

Agenda Item 8

Development Control Committee

11 December 2007



East Devon Local Development Framework Sustainability Appraisal - Scoping Report

Summary

There is a requirement that spatial planning policy documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework are subject to sustainability appraisal. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic process for assessing the environmental, social and economic impacts of plans, policies and proposals.

Sustainability appraisal needs to be an ongoing process through plan production, from consideration of background issues, to defining preferred choices through to fine tuning exact policy wording or boundaries. Appraisal will help refinement and amendment of plans as they are produced and the appraisal will ultimately be used to justify Council policy at examination.

The first stage of the appraisal process is to produce a Scoping Report. The Scoping Report sets out broad sustainability themes and issues and paints an overview picture of East Devon. A draft scoping report has been produced and Committee endorsement is sought for agreement to issue the draft for consultation.

Recommendation

1. That the East Devon Local Development Framework Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report be Issued for public consultation.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To comply with legal requirements and to give the relevant statutory bodies and the wider public the opportunity to comment on the first draft of the Scoping Report.

b) Alternative Options

Sustainability appraisal is mandatory for plans prepared by planning authorities under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. There is a legal requirement to undertake consultation on the Scoping Report and therefore no alternatives are identified.

c) Risk Considerations

Failure to produce a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and consult on its content will run counter to legislative requirements. This would be liable to render any Development Plan Documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework as unsound. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and subsequent plan appraisal will meet the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (also known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive), which has been incorporated into UK law.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

It is proposed that Sustainability Appraisal will be undertaken 'in-house' by staff of the the Policy and Conservation Section of the Council. Costs will, therefore, be met from existing staff time/budgets.

e) Date for Review of Decision

Consultation on the Scoping Report will take place over a five week period and after this time period (in early 2008) consultation responses received will be reported back to Committee with proposed amendments to the Scoping Report.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The consultation draft of Sustainability Appraisal scoping report contains a forward which summarises the role of the draft Scoping Report and contains relevant supporting information. The forward advises that:

“There is a requirement that planning policy documents are subject to sustainability appraisal. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic process for assessing the environmental, social and economic impacts of plans, policies and proposals.

Sustainability appraisal needs to be an ongoing process through plan production, from consideration of background issues, to defining preferred choices through to fine tuning exact policy wording or policy boundaries. Appraisal will help refinement and amendment of plans as they are produced and the appraisal will ultimately be used to justify Council policy at examination.

The Council will be producing a number of planning/spatial policy documents which will make up the East Devon Local Development Framework. These policy documents will need to be subject to sustainability appraisal. A key initial part of the appraisal exercise is to gain a picture of background circumstances and consider their relevance or importance to the policy making process. This understanding the context stage is called scoping.

This document is the first consultation draft of the scoping report for the Core Strategy of the East Devon Local Development Framework. The intention is, however, that this scoping report will also form a basis for the scoping report for other LDF documents and potentially also other Council and partner organisation policy documents and plans. In this respect this document forms a generic scoping document.

The aims of this scoping report are to:

- identify environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other plans and programmes that are relevant to documents that will make up the LDF;*
- assess the existing environmental, social and economic characteristics of East Devon, and how these are changing, taking a long term view of whether, and how, the area is expected to develop;*
- in the light of these reviews consider key issues and problems that the LDF documents should address in the pursuit of sustainable development;*
- set out an framework for carrying out the remainder of the SA, including identifying objectives against which draft policies and options may be*

assessed, and indicators against which progress towards meeting those objectives can be monitored in the future.

This report has been prepared for consultation with relevant stakeholders. Following consultation and appropriate amendments, it will be used for the Sustainability Appraisal of the East Devon Local Development Framework Core Strategy. It is stressed that it is not the final completed scoping report but it is issued to stimulate debate with a view to it being refined through further on-going discussion and drafting.

1.2 This Scoping Report is produced, in the first instance, for the Core Strategy. The intent is, however, that it will be a generic scoping report that will be applicable to other LDF documents; subject to addition of further material relevant to the subject matters/localised areas addressed in those other LDF documents.

2.0 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

2.1 A key output from the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is an Appraisal Framework. This Appraisal Framework sets out the key sustainability objectives against which emerging objectives, options, strategies and policies will be tested. It is stressed that the role of framework is not to state or define what a 'sustainable' policy is or should say. Rather the role of the framework is to define the outputs or results, in sustainability terms, that are seen as a desirable outcome or result from the implementation of a strategy, policy or proposals. The appraisal exercise, and the role of the framework, can be looked upon as one of posing sustainability questions and therefore highlighting the more and the less sustainable options. Use of the framework, in conjunction with other appraisal processes, will highlight potential problem areas and highlight if and where mitigation measures may be appropriate.

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Framework, taken from the draft scoping report, is reproduced below. Sustainability objectives are grouped under broad subject matter themes and relevant indicators are identified. Core and local indicators are linked to issues or matters that can be expected to be directly influenced by the spatial planning process (i.e. there is liable to be some degree of causal relationship between any policy and outcomes). Monitoring of these indicators will help advise on the success of any policy and potentially help point out future policy refinement. Contextual indicators are not typically directly related to the implementation of planning policy (i.e. there is unlikely to be a straight causal relationship between plan policy and any indicator measured). These contextual indicators do, however, advise of broader issues and circumstances and will be of relevance to informing policy choices and any potential policy refinements.

East Devon Local Development Framework - Sustainability Appraisal Framework

| Theme | Objective | Core Indicators and Local Indicators | Contextual Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|
| A) Social Progress and Community Development | | | |
| Housing | 1) To ensure everybody has the opportunity to live in a decent home. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market housing completions. Social affordable housing completions. Intermediate affordable housing completions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of affordable homes that meet special needs. Vacant residential properties. Proportion of Local Authority homes which are non-decent. No of rough sleepers. Ratio of average house prices to average incomes (and lower quartile equivalent). Total number of houses in East Devon Total Number of affordable houses in East Devon. Households in East Devon in |

| Theme | Objective | Core Indicators and Local Indicators | Contextual Indicator |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> need of affordable housing. Projected newly arising need for future affordable housing in East Devon. |
| Social Inclusiveness | 2) To ensure that all groups of the population have access to community services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dwellings built and % of new residential development within 1,000m of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a GP; b) primary school; c) community centre; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranking in the Index of multiple deprivation |
| | 3) To provide for education, skills and life long learning to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) meet the needs of the local population, and (b) meet local employment needs. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSEs (Grades A-C). % of population of working age qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent. |
| Population and Health | 4) To improve the population's health. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of play areas built. Number of sports pitches built. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardised Mortality Ratios. Number and percentage of households (in urban and rural areas) within 400 metres of a play area. Number of people walking or cycling to school or work. |
| Settlement 'Liveability' | 5) To reduce crime and fear of crime. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of crime recorded. Fear of crime index/figures. |
| | 6) To reduce noise levels and minimise exposure of people to unacceptable levels of noise pollution. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers, nature and location of noise complaints. |
| | 7) To maintain and improve cultural, social and leisure provision. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of open space specifically managed for public use. Local Nature Reserves per 1,000 population. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Index of cultural facilities. % of residents satisfied with the Local Authority's parks and open spaces. |
| B) Environment Protection and Enhancement | | | |
| Built Heritage and Landscape | 8) To maintain and enhance built and historic assets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation areas. Number of listed buildings at risk. Number of Registered Parks and Gardens (and extent/area). | |
| | 9) To promote the conservation and wise use of land and protect and enhance the landscape character of East | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of dwellings developed on previously developed land. % of employment use developed on previously developed land. Density of new residential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant residential properties. Vacant commercial properties. |

| Theme | Objective | Core Indicators and Local Indicators | Contextual Indicator |
|--|--|---|--|
| | Devon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development. Number of trees with TPOs. % of land developed in landscape protection areas. % of the District designated under landscape protection policies. | |
| | 10) To maintain the local amenity, quality and character of the local environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of planning briefs or design statements produced. | |
| Biodiversity | 11) To conserve and enhance the biodiversity of East Devon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number/area of designated nature conservation sites. Area of Losses/damages to nature conservation sites arising from development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported condition of SSSI's, SACs, SPAs. Summary of achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan targets. |
| Transport | 12) To promote and encourage non-car based modes of transport and reduce journey lengths. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of population within 400m or 5 minute walk of a regular weekday/daytime public transport service. % of completed non-residential development complying with defined car-parking standards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children walking or cycling to school. Network of cycle paths. |
| Air, soil and water quality. | 13) To maintain and enhance the environment in terms of air, soil and water quality. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on water quality grounds. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of air pollution. Number of Air Quality Management Areas. General assessment of river water quality. |
| Climate Change | 14) To contribute towards a reduction in local emissions of greenhouse gases. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of planning permissions granted for renewable energy schemes and energy output capacity. Number of new dwellings meeting eco-standards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emission levels of greenhouse gases in East Devon. Energy generated from renewable sources. |
| | 15) To ensure that there is no increase in the risk of flooding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dwellings/premises falling in flood risk areas (for both protected and unprotected locations). |
| C) Natural Resource Management and Conservation | | | |
| Energy Consumption | 16) To ensure energy consumption is as efficient as possible | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> per capita consumption of energy. |
| Waste | 17) To promote wise use of waste resources whilst reducing waste production and disposal | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % household waste recycled. kg waste collected per head of population. |
| D) Economic Growth and Employment | | | |
| Economic Growth | 18) To maintain sustainable growth of employment for East Devon, to match levels of jobs with the economically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment land completions Employment land supply Loss of employment land to other uses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment rate. Average incomes. Economic activity rate. Numbers of people commuting into and out of East Devon for work purposes. |

| Theme | Objective | Core Indicators and Local Indicators | Contextual Indicator |
|-------|--|---|--|
| | active workforce. | | |
| | 19) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Towns of East Devon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail and office floorspace developed in East Devon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant Floorspace in East Devon Average commercial rents in East Devon towns. |
| | 20) To encourage and accommodate both indigenous and inward investment. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business registrations and de-registrations |

3.0 Availability of Copies of the Scoping Report

3.1 A full copy of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report will be available in the Members Area from Monday 3rd December 2007 and paper copies and electronic copies will also be available from this date onward from the Policy and Conservation Section of the Council. Following approval for consultation the Scoping Report will be placed on the Council Website and will be available for purchase.

4.0 Consultation on the Scoping Report

4.1 The Scoping Report will be made available for public consultation for a five week period, in accordance with the regulations. The consultation is liable to run from early January 2008 into February 2008.

Legal Implications

The legal framework for the LDF Sustainability Appraisal is set out in the report.

Financial Implications

Any financial implications can be met from existing budgets.

Background Papers

East Devon Local Development Scheme 2007

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Development Control Committee
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