

North Somerset Council

Core Strategy

**Sustainability Appraisal
Supplementary Summary
Revised Policy CS13**

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive¹ requires that a non-technical summary is provided of each SEA. This is set out below under the nine areas specified. Much of the required information is contained in the February 2011 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the whole Core Strategy; additional information is provided here only where circumstances have changed.

(a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes

This was set out in the 2011 SA of the Core Strategy². If a new housing requirement figure is adopted, Priority Objective 1 of the Core Strategy – which includes the 14,000 minimum dwelling requirement – will need to be changed to reflect this.

(b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme

(c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected

(d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme 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/EEC³

(e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation

These were set out in the 2011 SA.

(f) The likely significant effects⁴ 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

The 2011 SA (Main Report – Appraisal Tables) set out the likely significant effects identified. Policy CS13 has been reappraised to relate to the range of housing requirement figures considered by the council in November 2013. The Core Strategy is a high-level strategic document. It relies upon subsequent documents to add detail and so many effects are uncertain at this stage. Appraisal has identified that higher levels of housing growth have a greater adverse effect on greenfield land and may

¹ Annex 1 (j)

² [http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/localplanning/Documents/Core%20Strategy/sustainability%20appraisal%20\(pdf\).pdf](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/localplanning/Documents/Core%20Strategy/sustainability%20appraisal%20(pdf).pdf)

³ These Directives are known as the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

⁴ The footnote to Annex 1 states that “These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.”

also increase congestion in the short-term, though a combination of the employment-led approach and demographic change is likely to reduce out-commuting by 2026.

(g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme

The Core Strategy is a self-contained document and so the policies themselves contain mitigation measures, where relevant. The Core Strategy is to be read as a whole, so the mitigation measures applicable to one policy may be set out in another.

(h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information

The 2011 appraisal of Policy CS13 used six options, ranging from 6,711 to 26,750 dwellings and including the then preferred option of 13,400. The approach followed here is to maintain consistency with that previous work, adding four further options, being the range of housing requirement figures considered by the council in November 2013: the 14,000 figure previously adopted, the 17,130 'low' figure now favoured by the council and the 'mid' and 'high' figures produced from work by Edge Analytics, 19,395 and 20,220.

The SA was carried out in accordance with government guidance. It was done internally. The main difficulties encountered were that:

- the prediction of future effects is to some extent inherently subjective;
- strategic choices may conceal effects that only become apparent once proposals are further refined; and
- effects vary in their predictability in line with planning's ability to influence events, with economic and social predictions being far less assured than environmental ones.

(i) A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10

Proposals for monitoring are set out in the North Somerset Core Strategy Monitoring Framework, produced as part of the 2011 SA. Monitoring of environmental effects will be integrated with local plan monitoring generally. The results will be published in the Annual Monitoring Report.

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For further information please contact
Planning Policy and Research
North Somerset Council, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare,
BS23 1UJ

Email: planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk
Tel: 01934 426 682