

## ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

**1.1.1** The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance is to provide further guidance to the Southwark Plan 2002 Part I Section 5 and Part II Policy 1.2 to guide development within the Elephant and Castle Area of Opportunity illustrated in Figure 1. This information will be useful for developers, the community, residents, businesses, planning officers and prospective developers considering planning applications within the Elephant and Castle Supplementary Planning Guidance area.

**1.1.2** The Elephant and Castle area is identified in the draft Southwark Plan (2002) and in the draft Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) as an Opportunity Area. (See Planning Policy Context below).

**1.1.3** The Elephant and Castle area was redeveloped in the 1960s when the shopping centre was built and the roads laid out with pedestrian underpasses. For many years it has been recognised that design features of the area have led to serious problems of crime and fear of crime. In addition to this, the design and layout of the area makes interchange between public transport modes considerably less convenient than it should be. It is for these reasons that a major redevelopment of the area is needed to create a new place geared towards the needs of pedestrians and public transport users.

**1.1.4** This provides a challenge as the existing roads carry very large volumes of traffic. Making the area more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists will be difficult to reconcile with the need to keep traffic moving. It may be that some form of pedestrian segregation will continue to be needed.



**1.1.5** The Elephant and Castle provides an opportunity for more shopping facilities in the borough. Currently, Southwark has a low level of shopping provision which means that an unusually large number of shopping trips made by people in Southwark are to centres outside the borough – particularly to the West End. Providing more shopping locally will mean people will have less need to travel.

**1.1.6** Bearing in mind the expected growth in the population and their spending power, substantial growth will be sustainable. The Elephant and Castle provides an excellent location for this growth given its existing public transport links and the expected improvements with the proposed tram. This will enable growth to take place in a mainly car-free centre rather than have it distributed to less well-connected centres.

**1.1.7** This Supplementary Planning Guidance is intended to be a step towards the preparation of a master plan on which the local planning authority will be seeking agreement with local residents and businesses, land-owners, transport operators and other partners. It sets out the Council's vision for the area and the basic principles on which the success or failure of a plan for the area will be judged.

**1.1.8** The Supplementary Planning Guidance will be followed by a Comprehensive Development Framework which will establish in more detail the potential of the area, the general alignment of new roads, bus routes and the route of the Cross River Transit tram and the distribution of major land-uses. The Comprehensive Development Framework will also indicate where smaller sites will accommodate new housing to allow for the decanting of the larger housing areas that are being considered for redevelopment. Not all of these sites will be in the Supplementary Planning Guidance area.

**1.1.9** This Supplementary Planning Guidance will be updated to take into account the proposals and guidelines that emerge in the process of preparing the Comprehensive Development Framework. In particular it will respond to the effects of the proposed Congestion Charging Scheme once these are more fully understood following its implementation early in 2003.

**1.1.10** The Comprehensive Development Framework will also establish urban design principles to be followed in the redevelopment including guidelines for the planning of open space and the public realm. This will confirm that the Elephant and Castle is a suitable location for tall buildings.

**1.1.11** The Comprehensive Development Framework will guide the preparation of a master plan to be agreed with the Council's development partners, the community, land-owners and businesses in the area.

## **1.2 The Council's Role**

**1.2.1** The Council has three distinct roles in the Elephant and Castle area as:

- Regeneration Agency;
- Planning Authority;
- Landowner.

**1.2.2 Regeneration Agency** Southwark Council has been actively promoting the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle area for several years. The Elephant and Castle plays an important role in the Council's strategies for the regeneration of the borough in that areas with great potential for growth in job opportunities come together here with areas with high levels of unemployment and other social and economic problems. As one of the main public transport interchanges in south London, needs and opportunities may be integrated.



**1.2.3** The Elephant Links Partnership was set up in 1999 to run the regeneration programme which has funding from the Government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). The programme co-ordinates environmental improvements with measures to deal with social exclusion.

**1.2.4** Southwark Council will be seeking to enter into a partnership with a developer to deliver the redevelopment of the area early in 2003.

**1.2.5 Planning Authority** Southwark Council uses its function as the local planning authority, granting or refusing planning permission in accordance with the policies of the Southwark Plan, applying conditions and entering into planning agreements with developers to secure sustainable development. Guidance contained in all other relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance notes, especially the Sustainability Appraisal and Planning Obligations SPGs, will be taken into account.

**1.2.6 Land Owner** Southwark Council is a major land owner in the Elephant and Castle SPG area with interests in the Leisure Centre and several housing estates. The Council is able to promote the regeneration of the area by making land in its control available for redevelopment wherever appropriate. Particularly with regard to housing estates owned by the local authority, this is done in consultation with the residents of the area to ensure that their interests are protected.

### **1.3 Planning Policy Context**

**1.3.1** This Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Elephant and Castle has been developed within the context of the national and regional planning framework. The national planning framework is set out in Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG).



## National Framework

**1.3.2** The Government sets out its national planning framework in a series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes or PPGs. Relevant PPGs in relation to the Elephant and Castle are; PPG 1 General Policy and Principles, PPG3 Housing, PPG4 Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, PPG6 Town Centres and Retail Development, PPG13 Transport and PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, PPG17 Planning for Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation.

## Regional Framework

**1.3.3** The Mayors Plan for London is called the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) and its objectives are described in Part 1 of the Southwark Plan (2002). This SPG is working towards achieving economic growth, environmental protection, increasing housing provision and providing for community needs which the SDS objectives encompass.

**1.3.4** The SDS clearly states that high quality well designed development and regeneration will help support and re-establish town centres as attractive places with higher density housing and as distinctive centres of the community's life. The Plan suggests that Local Plans set out policies that support a wide role for town centres as locations for leisure and cultural activities as well as business and housing. This SPG supports this aim and sets out a flexible approach for accommodating appropriate development.

**1.3.5** In the SDS the Elephant and Castle is identified as a district shopping centre. This position in the hierarchy is acknowledged as a position that may change over time. Development should relate to the scale of retail commercial and leisure development in the centre and to perceived need.

More specifically the SDS spatial priorities which have an impact on Elephant and Castle are:

**1.3.6** Living in London – opportunities for additional housing will be in town centre redevelopment and near public transport interchanges.

**1.3.7** Enjoying London – encouraging leisure uses in town centres, which contribute to London's evening economy and ensure that town centres remain lively beyond shopping hours.

**1.3.8** The draft Southwark Plan (2002) states:

*"The Elephant and Castle will undergo major redevelopment in the coming years to take advantage of its important position as a transport interchange on the southern boundary of central London. It will also be one of the main areas for population growth and services to the population - especially higher education. The retail centre at the Elephant and Castle may expand significantly so that its position in the hierarchy of town centres in London changes from being a 'district centre' to a 'metropolitan centre'."* (The draft Southwark Plan – Part I)

**1.3.9** The draft SDS states:

*"The planning framework for the area around the Elephant and Castle should draw on its good public transport accessibility, proximity to Central Activity Zone and relatively affordable land. This could be a suitable location to meet some of Central London's longer-term needs for extra office space and is suitable for tall buildings. Large scale, car based retail development should not be encouraged. This framework should seek significant new housing and integrate this with a more efficient transport interchange. Environmental and traffic management improvements are crucial to the successful redevelopment of this southern gateway to Central London."* (The draft London Plan paragraph 2B.24)



**1.3.10** The SDS sets minimum targets for homes and jobs to be achieved up to 2016 in areas of opportunity. For the Elephant and Castle, within an identified area of 23 hectares, the targets are 4,200 new jobs and 4,200 new homes.

**1.3.11** The Elephant and Castle is identified as part of the Central Activities Zone and as an area of mixed-uses with a strong academic character due to the presence of South Bank University and the London College of Printing.

**1.3.12** This SPG has taken account and integrated the Mayor's policies outlined wherever possible into the policies and land use preferences.

#### **Local Framework**

**1.3.13** This Supplementary Planning Guidance supports both the current Southwark Unitary Development Plan (1995) and the new draft Southwark Plan (2002).

**1.3.14** This SPG has been prepared in accordance with the Southwark Unitary Development Plan (1995) Policy R.2.1 which states:

*"In designated Regeneration areas at Bankside, Elephant and Castle, Old Kent Road and Peckham and within the London Docklands Area (the UDA), as originally designated in 1981, investment will be welcomed and public/private sector partnerships encouraged. In these Regeneration Areas, or others which may be designated later, planning permission will normally be granted for proposals which:*

- *Generate employment;*
- *Improve the environment;*
- *Meet the needs of local residents;*
- *Bring back into beneficial use vacant land or buildings.*



*Unless environmental or amenity considerations suggest otherwise.”*

**1.3.15** This SPG is prepared in accordance with and supports the new draft Southwark Plan (2002) which states:

**Policy 1.2 – Area Action Plans**

*“The local planning authority will prepare action area plans which will form Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) that will guide development in the identified Opportunity Areas and in other relevant areas with high accessibility containing a mix of commercial, cultural or community uses and where there is significant potential for growth in employment and population. These development frameworks will identify the specific characteristics of the area that need to be enhanced or developed.*

*More detailed requirements are given in the Action Area Plan SPG for:*

- i. London Bridge;*
- ii. Elephant and Castle;*
- iii. Canada Water;*
- iv. Bankside and The Borough;*
- v. Bermondsey Spa;*
- vi. Old Kent Road;*
- vii. Peckham.*

**Reason**

*Significant growth in wealth creation, employment opportunities and in the number of homes can be accommodated in certain key locations with high accessibility to public transport. The specific characteristics of each area need to be taken into account and the potential to provide for growth carefully considered to ensure that the quality of*

*life of residents is maintained and enhanced. In the London South Central designated area, the best aspects of central London will be welcomed.”*

**1.4 Planning Policy Objectives**

**1.4.1** The Council has the following planning policy objectives for the Elephant and Castle area:

- i. Secure the comprehensive regeneration of the Elephant and Castle i.e. investment in transport, infrastructure, housing (both social and private), commercial development and the environment;
- ii. Removal of the of the constraints that have held back this area from achieving its true potential – the road system, the roundabouts, the shopping centre, the girdle of housing estates;
- iii. Establishment of a new mixed-use town centre with clear public realm;
- iv. To develop to a density consistent with a central London location and a major transport interchange;
- v. To achieve a quality of development which is consistent with a central London location;
- vi. To create an integrated public transport interchange which maximises ease of change between trains, underground, buses and other sustainable forms of transport and ease of movement within the area;
- vii. Development which is physically integrated into adjoining neighbourhoods;
- viii. Physical structure that allows organic change and development over time;
- ix. Shift priority from motorists to public transport users, cyclists, and pedestrians;
- x. Balance the needs of new and existing residents and businesses;