

Background

Sustainable Development

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as “*development, which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (The Brundtland Commission Report – Our Common Future, 1987)

March 2005 saw the Government publishing its new sustainable development strategy ‘Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy’. This strategy aims to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in an integrated way through the planning system, working towards a sustainable and productive economy, promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well being.

To achieve these aims, 5 guiding principles were identified:

1. Living within environmental limits
2. Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
3. Achieving a sustainable economy
4. Promoting good governance and
5. Using sound science responsibly

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (DCLG, 2005) reinforces that Local Development Frameworks must ensure that achieving sustainable development is pursued in line with the above principles. To accord with this, the UK Strategy objectives have been fully integrated into the sustainability framework set out in this report.

Purpose of Sustainability appraisal and the Sustainability Appraisal Report

Contributing to sustainable development is a key requirement for the Hastings Local Development Framework. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 contains a statutory requirement for local planning authorities to undertake their functions with a view achieving sustainable development. Therefore, the sustainability appraisal process that appraises social, environmental and economic effects of the plans and policies contained within the LDF, to ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The following Sustainability Appraisal Report will identify the likely significant effects of the Core Strategy Issues and Options, and Preferred Approaches, produced as part of the LDF. It will also identify the extent to which the implementation of the approaches within the Core Strategy will deliver the social, environmental and economic objectives of sustainable development.

Plan objectives and outline of contents

The Core Strategy presents a spatial vision supported by spatial and strategic objectives, to provide a long-term strategy to deliver regeneration and sustainable growth in the town over the next 20 years. The Core Strategy sets an overall framework for the development town, and will underpin the other documents that will be prepared as part of the LDF.

The Core Strategy Preferred Approaches presents 13 strategic and spatial objectives. These are:

- Objective 1: Increase business activity and create employment through town centre office developments, more high quality flexible industrial floor space, and excellent education and training.
- Objective 2: Provide additional homes that give a range of housing options for existing and future residents, including the provision of affordable housing.
- Objective 3: Identify sufficient land and floor space that will support the needs and opportunities for business, retail, education and skills sectors, to strengthen the local economy and enable increases in economic activity rates, employment rates, and average wages.
- Objective 4: Prioritise the use of previously developed land.
- Objective 5: Identify and promote retail sites in Hastings town centre and St Leonards district centre.
- Objective 6: Monitor and facilitate the local shopping areas of Old Town, Silverhill and Bohemia, so that they are safe, attractive and thriving places, which make a positive contribution to the local economy.
- Objective 7: Work at a local, county and national level to secure improvements in strategic transport infrastructure so that the town performs as a regional hub.
- Objective 8: All major development schemes will identify and promote sustainable alternatives to car use including walking, cycling and public transport.
- Objective 9: Achieve the sustainable and continued use of the seafront by ensuring it has a range of year round activities and facilities that attract residents, workers and visitors.
- Objective 10: Enable an increased take-up of sports, leisure and cultural activities by residents and visitors through the provision of accessible and affordable facilities and programmes.
- Objective 11: Improve the health and well being of the population, and contribute to community cohesion by providing community facilities and establishing a network of open and green spaces that are easily reached by residents.
- Objective 12: Enable the delivery of high quality and sustainably designed developments.
- Objective 13: Promote, enhance and manage the town's unique cultural heritage, historic buildings and natural landscape; making best use of the town's individual character and environment, to contribute to economic regeneration.

Environmental protection objectives

The SEA Directive requires us to identify how “the environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan, and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account”

The Core Strategy Preferred Approaches objectives have not been separated under specific headings relating to social, economic and environmental issues. The main reason for this is that sustainability is an integrated part of the planning system, in which environmental protection issues are fully considered. However, plan objectives 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13, can be described as being more specific in reflecting environmental protection objectives.

This report has had full regard to the outcome of both the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Appropriate Assessment is a legal requirement to protect sites of international environmental importance, referred to as Natura 2000 sites. The process of undertaking AA requires the local authority to consider the impact of development on not only the relevant sites within the town, but also the impact of development on Natura 2000 sites in other authorities.

Both the SFRA and AA can be accessed at www.hastings.gov.uk/ldf.

Environmental protection objectives have been fed into both the Sustainability Objectives used in this appraisal as well as the plan objectives shown above. The environmental objectives at local, county and regional levels are considered in more detail in the analysis of relevant plans and programmes, and the baseline assessment shown in Appendix A and B of this report.

Compliance with the SEA Directive

In addition to the requirement for Sustainability Appraisal, the European Directive 2001/42/EC (EC, 2001) also requires Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of a wide range of plans and programmes, including Local Development Frameworks. The objective of the SEA Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment, and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans, with a view to promoting sustainable development.

There is a significant degree of overlap between SEA and Sustainability Appraisal. Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) allows the requirements of SEA to be incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal process in the form of one single document. For ease of reference, this document will therefore refer to both processes as Sustainability Appraisal.

The following table specifies the requirements of the SEA Directive, and identifies where these requirements have been met throughout this report.

Environmental Report requirements (SEA Directive)	Where covered in the Sustainability Appraisal process
Preparation of an Environmental report detailed below (Article 5):	This Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporates the environmental report and was published alongside the Core Strategy Preferred Options DPD
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	SA Stage A – page 27 and Appendix A
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	SA Stage A – page 28
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	SA Stage A – page 28 and Appendix B
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	SA Stage A – table 3, page 32
e) The environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan, and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account	SA Stage A – page 24
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	SA Stage B – page 80
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment	SA Stage B – page 95
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information	SA Stage B – page 21 and table 7, page 59
i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring	SA Stage E – page 103
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	SA Stage B, C – page 3, and summary provided in a separate document
Consult responsible environmental authorities when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report (Article 5.4)	SA Stage A - Scoping Report, and page 21
Consult with responsible environmental bodies and the public on the draft plan and the environment report before the plan is adopted (Article 6)	SA Stage B, D – page 17 and page 104
Take into account the Environmental Report and consultation responses during the preparation of the	SA Stage B, D – page 20. Significant changes arising

plan before it is adopted (Article 8)	from the formal public consultation will be reported on following this report
When a plan is adopted Responsible Environmental bodies and the public and other relevant bodies will be informed of (Article 9): a) the plan is adopted b) a statement summarising how environmental consideration have been integrated into the plan, how any consultation responses have been taken into account and the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted. c) the measures for monitoring (Article 9)	SA Stage D – Will be undertaken and signposted in final SA report following public consultation SA Stage B, E – page 32 and final SA report following public consultation Page 103, and Annual Monitoring Report

Table 2: Compliance with the SEA Directive