The area to be covered by the VDS includes two Conservation Areas designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cookham Dean (designated in 1969, reviewed in 1994 and adopted in 1998); Cookham High Street (designated in 1969, reviewed in 1991 and adopted in 1998). <p>Conservation Areas Statements were prepared by RBWM in support of the designations.</p>

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope.

PPPSI	Key aims, Relevant objectives or Targets and Indicators,
RBWM: Landscape Character Assessment (September 2004)	<p>Paras. 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 set out 10 uses for this document:-</p> <p><u>Planning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informing emerging development plan policies at a borough level and influencing high tiers of policy, such as at regional and sub-regional levels; • assisting studies of development potential, for example to help identify sites for new development; • informing the siting, scale and design conditions for particular forms of development such as minerals and housing; • contributing to landscape capacity studies relating to the supply of land for housing, minerals and other land uses; • providing an input to Environmental Assessment at the level of plans and policies and in association with individual development proposals; and • providing a framework and context for the production of more local landscape character assessments and Village Design Statements. <p><u>Landscape Conservation, Management and Enhancement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a basis for the preparation of landscape management strategies; • helping guide landscape change in positive and sustainable ways, for example programmes of woodland expansion and identifying new uses for disturbed and degraded land; • informing the targeting of resources for land management and agri-environment schemes and evaluating the effectiveness of funding; and • monitoring landscape change by developing indicators in order to monitor rates and patterns of change. The information can be used to target areas for conservation and enhancement.
RBWM: Supplementary Planning Guidance, etc.	<p>RBWM has adopted the following Guidance that is relevant to the area covered by the VDS:-</p> <p>1. <u>Interpretation of [Local Plan] Policy F1 (Area Liable to flooding)*</u> (June 2004) . This covers design issues which need to be taken into consideration when developing in flood risk areas. Note: Parts of this document have been superseded.</p> <p>2. <u>Cookham Gas Holder Station Development Brief</u> (June 2004).</p>
RBWM: Townscape Assessment—Draft Characterisation Report. (September 2008)	<p>The Royal Borough has commissioned a Townscape Assessment of the larger settlements in its area. The first stage of this – the Draft Characterisation Report – includes the areas of Cookham Village and Cookham Rise.</p>

Stage A; Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

Local references and documents	
Sir Stanley Spencer, RA	<p>The internationally-renowned artist painted numerous pictures in and around the Cookhams. Views of the villages appear both in his landscapes and as settings for other works such as the '<i>Christ preaching at Cookham Regatta</i>' series and consideration of them will be an important element in the VDS. A full catalogue of his works is available at the Stanley Spencer Gallery.</p> <p>Note: A list of the Stanley Spencer paintings considered by RBWM to be related to the Cookham High Street Conservation Area is set out on pp. 29 and 30 of the Conservation Area Statement.</p>
Copas Farms: A Farmland Management Strategy for Cookham (Draft Review 2007-2008)	<p>Its declared purpose is to '...set out a policy for the management of the Green Belt land farmed by Copas Farms in the Cookham Parish area in a manner which is both beneficial to the local community and compatible with operating a viable and sustainable farm business.'</p>
Draft Cookham Plan (January 2008)	<p>The Draft Plan covers a wide range of issues and makes numerous recommendations. Currently, Cookham Parish Council is reviewing its contents and a revised draft will be published in due course.</p>
Cookham Healthcheck 2008	<p>A comprehensive survey of the community carried out under the aegis of RBWM in accordance with guidance contained in the 'Market Towns Health-check Handbook' (2005)</p>
Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record	<p>A GIS-linked database and accompanying archive which contains information on all recorded sites in Cookham and archaeological investigations carried out</p>
Habitat Map; Thames Valley Environmental Record	<p>A map showing the results of Phase 1 habitat surveys carried out recently in Cookham Parish.</p>
Phase 1 Habitat Survey of Cookham Parish, Berkshire; Martin Townsend, Consultant Ecologist. (April 2007)	<p>A survey commissioned by Cookham Parish Council in connection with the preparation of the draft Cookham Plan.</p>

Question 1: PPPSI Review

Do you agree that this list of plans, policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives is accurate for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Cookhams Visual Design Statement? If not, please list the PPPSIs you consider should be deleted and any other PPPSIs you believe should be added.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

3.2 Baseline data for the Sustainability Appraisal

3.2.1 In preparing this Scoping Report the VDS Group has focused the search for baseline data on the material it considers is directly relevant to the task of preparing the VDS. It has done this for the following reasons:

1. much of the available data covers a significantly wider area than the Cookhams and is not capable of accurate apportionment;
2. the purpose of the VDS is limited to addressing issues relating to the design, ambience and relationships of future development proposals. It is not, therefore, concerned with the economic or social need or justification for such development.

3.2.2 Population and geographic area

- The latest figures for Cookham Parish indicate a population of 5,500 with a higher than average age and a low proportion of ethnic minorities.
- There are 2,483 households in the parish, divided as follows: Cookham Village - 268, Cookham Rise - 1,717, Cookham Dean - 498.
- The land area within the Parish boundary is 1,329 hectares. Within that area the broad land use classifications are:-
 - developed land for residential, employment, community and social uses;
 - agricultural land;
 - amenity land, sports grounds, etc.
 - woodland;
 - common land, owned by the National Trust;
- The River Thames borders the north and east sides of the Parish and is one of its most significant features.

Housing

- It is estimated that 80% of dwellings in the Cookhams are owner/occupied and 20% rented, including 9% belonging to the Maidenhead and District Housing Association.
- 15% of dwellings in the Cookhams are flats, caravans or temporary structures.

Retail and other businesses

- There are 36 businesses occupying Class A1 retail premises, 6 public houses, 10 restaurants and 3 coffee shops.
- There are purpose-designed or converted office buildings at GKL House in Lower Road, The Courtyard Barns at Mount Farm, the former Dean Service Garage and Baybrook on Maidenhead Road.
- In recent years changes in agricultural operations have enabled farm buildings to be re-used for office and light industrial purposes and several conversions to these uses have occurred, notably at Kings Coppice Farm, Woodlands Farm and Lower Mount Farm.

Churches, schools, halls and club premises

- The Cookhams have two Church of England churches: Holy Trinity, Cookham and St. John the Baptist, Cookham Dean; a Roman Catholic church, St. Elizabeth's in Lower Road and a Methodist Church in Lower Road.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

- Each of the three Cookham communities has its own primary school. There is one private junior school, Herries Preparatory School in Dean Lane. A private day nursery operates in Dean Lane and there is a local authority nursery at Station Hill.
- The villages have the following halls, which are available for private hire: The Parish Centre, Churchgate, Pinder Hall and the Methodist Hall in Lower Road, Cookham Dean Village Hall and the Cookham Dean Women's Institute Hall.
- There is one social club with its own premises: Cookham Social Club.
- Other, smaller premises are used by local youth and community groups.

Institutional properties

- The Cookhams are unusual in playing host to two significant institutional occupiers:
 - (i) The John Lewis Partnership, which owns the Odney Club, Odney Lane, Cookham and Winter Hill Golf Course, primarily for the benefit of its staff, and
 - (ii) The Chartered Institute of Marketing, owners of Moor Hall, a conference and training centre situated off School Lane, Cookham.
- The Stanley Spencer Gallery is situated at the eastern end of Cookham High Street.

Recreational sites

- Cookham Dean Cricket Club occupies land with a pavilion off the west side of Whyteladys Lane. Winter Hill Golf Course is owned by the John Lewis Partnership.
- The only formal playing field is the Alfred Major Playing Field in Cookham Rise.

Car parks

- There are various surface level public car parks at: the Parish Centre, the Station Parade shops, Cookham Station, and in Lower Road adjoining the Medical Centre, all of which are associated with adjoining uses. Parking space is also available on National Trust land at The Moor, Winter Hill and Cookham Dean Common. The only local authority public car park is situated in Sutton Road.

Built environment

- There are 52 Listed Buildings and 2 Conservation Areas in the Cookhams. Of the former 3 are Grade 2* and 38 are Grade 2.
- There is one ancient monument recorded.

Natural environment

- There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest, at Cockmarsh.
- There are 6 Wildlife Heritage Sites.
- The area on the north and west sides of the Parish is classed as an Area of Special Landscape Importance.
- The Cookhams have a range of flora and fauna, much being typical of the Thames Valley. But amongst some 150 species of birds which have been recorded, at risk species such as Lapwing, Skylark and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker are included. With over 500 plant species, nationally scarce Brown Galingale and regionally important Black Poplar are present. Rare insects noted include Toadflax Brocade, Mocha and Striped Lychnis moths, and Variable Damselfly.
- The quality of the agricultural land in the area is mainly Grades 2 and 3.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

Green Belt

- The built-up parts of Cookham Village and Cookham Rise are excluded from the Green Belt, but Cookham Dean is entirely within it.

Planning activity

- In 2008 there were a total of 150 planning applications in Cookham Parish. Of these 4 were for work connected with Listed Buildings, 34 for works involving trees, 10 for development in Conservation Areas. Most applications are for dwelling house extensions.
- In 2008 permission was granted for 2 new or replacement dwellings; 2 permissions related to retail premises; 1 permission related to agriculture.

Question 2: SA Baseline Data

Do you agree that the baseline data contains appropriate information? If not, please let us know what further data should be added.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

3.2.3 Sustainability Issues and Problems

The principal sustainability issues facing the Cookhams have mainly been derived from other documents produced by the Royal Borough. They are:-

Population and households

Population projections predict that the population of the Royal Borough will rise slightly in the future, but the number of households will steadily increase at a much faster rate. The percentage of the population aged over 65 is predicted to increase, which could have implications for the types of housing that need to be delivered. Local research in the Cookhams has indicated their population has a higher average age than elsewhere, but there is also a slightly higher proportion of younger people than the national average. There are concerns the requirements of the groups are not being met.

These demographic changes will have implications for the amount of new housing required and its type and size, but the the villages do have to be viewed in the broader context of the surrounding area.

Local character

Surveys of visitors carried out by the VDS Group have confirmed that outsiders appreciate the special character of the Cookhams as much as it is appreciated by residents. The character, history, setting and diversity of the Cookhams are the elements that have made them unique. Consequently, they have become an attractive location for people to set up home, especially for those who value their proximity to London, Heathrow and the motorway network. But there is the need to balance the maintenance of these attributes with the need to ensure the villages continue to be vibrant, free-standing communities.

The Green Belt and the countryside

The countryside around the Cookhams is fragile and under great pressure, from development, from the intensification of existing activities, and from tourism. Although virtually all of it is within the Green Belt and is subject to the prohibition of 'inappropriate' development, this does not mean it is immune to small-scale changes, which through their cumulative effect can result in urbanisation and degradation.

The Inspector who reviewed the Royal Borough's LDF Core Strategy in June 2007 intimated in his report that RBWM should review the boundaries of the Green Belt as part of its consideration of the availability of potential land for future housing and, clearly, this must be a concern given the narrowness of the Green Belt between Cookham and Maidenhead .

Housing

The Royal Borough is faced with the need to find 6,920 dwellings for the period up to 2026, an average of 346 per annum. Currently, insufficient land has been identified to meet this target. In the last few years most of the Royal Borough's new housing has been constructed on land within its existing built-up areas, but it may be necessary for RBWM to find land outside these areas if its housing requirements are to be met.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

Much of the housing which has been built recently in the Royal Borough has been developed at densities which are significantly higher than those pre-existing. If sites for new housing have to be found within Cookham or Cookham Rise they could also be redeveloped at higher densities, which might have a deleterious effect upon their surroundings and local infrastructure, especially roads. Local people have frequently expressed their concern about the density of proposed new housing development.

The view has been expressed that insufficient new, affordable housing for local residents is being built in the Cookhams; however, there is already a significant amount of housing which is owned by the local housing association.

There appears to be a trend to replace single dwelling houses in Cookham Dean on a one-for-one basis. To what extent should new houses here reflect the designs of their predecessors?

Business premises

Apart from local retailers, the principal businesses in the Cookhams are mostly office-related. To a certain extent they are bound to draw their employees and visitors from outside and frequently do not have sufficient on-site parking space. This has caused problems with other road users while the proliferation of parked cars has been seen as detrimental to local amenity.

In line with the national policy of supporting agriculture, many farm buildings have been converted to non-agricultural uses in recent years. While this may not be harmful in itself it can result in an increase in traffic along rural roads and their use by large vehicles to which they are unsuited. Similar effects can be found where farm businesses have diversified.

Many of the traditional sources of employment in the Cookhams have disappeared. There are now no petrol filling station or car service premises in Cookham Dean and the Dean's Post Office and general store has recently closed. It seems unlikely that Cookham Dean's post office will re-open in its previous form. Dean residents now have to source their supplies elsewhere. The builder's yard in Lower Road has been redeveloped for housing and there have been proposals to replace the small office building, GKL House.

The public consultation on the draft Cookham Plan showed strong support for the local shopping centre at Station Hill, but there was also widespread dissatisfaction with its appearance, parking provision and the standard of external maintenance.

Travel and Transport

The single-line traffic flow system over Cookham Bridge introduced in 2000 has increased peak hour congestion in the High Street and Sutton Road. Pedestrian safety remains an issue in The Pound.

Various proposals were mooted through the Draft Cookham Plan for road improvements, but considerable concern was expressed about their potential environmental impact. Other respondents complained about the lack of adequate parking, particularly in the vicinity of the Medical Centre in Lower Road and in Cookham High Street. The car park on The Moor, which is extensively used by visitors, is of poor quality and at weekends in peak periods cars spill over onto the grass.

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

The railway service is seen as a key component in maintaining the vitality of the Cookhams. It is used particularly by commuters and school children, but doubts have been expressed that the advent of Crossrail at Maidenhead may result in fewer connections.

Cookham Village and the Rise are served by a bus service from High Wycombe to Maidenhead. While this is useful, its frequency is inadequate. The bus service for Cookham Dean operates twice-weekly, but is only for pre-booked passengers.

Tourism

The same factors that have made the Cookhams a magnet for people to live in also encourage a substantial amount of tourism. It is necessary to ensure this does not result in development which degrades and devalues the very elements that make them a special place.

Natural environment

The countryside around the Cookhams is a haven for wildlife and many people believe more sustainable patterns of development can be promoted which would encourage biodiversity.

Question 3: Key Sustainability Issues

Do you agree these are the Key Sustainability Issues to be considered for the VDS?

3.3 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

3.3.1 The Sustainability Appraisal framework provides a means of assessing whether the VDS is promoting sustainable development. At its heart are the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. These are distinct from any plan objectives which may be proposed in the VDS although they may be similar or overlap. They provide a way of checking whether any objectives, policies and proposals that will be put forward in the VDS are the best possible ones for sustainability – a yardstick against which the social, economic and environmental effects of the VDS can be tested.

3.3.2 In February 2008, a draft set of 21 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives developed by RBWM was put out to consultation. Following that consultation, some objectives were amended and two new ones were added. There are now a total of 23 Sustainability Assessment Objectives for the Borough's Local Development Framework and these are listed in the Appendix.

3.3.3 For the purposes of the Sustainability Appraisal of the VDS, not all the Royal Borough's Sustainability Appraisal Objectives will be used since the VDS Group considers some are not relevant to the limited purview of a Village Design Statement. Table 2 on the following pages lists those which are considered relevant to the VDS together with their associated Indicators and Targets. This table is central to the Sustainability Appraisal and will be used to appraise the VDS.

Table 2: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

SA Objective	Indicators	Targets	Current trends in the Borough
5. Reduce crime and the fear of crime.	a. Rate of domestic burglaries, violet offences in a public place and vehicle crimes. b. Fear of crime.		Between 2005 – 2007 the level of domestic burglaries and vehicle crime remained stable, whilst violet offences increased slightly. Respondents who feel their lifestyle is restricted a lot by fear of crime reduced by 10% between 2002 and 2005. The majority of RBWM residents feel their lifestyle is not restricted by a fear of crime.
6. Create and sustain vibrant and distinctive communities which recognise the need and contributions of all individuals.	a. Percentage of people who agree that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together. b. Percentage of people satisfied with their areas as a place to live.		2007: Agree = 58%; did not know = 20%.
	c. Percentage of residents who agree that they can influence decision affecting their local areas.		2007: Satisfied = 76% (incl. 14% Very Satisfied).
			2007: Agree = 22%; Disagree = 50%
7. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities including the countryside and the historic environment.	a. Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of key services. b. Additional open space secured.		New housing in 2006/7 was most accessible to employment areas, GPs and secondary schools and least accessible to hospitals. Since 2001/2, 6 new open spaces and 4 play areas have been secured.
	c. Percentage of residents satisfied with the Borough's parks and open spaces.		2006/7 = 82%.

SA Objective	Indicators	Targets	Current trends in the Borough
8. Encourage increased engagement in cultural and sporting activity across all sections of the community.	a. Percentage of public rights of way that are easy to use by members of the public.	2009/10 = 95%.	2006/7 = 84%.
	b. Percentage of residents satisfied with sports and leisure facilities.		2006/7 = 68%.
10. Sustain economic growth and competitiveness and a buoyant tourism sector by focusing on the principles of 'smart growth'.	a. Gross Value Added (GVA) per head.		2004 = £27,245 (Berkshire). Very high levels of GVA compared to regional and national data. Economically prosperous county.
	b. Shopping patterns (Retail and Leisure Survey 2006).		35.5% of households in Maidenhead Zone do main food shopping in Maidenhead town centre. 33.9% of households in Maidenhead zone shop for clothing and footwear in Maidenhead town centre.
13. Re-use previously developed land and existing materials from buildings, and ensure there is a high quality townscape.	a. Percentage of new and converted buildings on previously developed land.	60% (South East Plan) (all development).	Generally exceeds 90%
	b. Percentage of land developed for employment which is on previously developed land.	60% (South East Plan) (all development).	The majority of employment development takes place on Previously Developed Land
	c. Number of contaminated sites.		There are approximately 480 potentially contaminated sites in the Royal Borough. Following a risk assessment 32 sites have been prioritised for further investigation.
14. Reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment.	a. Number of properties at risk from flooding.	Prevent all inappropriate development in the flood plain.	2007: 27% of all properties are at risk from flooding.
	b. No. of planning applications approved against Environment Agency advice.		2006/7 = 0.
	c. New development with sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) installed.		

SA Objective	Indicators	Targets	Current trends in the Borough
15. Reduce air pollution and the proportion of the population subject to noise pollution.	a. Concentration of NO ₂ in the AQMA in 2006 as annual mean 50 ug/m ³ in relation to air quality objective of 40 ug/m ³ by 2010. b. No. of residential premises in Windsor and Maidenhead Air Quality Management Areas. (AQMAAs)	2010/11 = 40 ug/m ³ in both AQMA (national objective).	2006 annual mean: Windsor AQMA = 49 ug/m ³ ; Maidenhead AQMA = 51 ug/m ³ .
	c. No. of noise complaints.		Windsor = 720 residences; Maidenhead 1,300 residences.
17. Conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity.	a. Occurrences of farmland birds. b. Percentage of SSSIs in favourable condition. c. Condition of Wildlife Heritage Sites.		2006/7 = 801.
	d. Occurrences of garden butterflies. e. Occurrences of stag beetles. f. extent of ancient woodlands.	National: 95% of the SSSI land to be in favourable or 'recovering' on by 2010.	Small positive change with population levels for 2005/6 back to 1995 baseline levels. Remains below county figures. 96% of sites in a favourable or recovering condition in 2006.
	g. Impact of housing on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.		Under investigation.
			Trends remain the same between 2005/6 and 2006/7.
			2006/7 = 29% of grid squares in RBWM are occupied by stag beetles.
			Indicators on heathland birds and visitor numbers with respect to the SPA are currently under discussion.

SA Objective	Indicators	Targets	Current trends in the Borough
18. Protect and enhance the Borough's countryside, natural and historic environment.	a. Extent of nature conservation designations.		Land area: international nature conservation designations – 7.9%; SSSIs – 8.4%, LNRs and WHS – 7.2%.
	b. Listed buildings on the national 'Buildings at Risk' Register.		2006/7 = 2 (very low compared with those buildings at risk nationally).
	c. Percentage of Conservation Areas with a character appraisal.		2008 = 63%.
	d. Percentage of Conservation Areas with a character appraisal with management proposals up-dated in the last 5 years.		2008 = 22%
19. Improve the efficiency of transport networks by enhancing the proportion of transport by sustainable modes and promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.	a. Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak. (NI 167).		Awaiting data from DfT.
	b. Mode of travel to work.		Relatively more of Windsor and Maidenhead's residents commute by car to work than nationally.
	c. Percentage of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, public transport has got better or stayed the same.		2003/4 = 66.9%.
20. Reduce the global social and environmental impact of consumption of resources by using sustainably, and ethically produced, local or low impact products.	a. Ecological footprint.		2006: 6.49 gha per person (above national average).
	b. Percentage of commercial buildings meeting BREEAM Very Good Standard or above or equivalent.		

Stage A: Setting the context of the Appraisal and establishing the scope

Question 4

Do you agree these are the appropriate objectives, indicators and targets to use in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework?

3.4 Difficulties encountered in compiling information for carrying out the Appraisal

3.4.1 The difficulties are:

- the VDS Group is reliant on other organisations for data. This has sometimes been difficult to obtain and assumptions in the Sustainability Appraisal will only be as good as the data upon which they will be based;
- consultation fatigue and the capacity of stakeholders to respond to many consultations;
- legislation requires that certain issues are included in Sustainability Appraisals and specific terminology used. This makes for long documents which are difficult to read.

3.5 Consulting on the Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal

3.5.1 Details of the consultation and how you may respond can be found in the Foreword to this document.

Question 5

Do you agree that this Scoping Report sets out an appropriate methodology for the Sustainability Appraisal of the VDS for Cookham Parish?

Glossary

Glossary

Baseline Data	The data are used as a reference with which to compare future observations or results.
Biodiversity	The richness and variety of living things (i.e. plants, birds, animals, fish, insects, etc.), which live in a given area, and the habitats that support them.
Brownfield Land	Land which has been previously developed, excluding mineral workings, agricultural and forestry buildings and other temporary uses.
Core Strategy DPD	The Development Plan Document within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's Local Development Framework which will set out the long-term vision and objectives for the area. It will contain a set of strategic policies which are required to deliver the Council's vision for the area, including the broad approach to future development.
DCLG	The Department of Communities and Local Government
Development Plan Document (DPD)	A special planning document within the Council's Local Development Framework which sets out policies for development and the use of land.
Environmental Report	A document required by the SEA Directive, as part of an environmental assessment, which identifies, describes and evaluated the likely effects on the environment of implementing a plan or programme.
Green Belt	Land which is designated in development plans to be kept open in accordance with PPG2.
Habitat	A site or areas inhabited by wild flora and fauna upon which they are reliant for the continuing free existence.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	Consists of a number of documents which together form the spacial strategy for development and the use of land.
Local Plan	The Borough-wide planning document (adopted incorporating alterations in June 2003), which sets out policies for development and the use of land. It will be replaced by the Local Development Framework.
ODPM	The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)	A series of notes issued by the government, setting out policy guidance on different aspects of planning. They are being replaced by Planning Policy Statements.

Glossary

Planning Policy Statements (PPS)	A series of statements issued by the government, setting out policy guidance on different aspects of planning. They are replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes.
Previously Developed Land	Land which is or was occupied by a building (excluding those used for agriculture and forestry). It also includes land within the curtilage of the building; for example, a house and its garden would be considered to be previously developed land.
SSSI	A Site of Special Scientific Interest.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A tool for integrating environmental considerations into decision-making by ensuring that significant environmental effects of the decision are taken into account.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Provides supplementary guidance to policies and proposals contained within Development Plan Documents. It does not form part of the Development Plan, nor is it subject to independent examination, but its contents can be a 'material consideration' in the consideration of a planning application.
Sustainability Appraisal	Appraisal of plans, strategies and proposals to test them against broad sustainability objectives.
Sustainable Development (SD)	<p>Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland 1987). Four priorities are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change and energy • Sustainable consumption and production • Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement • Sustainable communities
Target	Provides a guide to the speed and direction in which indicators should move to achieve objectives.

Appendix – Full list of Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

The table below shows the full list of Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for the Royal Borough. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework in section 3.3 (Table 2) is a subset of this table since not all the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives are relevant to the VDS. Those selected for the VDS are shown in bold type.

	RBWM Sustainability Appraisal Objectives
1	Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home.
2	Improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health.
3	Reduce poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas and the rest.
4	Raise educational achievement levels and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work.
5	Reduce crime and the fear of crime.
6	Create and sustain vibrant and distinctive communities which recognise the needs and contributions of all individuals.
7	Improve accessibility to all services and facilities including the countryside, natural and historic environment.
8	Encourage increased engagement in cultural and sporting activity across all sections of the community.
9	Ensure high and stable levels of employment for everyone's benefit.
10	Sustain economic growth and competitiveness and a buoyant, sustainable tourism sector by focusing on the principles of smart growth.
11	Stimulate economic revival.
12	Develop a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy that excels in innovation with higher value, low impact activities.
13	Re-use previously developed land and existing materials from buildings, and ensure that there is a high quality townscape.
14	Reduce the risk of flooding and the resultant detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment.
15	Reduce air pollution and the proportion of the population subject to noise pollution.
16	Address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and ensure that the borough is prepared for its impacts.
17	Conserve and enhance the borough's biodiversity.
18	Protect and enhance the borough's countryside, natural and historic environment.
19	Improve the efficiency of transport networks by enhancing the proportion of transport by sustainable modes and by promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.
20	Reduce the global social and environmental impact of consumption of resources by using sustainably and ethically produced, local or low impact products.
21	Reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste.
22	Maintain and improve the water quality of the borough's rivers and ground waters, and achieve sustainable water resources management.
23	Increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the borough.

RESPONSE FORM

Question 1: PPPSI Review

Do you agree that this list of plans, policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives is accurate for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Cookhams Visual Design Statement? If not, please list the PPPSIs you consider should be deleted and any other PPPSIs you believe should be added.

Question 2: SA Baseline Data

Do you agree that the baseline data contains appropriate information? If not, please let us know what further data should be added.

Question 3: Key Sustainability Issues

Do you agree these are the Key Sustainability Issues to be considered for the VDS?

Question 4

Do you agree these are the appropriate objectives, indicators and targets to use in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework?

Question 5

Do you agree that this Scoping Report sets out an appropriate methodology for the Sustainability Appraisal of the VDS for Cookham Parish?

Do you have any other comments which will help the VDS Group prepare the Sustainability Appraisal?

Your details:

-

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....POSTCODE.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER: E-MAIL ADDRESS

Please send your responses to:

Mrs Janet Wheeler, Council Offices, High Road, Cookham Rise, Berks, SL6 9JF,

or e-mail them to vds@cookham.com