

London Borough of Hillingdon
Unitary Development Plan
(adopted 1998)
Saved Policies
27th September 2007



HILLINGDON
LONDON



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INTRODUCTION TO SAVED POLICIES

The 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act introduced a new development plan regime including Local Development Frameworks. A three year phase-in period was allowed during which time old style local plan policies would remain in force unless they were replaced by new measures. Hillingdon has been at the forefront of the production of its Local Development Framework. However in 2006, following the Lichfield and Staffordshire planning inquiries and changing requirements, it became evident to Government that the target for the replacement of existing plans was not going to be met nationally. As a result in August 2006 the Secretary of State issued a direction to save policies. Each of Hillingdon's Unitary Development Plan policies was subjected to six tests identified in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (2004). Following Member approval in March 2007 a request to save the remaining policies was submitted to the Government Office for London for further scrutiny.

A direction was issued on 24 September 2007 by the Government Office for London confirming Hillingdon's request to 'Save' key local policies and to delete obsolete or rarely used policies. This was effective from the 27 September 2007.

How to use the Saved Policies

In this 'Saved Policies' version of Hillingdon's Unitary Development Plan much of the document remains the same as the 1998 adopted version. However deleted policies and supporting text have been struck through. Where appropriate text has been added in boxes indicating where specific issues are addressed by national guidance or through the London Plan (2004). Maps have been relabeled but the boundaries and content is the same as the 1998 original.

Following an early revision to Hillingdon's car parking standards and planning inquiry in 2002 and more recent changes originating from the London Plan, the original standards have been replaced. The Interim Parking Standards are located in Appendix 1.

CONTENTS

PART 1

1.	Introduction	9
2.	The Principal Themes of the Plan	15
	Part 1 Policies	41

PART 2

SECTION 1: MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

3.	Open Land and Countryside	47
4.	Ecology and Nature Conservation	71
5.	Built Environment	89
6.	Other Environmental Considerations	103

SECTION 2: MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

7.	Housing	117
8.	Shopping and Town Centres	133
9.	Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities	167

SECTION 3: MAINTAINING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

10.	The Local Economy	189
11.	Airports and Aviation	203
12.	Tourism	213
13.	Minerals and Waste Disposal	219

SECTION 4: REDUCING TRAVEL DEMAND

14.	Accessibility and Movement	245
-----	----------------------------	-----

SECTION 5:

15.	Proposals	267
-----	-----------	-----

Hayes/West Drayton Corridor

~~PR1~~	~~Station Site, Hayes~~	271
PR2	Western Core Area, Hayes	272
~~PR3~~	~~Yiewsley/West Drayton~~	273
PR4	Thorn EMI Complex, Blyth Road, Hayes	274

~~PR5~~ :	~~BASF Site, West Drayton~~	275
~~PR6~~ :	~~DRA Site, Warwick Road, West Drayton~~	275
~~PR7~~ :	~~Land at Bourne Avenue, Hayes~~	277
PR8 :	RAF West Drayton	278
~~PR9~~ :	~~Minet Estate (St Christopher's), Hayes~~	279
PR10 :	Powergen/Bulls Bridge Site, North Hyde Gardens, Hayes	280
~~PR11~~ :	~~The Chestnuts, Barra Hall Park, Hayes~~	281

Uxbridge & Harefield Planning Area

~~PR12~~ :	~~175-222A High Street, Uxbridge (Block 6/7)~~	282
~~PR13~~ :	~~Land at High Street, Vine Street, Hillingdon Road, Uxbridge (Block 13)~~	283
~~PR14~~ :	~~Mahjacks Island Site~~	285
~~PR15~~ :	~~Windsor Street~~	286
PR16 :	Coppermill, Harefield	286
~~PR17~~ :	~~Harefield House, High Street, Harefield~~	288
~~PR18~~ :	~~Manor Court, Church Hill, Harefield~~	289
PR19 :	Breakspear House, Breakspear Road North, Harefield	290
PR20 :	Harefield Hospital	290
PR21 :	Hillingdon Hospital	291
PR22 :	Brunel University	292
PR23 :	Hillingdon Circus	294
~~PR24~~ :	~~Hillingdon House Farm, Park Road, Uxbridge~~	295

Ruislip/Northwood Planning Area

~~PR25~~ :	~~Battle of Britain House, Ruislip~~	296
~~PR26~~ :	~~St. Vincents Hospital, Northwood Hills~~	297

ANNEX 1 - Car Parking Standards	312
--	-----

LIST OF POLICIES	323
-------------------------	-----

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	333
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No

1	Areas Covered by Local Plans	13
2	Key Diagram	38
3	Derelict and Damaged Land	69
4	Archaeological Priority Areas	101
5	Areas Sensitive to High Buildings	102
6	Areas at Risk from Flooding and River Corridor	112

7	Primary, Secondary and Core Shopping Areas of Town and Local Centres	
	7A Harefield	150
	7B Ickenham	151
	7C North Hillingdon	152
	7D Hillingdon Heath	153
	7E South Ruislip	154
	7F The Willows, Willow Tree Lane, Yeading	155
	7G Harlington	156
	7H Northwood Hills – Minor Town Centre	157
	7J Green Lane, Northwood – Minor Town Centre	158
	7K Eastcote – Minor Town Centre	159
	7L Ruislip Manor – Minor Town Centre	160
	7M Uxbridge Road, Hayes – Minor Town Centre	161-162
	7N Ruislip – Major Town Centre	163
	7P Hayes – Major Town Centre	164
	7Q Yiewsley/West Drayton – Major Town Centre	165
8	Areas of Open Space Deficiency	185
9	Residential Areas More Than 400m from a Children’s Playground	186
10	Sand and Gravel Deposits, Rail Aggregates Depots and Rail Connected Waste Transfer Stations	242
11	Cycle Routes	264
12	Planning Sub-Committee Areas	298
13	Hayes/West Drayton Regeneration Corridor	299

4. ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

Introduction

4.1 The public interest in wildlife, their surroundings and the wider environment has increased considerably over recent years. It is now generally accepted that the planning process must take nature conservation and wildlife into account and actively plan for it through protecting and improving the existing environment, and creating new environments and wildlife habitats. This is endorsed in Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG, para. 66) and is reflected in several Acts and Circulars, most particularly the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), the Conservation (Natural Habitats &C.) Regulations 1994 and PPG9. The latter re-emphasises the government's commitment to nature conservation and states that "the conservation of nature is important. Attractive environments, where attention is given to nature conservation, are essential to social and economic well-being. With careful planning and control, conservation and development can be compatible. The Government looks to local authorities to keep themselves informed of the state of the natural environment locally, and to take account of nature conservation interests wherever relevant to local decisions." Furthermore, "The (European) Habitats Directive states that UDP shall include policies encouraging the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna." This Plan therefore aims to protect habitats of ecological importance throughout the Borough, although where these occur on land used for agriculture, the usual changes in the way agricultural land is managed, as permitted under the General Development Order, will still be possible.

4.2 It is also generally accepted that wildlife and the natural areas which support it can perform a variety of functions in the urban area. Informal recreation, leisure, education, agriculture, forestry, and nature conservation are all activities for which such areas may be used. They provide much needed diversity in our visual surroundings and produce a landscape that can be enjoyed by everyone. Wildlife habitats cross the boundary of town and country and Hillingdon is in a favourable location with a great diversity of habitats. In fact, Hillingdon forms a vital link between inner London and the surrounding countryside of the Home Counties, with both natural and man-made corridors enabling flora and fauna to penetrate into the very heart of London.

Protection of Habitats

4.3 Hillingdon was identified as having one of the most important habitat networks in Greater London in the former Greater London Council's Wildlife Habitat Survey carried out in 1984/5. It has important areas of unimproved grassland (including ancient hay meadows and pastures) and broad-leaved woodland, much of which is ancient in origin. Hillingdon is also one of the richest Boroughs in terms of

aquatic habitats. The Borough has 20% of all the standing water in the Greater London area and has an equally important network of rivers and canals.

4.4 The London Ecology Unit (LEU) continues the work of the Wildlife Habitat Survey and identifies eleven Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. (See Table 4.2). These sites are of a quality which exists in very few places in London and have an especially varied fauna and flora. Of the 37 sites of Borough Importance there are 12 Grade I (the best from a Borough perspective) and 25 Grade II (valuable on the same criteria as Grade I, but of a lower quality). Six Sites of Local Importance have been identified and, further work will be done to identify additional sites with potential for 'Local' designation. Many of these sites have been re-surveyed during the summer of 1993, as well as other areas of the Borough not previously identified as being important for nature conservation. The results of this re-survey have been published as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and amended site boundaries will be included as part of an early review of this plan.

4.5 Within the Borough there are also six sites designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's). These have been selected against national criteria as needing protection, being the best examples of our national heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. All these sites with the exception of Harefield Pit, which has been designated as a SSSI for geological reasons, fall within Sites of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation. The Uxbridge/ Harefield area is very important for nature conservation. The Grand Union Canal runs through the area and this, coupled with the complex river network provided by the Rivers Colne, Frays and Pinn, makes this area particularly important. The area contains many of the Borough's sites of nature conservation importance including five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in their entirety. The Ruislip/Northwood Area contains three extensive woodlands, Park Wood, Copse Wood and Mad Bess Wood, which together with Bayhurst Woods in the Uxbridge/Harefield area form part of a large complex of ancient woodland known as Ruislip Woods, which together make up the sixth Site of Special Scientific Interest within the borough.

4.6 Ruislip Woods has also been declared as a National Nature Reserve by English Nature. In addition the Council has designated four sites within the borough as Local Nature Reserves, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and several other sites as nature reserves. All are managed specifically for nature conservation. Consideration will be given to designating the existing nature reserves of The Grove, Uxbridge Moor, Stockers Lake, Frays Farm Meadows/Denham Lock Wood/Harefield Place area and

Ickenham Marsh as Local Nature Reserves under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

4.7 The Local Planning Authority will take account of the ecological and scientific importance of sites within the Borough of national importance (SSSI's), regional importance (Sites of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation) and local importance (Sites of Borough Grades 1 and 2 or Local Importance for nature conservation) as well as designated Local Nature Reserves and other nature reserves. It aims to protect the most valuable and sensitive sites by averting harm to the ecological or scientific value of a site resulting from development and/or a change of land use on or in the near vicinity. The Local Planning Authority will have regard to the relative significance of international, national, local and informal designations in considering the weight to be attached to nature conservation interests. Where appropriate, developers may be asked to submit an ecological assessment in order to demonstrate that the proposed development will not have adverse ecological effects. Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be given the highest level of protection. The impact on sites of lesser importance should be kept to a minimum. All sites of importance for nature conservation are shown on the Proposals Map. Changes to site boundaries, or new sites identified and proposed for such designation by the Local Planning Authority and/or the London Ecology Committee, will be subject to review.

4.8 The London Ecology Unit also identified three Countryside Conservation Areas where traditional land use has continued until the present day (see paras 3.27, 3.28 and Policy OL15). Although not of consistently high nature conservation value throughout, such areas have considerable visual and aesthetic appeal resulting from their mix of small fields, hedges, copses, woods and ponds. The LEU also stresses the importance of particular corridors through the urban areas, such as the Grand Union Canal and Yeading Brook, which provide wildlife links from the open countryside to the more heavily urbanised areas (see para 3.22). The whole of the Grand Union Canal is included as a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. The Council will continue to liaise with adjoining local authorities to ensure that ecological policies and the management of biological networks are consistent across boundaries.

EC1 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OF SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, OR BE UNACCEPTABLY DETRIMENTAL TO SITES OF METROPOLITAN OR BOROUGH (GRADE I) IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION, DESIGNATED LOCAL NATURE RESERVES AND OTHER NATURE RESERVES. IF DEVELOPMENT IS PROPOSED ON OR IN THE NEAR VICINITY OF SUCH SITES, APPLICANTS MUST SUBMIT AN ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT WHERE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT HAVE UNACCEPTABLE ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS.

EC2 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL PROMOTE NATURE CONSERVATION AS A POSITIVE LAND USE AND WILL TAKE NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LAND ESPECIALLY WITHIN SITES OF BOROUGH (GRADE II) AND LOCAL IMPORTANCE, AS DEFINED BY THE LONDON ECOLOGY UNIT. THE PROTECTION OF SPECIES AFFORDED BY THE WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AMENDED 1985) WILL BE A MATERIAL CONSIDERATION. WHERE APPROPRIATE THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY MAY ASK APPLICANTS TO SUBMIT AN ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT BEFORE IT DETERMINES DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.

EC3 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL REQUIRE PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE TO HAVE REGARD TO THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON SUCH SITES OF CHANGES IN THE WATER TABLE AND OF AIR, WATER, SOIL AND OTHER EFFECTS WHICH MAY ARISE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT.

TABLE 4.1 DESIGNATED SITES.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest. (SSSI's)

Ruislip Woods.
Old Park Wood, Harefield.
Mid Colne Valley, Harefield.
Frays Farm Meadows, Ickenham
Denham Lock Wood, Ickenham.
Harefield Pit.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR's)

Yeading Woods.
Yeading Brook Meadows.
Ruislip.
Denham Country Park.

National Nature Reserves.

Ruislip Woods.

Other Nature Reserves

Stocker's Lake, Harefield.
Springwell Reed Beds, Harefield
The Alder glade, Uxbridge.
Tarleton's Lake, Ruislip.
Dews Farm Sandpit, South
Harefield.
Park Road Ponds, Uxbridge.
Uxbridge Moor, Uxbridge.
The Grove, Hillingdon.
Harefield Place, Harefield.
Denham Lock Wood, Denham.
Frays Island, West Drayton.
Ickenham Marsh, Ickenham.
Highgrove, Eastcote.

TABLE 4.2 SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

Sites of Metropolitan Importance:

The Grand Union Canal.
Ruislip Woods and Poor's Field.
Old Park Wood, Harefield.
Yeading Brook Fields.
Carp Ponds and Broad Dock,
West Drayton.
Little Britain, Cowley.
Mid Colne Valley
(including Frays Farm).
Springwell and Stockers Lake,
Harefield.
Coppermill Down, Harefield
The Lower Colne, between
West Drayton and Longford.
Perry Oaks Sewage Farm,
Heathrow.
Land between Borough boundary
and Eastern boundary
of Heathrow Airport.

Sites of Borough Grade I Importance:

Hayes Pasture at Yeading Brook, Hayes.
Haydon Hall Meadows, Eastcote.
Shepherds Hill Woods and Fields,
Harefield/Northwood.
Haste Hill Rough and Northwood Golf
Course, Northwood.
Ickenham Marsh, Austins Lane Pastures
and Springwell and Freezeland Covert,
Ickenham.
East Colne Valley Chalk Pits.
Churchyard and Wood, Harefield.
Uxbridge Ponds, Uxbridge.
Dew's Dell, Harefield.
New Years' Green, Harefield.
River Colne, Canal and River Frays at
Uxbridge Moor.
Home Covert and Lowdham Field,
Hillingdon.
Banks of the Duke of Northumberland's
River.
Yeading Brook-Hayes Bridge Leisure
Gardens.
Former Two Bridges Farm Site,
East Bedfont.

Sites of Borough Grade II Importance:

Dog Kennel Covert, Cranford.
Cranford Park, Cranford.
River Pinn and Manor Farm Pastures,
Yiewsley.
The Piggeries, West Drayton.
Chapel Lane Pastures, Yiewsley.
Stockley Road Rough, West Drayton.
The Gravel Pit, Northwood.
Hospital Meadow, Northwood Hills.
Borough Hill, Northwood Hills.
Potter Street Hill, Northwood Hills.
Old Pumping Station Field, Ruislip.
Clack Lane and Pinn near West Ruislip.
Highgrove, Eastcote.
Uxbridge Common Meadows, Uxbridge.
Common Plantation and Park Wood,

Sites of Local Importance:

Hillingdon Court Park, Hillingdon.
River Pinn near Eastcote.
Yeading Brook between
Roxbourne Park and Ruislip Gardens.
Mary's Wood End, Hayes.
Uxbridge Road, Hayes.
Hayes Shrub, Hayes.
Spikes Bridge-King George's Field,
Yeading.

Ickenham.
Ickenham Pond, Ickenham.
The Diary Farm, Harefield.
The Grove, Hillingdon.
Ickenham Common, Ickenham.
White Heath Farm Woods, adjacent
fields and Harefield Grove, Harefield.
Harefield Hall and the Lodge, Ickenham.
Brackenbury Railway Cutting, Harefield.
Knightscode Farm Pond, Harefield.
Harefield Green Pond, Harefield.
Northwood Road, derelict house, Harefield.

Promotion of Nature Conservation

4.9 The Council is the largest single landowner in the Borough and owns and manages large areas of open space, parks, golf courses, playing fields, cemeteries, woodlands, as well as a significant amount of farmland and many miles of roadside verge and hedgerow. It has therefore a tremendous opportunity to further the cause of nature conservation by seeking to maximise the nature conservation potential of land in its ownership or under its control. The local planning authority will produce a nature conservation strategy in consultation with other local authority departments, statutory bodies and local groups, which will promote the protection, enhancement and management of sites of nature conservation value. Priority will be accorded to protecting habitats that cannot be recreated. Priorities for sites of local importance should take account of the biological components and their potential as a source of enjoyment in the context of the recreational, educational and social needs of the local community. Steps will be taken to further the co-existence of natural communities alongside other land uses. The council will adopt management policies and where appropriate produce management plans in consultation with nature conservation groups which maintain and enhance the nature conservation interest of open land within its ownership and it will encourage other landowners to adopt such practices.

4.10 The Council intends to prepare a Nature Conservation Strategy for the Borough, as recommended in LPAC's Strategic Advice (SA, para. 8.28) and English Nature's 'Planning for Wildlife in Urban Areas' (1987). This will not only monitor and review existing sites of ecological value, but will seek out opportunities to create new environments of ecological interest.

4.11 Attractive wildlife sites and others which are appropriate for environmental education are often subject to intense use and have implications for land use. The Council will promote environmental education by ensuring that all schools and local people have access to areas for appreciating and studying the natural environment.

Sites suitable for environmental education, such as local parks, school grounds etc., will be identified in the Nature Conservation Strategy.

Creation of New Habitats

4.12 Nature conservation can be integrated into landscaping around all kinds of development, using native species to attract a variety of wildlife. Features of potential value to wildlife include parks, gardens and amenity spaces within residential areas. Opportunities will therefore be sought to encourage new habitats in private developments, through voluntary or legal agreements, and conditions attached to planning permissions. Species appropriate to the local ecology should be used in any landscaping or planting schemes, except where special requirements of purpose or location dictate otherwise. When appropriate, the Local Planning Authority will also seek to secure funding for the future management of created or enhanced nature conservation areas. Changes in the way agricultural land is used in the future may also present new opportunities. Less emphasis on maximising production may mean less use of pesticides and artificial fertilisers, enlarged field margins and the opportunity for the management of more land for its wildlife interest. Sites adopted as Local Nature Reserves are set out below.

EC4 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR EXISTING SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE, IN PARTICULAR THOSE VULNERABLE TO DEVELOPMENT, AND WILL SEEK TO IDENTIFY NEW SITES SUITABLE FOR DESIGNATION AS LOCAL NATURE RESERVES FOLLOWING APPRAISALS OF LAND FOR NATURE CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES.

EC5 IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY MAY REQUIRE CERTAIN ON-SITE ECOLOGICAL FEATURES TO BE RETAINED IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND SEEK TO ENHANCE THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND ECOLOGICAL INTEREST OF SITES OR CREATE NEW HABITATS THROUGH THE USE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO PLANNING PERMISSIONS OR THROUGH PLANNING AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED WITH DEVELOPERS.

4.13 Disused land and wasteland can also offer wildlife and nature conservation opportunities if managed appropriately, particularly in urban areas where it can also have amenity value. It may be possible to use some sites for open space or nature conservation on a temporary basis until required for new development.

EC6 WHERE EXISTING DERELICT, DAMAGED AND TEMPORARILY VACANT LAND HAS ECOLOGICAL, EDUCATIONAL, RECREATION AND SOCIAL POTENTIAL FOR THE ENJOYMENT AND PROTECTION OF NATURE OR WHERE JUSTIFIED BY THE ECOLOGICAL INTEREST OF THE LAND OR THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL AREA, THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THE LAND OR PART OF IT IS MAINTAINED TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY AS WILDLIFE HABITAT.

