

North Somerset Council
Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

**Sustainability Appraisal
Template**

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BASIC INFORMATION

What is this document about?

1. This report sets out the proposed scope of sustainability appraisal for North Somerset Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). We have published it so you can comment on what we should include and how we should go about doing sustainability appraisal.

Sustainable development

What does 'sustainable' mean?

2. In the Government's view¹, the goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. That goal is to be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal wellbeing. This needs to be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.

3. The Government's five guiding principles for sustainable development are:

- living within environmental limits
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- achieving a sustainable economy
- using sound science responsibly
- promoting good governance

Why is sustainable development important?

4. Sustainable development attempts to reconcile economic, environmental and social objectives. Continued economic growth puts increasing pressure on environmental resources, while aspirations for social change impinge on both. The challenge is to achieve 'smart growth' that enables economic and social goals to be met without causing long-term harm to the environment on which life depends. Climate change, global competition

¹ *Securing the Future – UK Government sustainable development strategy, 2005*

and fuel poverty are all examples of the complex, inter-related nature of sustainable development issues.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

Why do we need to do it?

5. The new planning system² requires us to produce a Sustainability Appraisal of most of the local development documents (LDDs) that will make up the Local Development Framework (LDF)³. The SA must also comply with the requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment⁴ (see below). We are required to exercise our plan-making functions with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, having regard to national policies and advice⁵. We are not required to justify national policies when conducting SA, for example by appraising alternatives to them, though we should identify the significant sustainability effects of implementing them.

What does it do?

6. SA assesses the likely economic, environmental and social impacts of plans and policies, allowing us to weigh up alternative options. The potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of different policy options all need to be identified and appraised against an agreed set of objectives. Figure 3 provides a diagram illustrating how this integration will take place.

Why is this helpful?

7. From this assessment, decisions can be taken to make the positive impacts of these plans and policies as great as possible, and their negative impacts as minor as possible. Ultimately, political judgements will be made. The assessment cannot pre-determine those judgements but helps to ensure that they are well-informed and transparent. SA will play an important part in demonstrating that an LDD meets the tests of soundness; it will also contribute to the reasoned justification of policies.

8. SA does not assess whether a planning document will achieve sustainable development, which is not something a local planning authority can achieve on its own. An LDD cannot 'fail' SA; if the assessment reveals that all options have irreducible negative impacts the choice is then to accept these or to explore new options, if any.

² Brought in by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (specifically section 19(5))

³ Local development documents (LDDs) comprise development plan documents (DPDs), supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and certain other documents not containing planning policies

⁴ Directive 2001/42/EC on the 'assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment', commonly referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or 'SEA' Directive, transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the 'SEA Regulations')

⁵ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, section 39

How will it work?

9. SA is intended to be a systematic, consistent process through which the performance of an LDD can be tested against the objectives of sustainable development while the LDD is still being produced. SA is an integral part of LDD preparation. We must prepare a sustainability appraisal report at each key stage of the preparation process for all the Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents that make up the LDF. These reports provide an audit trail of how the document has changed to take into account the findings of sustainability appraisal.

Who else will be involved?

10. We are required to consult certain statutory bodies about the first report in each case, known as the 'Scoping Report', and the public about the main sustainability appraisal reports. But we want to involve from the outset everyone who is interested.

Where will I be able to view the Sustainability Appraisal documents?

11. On the website⁶ and with the documents they are appraising.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

12. Separate regulations came into effect in July 2004 in line with a European Directive. This means that we have to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment for many policies and plans we prepare, including most LDDs. The regulations relate not only to planning but also include any mandatory policy documents that set the framework for future development consent for projects with significant environmental effects.

13. Like Sustainability Appraisal the underlying purpose is to seek to ensure that the positive impacts of these plans and policies are made as great as possible, and their negative impacts as small as possible.

14. The SEA Directive focuses exclusively on environmental issues, whilst the broader sustainability appraisal also considers social and economic issues. However, its definition of 'environmental' is quite broad – including population, human health, cultural heritage and material assets.

Overlap between Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

15. There is a great deal of overlap between the SA and SEA aims and processes when applied to documents in the Local Development Framework.

⁶ www.n-somerset.gov.uk

Government advice suggests that the requirements of SEA can be incorporated within the SA process, and for the most part we aim to do this.

Appropriate Assessment

16. Land use plans that affect habitats of European importance⁷ need 'Appropriate Assessment' under the EU Habitats Directive⁸. We intend that that this will be carried out by specialist consultants and published alongside the Submission Core Strategy DPD and the SA Report.

Our template

17. To help us provide a consistent approach to how we carry out Sustainability Appraisals (and Strategic Environmental Assessments) we have developed this template to be used for each of our planning documents. This version is a draft, on which we are now inviting comments. The first LDD to be assessed using the template will be the Core Strategy.

⁷ Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). North Somerset includes parts of the Severn Estuary SPA, three SACs (Avon Gorge Woodlands, Mendip Limestone Grasslands and North Somerset and Mendip Bats) and one candidate SAC (Severn Estuary).

⁸ Directive 92/43/EEC

THE NORTH SOMERSET SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL TEMPLATE

Where in the process does this document fit?

18. The following pages and associated documents⁹ form a standard template suitable for shaping SA/SEA of all North Somerset's DPDs. This may also be relevant to SPDs, although the more restricted scope of these implies that a different range of baseline data will be relevant. Individual DPDs may also have their own specialist baseline data and with the passage of time the range of documents referred to will need updating. Nevertheless, it is hoped that much of what follows will be of general application throughout the first generation of LDDs. The intention therefore is that the Sustainability Appraisal Template will form a common element in all the SA Scoping Reports we are required to produce, with a brief covering document identifying any matters specific to each LDD, if necessary.

What do you think?

19. The purpose of this document is to consult on the sustainability objectives and the related sustainability indicators. We would like to know whether you think we have chosen the best objectives and indicators for North Somerset and whether these adequately cover all the likely sustainability issues. A response form attached to this document will help you in responding.

Why is the council consulting on this document?

20. Regulations require us to consult with the three statutory environmental agencies (English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency) when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in an SEA. The council also welcomes comments from other sources.

How long does the consultation period last?

21. The SEA Regulations require this period to last five weeks. Statutory consultees are required to respond within this period if they wish to do so. The council is also inviting comments more generally, which should be submitted by Friday, 30 November 2007.

How do I make my comments?

22. Please fill in and return the response form at the end of the document or use it as the framework for your response.

⁹ comprising the Strategies and Initiatives Document and the Topic Papers

What will happen to my comments?

23. Officers in the Planning Policy Team will consider these comments to inform the development of the issues and alternative options for the LDD. The council's timetable for preparing each LDD is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). Stakeholders are advised to contact the Planning Policy Team or visit the website¹⁰ for the current commitments to the preparation of North Somerset's Local Development Framework.

¹⁰ www.n-somerset.gov.uk

STAGES OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

24. Figure 1 sets out the recommended stages of SA, from A to E¹¹. Each of these stages has sub-stages, or 'tasks', from Task A1 to Task E2, which are set out in Figure 2. This document is concerned with Stage A and Tasks A1 to A5.

25. For each LDD there will be a Scoping Report, the purpose of which is to set out the scope and proposed level of detail for the sustainability appraisal to be undertaken. It will need to set out a range of information, some of which will be common across the North Somerset LDF and is discussed further below. For the Core Strategy, this template and associated documents form the Scoping Report. For subsequent LDDs, additional information may need to be provided to update and make more specific the information contained here. Alternatively, it may be found that this template provides all the information required.

26. The range of information required of a Scoping Report is:

- the environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other policies, plans and programmes relevant to the LDD (**published separately as the Strategies and Initiatives Document**);
- a range of baseline data on the current environmental, social and economic condition of North Somerset, and how these are changing (**published separately as a series of Topic Papers**);
- in the light of these two reviews, the key sustainability issues and problems that the LDD could address in the pursuit of sustainable development (**Appendix A below**);
- the proposed Sustainability Appraisal Framework: i.e. the sustainability objectives against which emerging LDD objectives and policy options will be tested (**Appendix A below**);
- proposals for the structure and level of detail of the Sustainability Appraisal Report to be published alongside the Preferred Options and Submission consultation documents (**page 10 below**).

Policy context review

27. We must take account of relationships between each LDD and other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives¹². The SEA Directive also specifically requires environmental protection objectives at international, European Community or national levels to be taken into account. We have therefore identified the objectives of those relevant policies, plans and programmes so that these can be taken into account in the preparation of the LDD. This information is published separately as the **Strategies and Initiatives Document**.

¹¹ *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*, ODPM, 2005 (referred to as 'ODPM guidance'):

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/sustainabilityappraisal

¹² ODPM guidance, 2005, p. 44

Evidence base review

28. Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. We have therefore set out a range of baseline information on the current environmental, social and economic state of North Somerset, and how it is changing. This baseline information will help establish both what objectives the LDD should address and the indicators which could be used to monitor the effects of any subsequent LDD policies and proposals. This information is published separately as a series of **Topic Papers**. The term 'evidence base' is used in the context of LDD production but the datasets are the same as that which is termed 'baseline information' for SEA purposes. Although Government guidance¹³ suggests a highly scientific approach, available resources – including existing historic data – are unlikely to be able to support this fully in practice.

Sustainability issues and problems

29. The purpose of columns 1 and 2 in **Appendix A** is to utilise the findings of the two reviews to identify the key sustainability issues and problems that the LDD could address. These must be based on evidence related to baseline information.

30. Sustainability objectives are not necessarily the same as plan objectives, though they cover the same ground, as do the matters that inform them. The Core Strategy key challenges¹⁴ have been the principal influence in drafting the SA issues and problems, though formal differences in perspective lead to some differences in wording. Development of the two sets of objectives should be integrated, so that sustainability considerations are built in at the earliest stage.

31. SEA requires that cumulative effects, including secondary and synergistic effects, are taken into account in the assessment. At this stage, this involves identifying any particularly sensitive receptors, for example, areas in or adjoining North Somerset where incremental change could trigger further significant effects. Possible concerns might include air quality, water supply, habitat fragmentation and loss of tranquillity or dark skies. Traffic congestion could increase if transport infrastructure does not keep pace with development and there can be similar capacity issues with other infrastructure and community facilities. Most forms of development will also have some marginal influence on climate change. Only *significant* cumulative effects need be considered; we are unable to define any specific concerns at present but will need to revisit this issue as SA proceeds. Appendix A considers protection of the key receptors under the broad categories of 'health and safety', 'Distinctiveness' and 'Service Provision and Need'. Cumulative effects can also be positive: for example, climate-change policies may also have wider benefits where they can be designed in a way that also meets other goals.

The sustainability appraisal framework

32. The sustainability appraisal framework consists of a set of sustainability objectives against which the LDD's emerging objectives and policy options will be tested. Sustainability objectives provide a way of checking whether the LDD objectives are the best possible ones for sustainability. The set of objectives is

¹³ ODPM guidance, 2005, para. 3.2.9

¹⁴ Core Strategy Pre-production Brief, 2007, pp.17-19

provided in column 5 in **Appendix A**. They are derived from the key issues and problems in the same way that the plan objectives will be derived from the key challenges. They may therefore change; as the LDD evolves, so the SA framework will need to reflect any improvements made to the plan objectives.

33. The indicators given in column 6 in Appendix A are provisional. Although we are encouraged to use quantitative appraisal techniques, the practicality of this depends upon the availability of suitable models and data. This aspect of the SA process will be kept under review as we move towards carrying out each appraisal.

34. SA need not be done in any more detail than is useful for its purpose. It is important to focus on *significant* effects that enable options to be distinguished and evaluated, in the specific context of that LDD. If objectives appear to be missing from Appendix A, this may be because they are objectives for matters over which the planning system has no significant influence, or because it is likely that all potential options – including ‘do nothing’ – will have the same effect.

Proposals for the structure and level of detail of the sustainability appraisal report

35. Figure 1 describes how a Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced for both the Preferred Options and Submission LDD public consultation documents. If relevant, we may also carry out, in less detail, an initial appraisal at the issues and options stage, though this is not proposed for the Core Strategy.

36. The purpose of this final section, therefore, is to set out the proposed structure and level of detail the council intends to adopt for the SA report.

37. It is intended that the structure of the SA report will be in accordance with that provided in Figure 40 of the ODPM guidance¹⁵.

38. Regarding the level of detail, the intention is to prepare the SA report in accordance with the ODPM guidance so that it meets both the requirements of the SEA Directive and will be an easily understood public consultation document.

Monitoring

39. SA can assist in formulating targets and indicators consistent with sustainable development objectives. Annual Monitoring Reports could therefore include information on the significant sustainability effects of the LDD. Specifically, the SEA Directive requires the significant environmental effects of implementing an LDD to be monitored to identify unforeseen adverse effects and to enable remedial action¹⁶. However, SA indicators should help the decision-making process and may not necessarily be the same during the assessment as in monitoring.

¹⁵ ODPM guidance, 2005, p. 151

¹⁶ Article 10(1)

Figure 1 Sustainability appraisal process

Stage of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and its output	Linkage between SA Stage and preparation of each Local Development Document (LDD)	Purpose
<p><u>STAGE A</u></p> <p>Scoping Report (CURRENT STAGE – September 2007)</p>	<p>This is prepared alongside the preparation of the LDD evidence base</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity relevant plans and programmes. • Establish the baseline situation. • Identify sustainability issues. • Set out the SA framework: proposed SA objectives against which LDD will be tested. • Proposed structure and level of detail of SA Report.
<p><u>STAGE B</u></p> <p>Developing and refining options</p>	<p>This is carried out alongside the preparation of the issues and alternative options for the LDD to address</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To refine the issues and options for the LDD. • To appraise the sustainability of the options. • To consult on the initial SA report if relevant.
<p><u>STAGE C</u></p> <p>Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal Report</p>	<p>This is developed alongside the preparation of the Preferred Options document. Consultation on both the Preferred Options LDD and Sustainability Appraisal Report will take place at the same time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify preferred options. • Assess the significant social, economic and environmental effects of the Preferred Options Document. • Develop proposals for monitoring the LDD.
<p><u>STAGE D</u></p> <p>Final Sustainability Appraisal Report</p>	<p>This is developed alongside the preparation of the LDD to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Consultation on both will take place at the same time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraising significant changes to the LDD arising out of consultation undertaken in Stage C. • The Sustainability Appraisal Report will be used to determine the 'soundness' of the LDD and whether it should be approved or not.
<p><u>STAGE E</u></p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report</p>	<p>The extent to which the LDD title is delivering its sustainable development objectives will be assessed as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon adoption of the LDD, publication of a statement of how SA has been taken into account. • Monitoring implementation of the LDD.

Figure 2 Stages and Tasks

Stage A: Context and objectives

- A1:** Identifying other plans, programmes and sustainability objectives
- A2:** Collecting baseline information
- A3:** Identifying key sustainability issues
- A4:** Developing appraisal framework
- A5:** Consulting on the scope of the appraisal

Stage B: Developing and refining options

- B1:** Testing plan objectives against appraisal framework
- B2:** Appraising issues and options
- B3:** Predicting effects
- B4:** Assessing effects
- B5:** Mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
- B6:** Developing proposals for monitoring

Stage C: Reporting

- C1:** Preparing the appraisal report

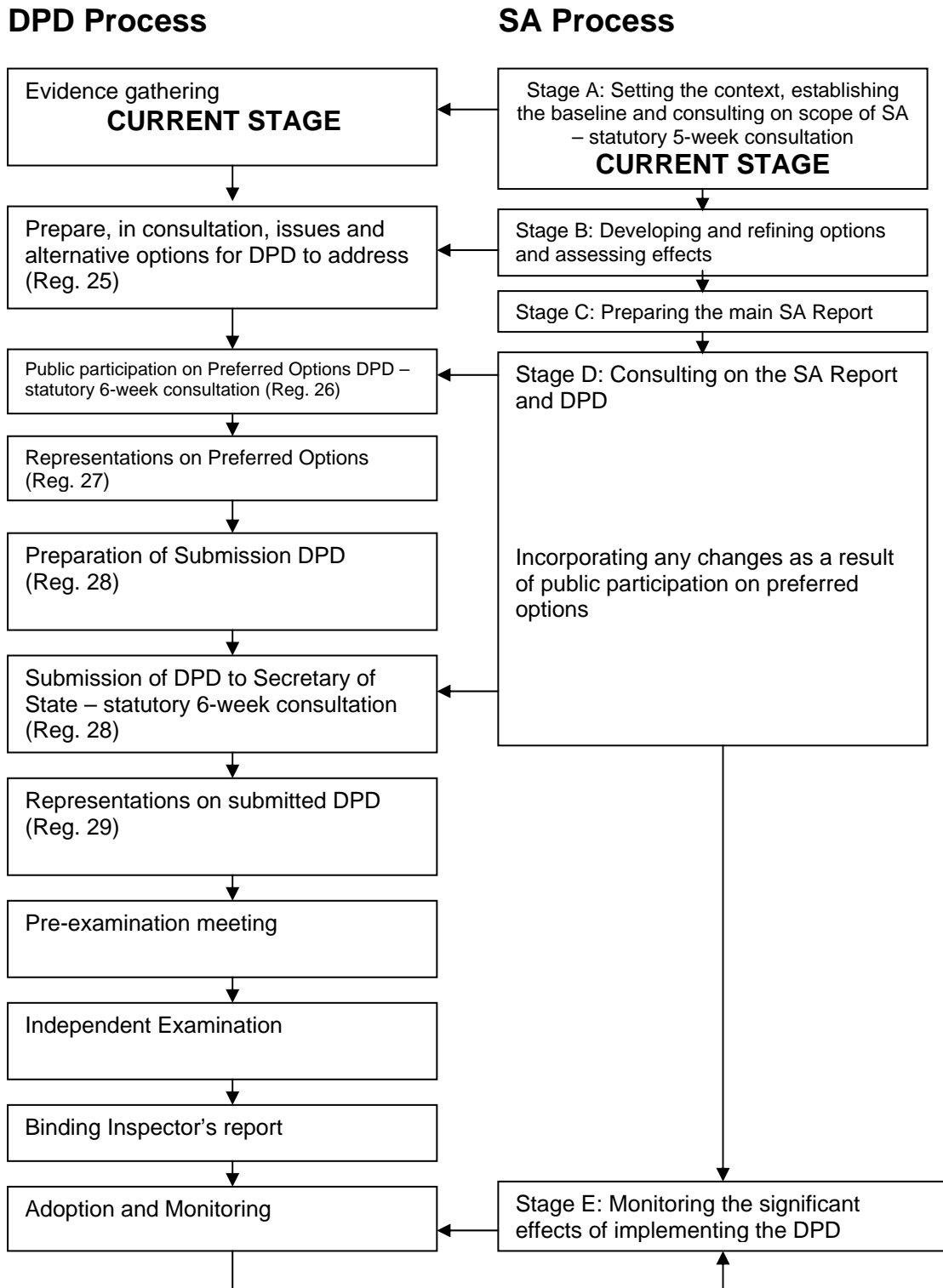
Stage D: Consultation

- D1:** Public participation
- D2:** Assessing significant changes
- D3:** Making decisions and providing information

Stage E: Monitoring implementation

- E1:** Finalising aims and methods for monitoring
- E2:** Responding to adverse effects

Figure 3 How sustainability appraisal (SA) is integrated into the preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPD)



Source: *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*, ODPM, 2005

Note: “Reg. 25” etc. refers to Regulations of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. These Regulations implement the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
General development principles * With a generally affluent and growing population, existing pressures on resource use will tend to increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft RSS requires economic and household growth (e.g. policies E2, HD1) • Stern Review 	Moderate: UK contribution to reducing greenhouse gases has come through cuts in industrial emissions, while emissions from transport and housing have increased.	Declining: Continuing growth in transport and housing may exceed ability to mitigate impacts through improved design and technology, at least in short-medium term.	EN2. Minimise average travel-to-work distance. EN4. Minimise loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile farmland. EN7. Enable design to minimise resource use and contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. EN9. Increase the life expectancy of buildings. SC1. Meet local needs locally.	Average travel-to-work distance. Brownfield / greenfield split. Carbon footprint. Modal split. Sustainable building design standards met (e.g. through economies of scale). Accessibility modelling.

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				SC2. Improve accessibility to service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision.	
* Unavoidable climate change increases vulnerability to flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stern Review • Environment Agency floodplain maps • Catchment Flood Management Plan • Weston Flood Management Study (Royal Haskoning) • Royal Horticultural Society report: <i>Front Gardens</i> 	Poor: Much of North Somerset is in floodplain, including most of Weston and Clevedon and eastern part of Portishead, though flood defence structures offer a degree of protection. SW has 3 rd highest percentage (31%) of front gardens that are more than ¾ paved, twice the figure for London.	Stable: Recent/projected development includes significant intrusions into floodplain but within existing protected areas. No current proposals for managed retreat.	EN5. Minimise development in floodplain. EN6. Promote sustainable drainage and protect existing permeable surfaces. EN8. Enable design to take account of higher temperatures and more extreme weather conditions.	Numbers living or working in floodplain, by PPS25 risk category. Sustainable building design standards met (e.g. through economies of scale).

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
* Unavoidable climate change increases vulnerability to heat-related discomfort/ill-health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stern Review 	Good/Moderate: Comfort levels in buildings/open spaces	Declining: Comfort levels could be affected by hotter, drier summers	EN8. Enable design to take account of higher temperatures and more extreme weather conditions.	Sustainable design standards met (e.g. through economies of scale). Density/open space to assist heat dispersal. Tree-planting to provide shade.
Unavoidable climate change offers additional opportunities for sustainable outdoor leisure pursuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Lifestyles Strategy • Stern Review 	Moderate: Traditional seaside attractions remain but some are derelict. Outdoor facilities are also associated with Dundry plateau and Mendip Hills AONB.	Declining: Continued loss of 19 th /20 th century facilities, with no immediate prospect of replacement	SC3. Increase opportunities for active lifestyles and sustainable outdoor leisure pursuits.	Sustainable sport and activity provision. Opportunities for outdoor activity (e.g. café culture).
* Commuting: imbalance between homes and jobs (both out-commuting from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census 2001 Travel-to-Work data 	Poor: All towns/villages have under 50% self-containment, except Weston (64% -	Declining: Recent residential permissions unrelated to employment are likely	EN1. Maximise self-containment of the urban areas. EN2. Minimise average	Self-containment modelling. Average travel-to-work distance.

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North Somerset and in-commuting from adjoining districts)		the lowest figure of the 11 SW Principal Urban Areas)	to reduce self-containment	travel-to-work distance.	
Health and safety at risk from unhealthy lifestyles and crime and other factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 • Health Deprivation Ranking (ODPM 2004, derived from Census 2001) 	Good: Average life expectancy over a year more than England & Wales average. Best health is in rural areas close to Bristol but off main roads. Significantly worse figures for parts of Weston. Lower number of crimes than national and Avon & Somerset averages.	Stable: Higher density housing and mixed use development may contribute to noise and disturbance problems in urban locations particularly.	SC2. Improve accessibility to service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision. SC3. Increase opportunities for active lifestyles and sustainable outdoor leisure pursuits. SC5. Promote positive wellbeing. SC6. Reduce health inequalities. SC7. Reduce crime and fear of crime, likewise anti-social	Sustainable sport and activity provision. Accessibility modelling (health provision). Availability of walking/ cycling to jobs, schools etc.

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				behaviour. SC8. Minimise risk to health and safety. SC9. Avoid exposure to pollution/noise. EC7. Make fuller use of urban spaces and promote a balanced night-time economy in town centres.	
Growth and function of settlements * Need for regeneration and renewal in the Strategically Significant Cities & Towns, ahead of new development, especially ahead of major new housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land availability records • Census 2001 Travel-to-Work data 	Moderate: Continuing recycling of urban land for housing. Retail offer in Weston Town Centre constrained by eccentric location relative to catchment and lack of available/	Stable: Major regeneration projects moving forward but overall progress potentially hindered by continuing economic restructuring	EN1. Maximise self-containment of the urban areas. EC4. Maximise opportunities for regeneration and renewal within the Strategically Significant	Self-containment modelling. Brownfield / greenfield split. Land use split. Housing requirement met (1,300 pa).

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		suitable sites.		Cities & Towns, ahead of new development, especially ahead of major new housing. EC5. Avoid prejudicing, by phasing or otherwise, the achievement of other sustainable development objectives for regeneration and quality of life.	
* Need for improved sustainability of other towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census 2001 Travel-to-Work data 	Poor: All towns/villages except Weston have under 50% self-containment	Declining: Recent residential permissions unrelated to employment are likely to reduce self-containment	EN1. Maximise self-containment of the urban areas. EN2. Minimise average travel-to-work distance.	Modelling of self-containment and travel-to-work distances.
* Urbanisation of rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning permission and completion 	Good: North Somerset's area is	Declining: North Somerset has absorbed	EN3. Limit rural development to that	Area of land developed beyond existing extent

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
	records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air traffic monitoring • Road traffic monitoring • Tranquillity mapping • Dark skies mapping (CPRE, 1993-2000) 	mainly rural. More localised analysis could reveal greater variation in the baseline.	considerable development in recent decades but not without some environmental losses. Pressure for development remains strong. Increased air and road traffic reduces tranquillity. Little immediate prospect of mitigation through bypass construction, which would have its own impacts on rural character.	meeting local needs, or infrastructure needs unavoidably requiring a rural location. EN4. Minimise loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile farmland. EN11. Avoid major development in the most environmentally sensitive areas.	of urban areas, analysed by location. Tranquil areas / dark skies. Accessibility modelling (open areas).
Distinctiveness * Protection and enhancement of distinctive and valued cultural, heritage and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental records • Planning permission and completion 	Good: North Somerset's area is mainly rural and contains many sites	Declining: North Somerset has absorbed considerable development in recent	EN10. Achieve a net gain in cultural, heritage and landscape features and biodiversity of	Amount of new green infrastructure. Effect on environmental designations.

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
landscape features (including settlement form) and biodiversity of North Somerset	records for development in Green Belt	designated for conservation reasons. More localised analysis could reveal greater variation in the baseline.	decades but not without some environmental losses. Pressure for development remains strong. Lack of consensus on visual characteristics to be sought in new development inhibits search for quality.	North Somerset. EN12. Avoid damage to irreplaceable valued features.	
Increased opportunities for the public to appreciate these features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 	Moderate: A 2004 comparison showed North Somerset amenities to be below the national average and identified significant dissatisfaction with access to culture. We have 2 cinemas, 15 libraries, 3 theatres and	Stable: New access routes continue to be implemented, though progress is slow. Public funding for arts, heritage and sport will be constrained in short-term by demands of 2012 Olympics. ICT developments will affect	SC4. Develop a positive sense of place both physically and socially.	Amount of service/ social provision made in advance of development. Use of existing features/ culture. Amount of green infrastructure. Accessibility by sustainable modes.

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		varied indoor/outdoor events - notably at Weston, Clevedon and at Ashton Court - but residents look to Bristol for higher-order facilities. Tyntesfield has opened, but seaside attractions at Weston have closed. Opportunities to access countryside are variable, depending on intensity of rights-of-way and land with public access. Number of Local Nature Reserves has increased.	access to culture unpredictably.		

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Housing provision and need Demand for housing Lack of affordability of housing for local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSS requires household growth • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 • North Somerset Housing Needs Assessment Model 	Poor: Affordability is a significant problem. 2004 Coutie study identified need for 375 new affordable homes each year but 2006 AMR showed only 79 were built.	Declining: Current provision does not enable affordability gap to be filled.	SC10. Meet housing requirement. SC11. Narrow the gap between income and house prices/rents.	Housing numbers – assessment of risk of non-delivery. Specific housing needs met. Income/affordability ratios.
Service provision and need Adequacy of service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision to respond to the growing and changing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections of population growth and change 	Moderate: Considerable local variation in the baseline. Many residents are within walking distance of shops, schools and doctors, but those who	Declining: Some rural services have been lost, but in many places the position may be characterised as stable.	SC2. Improve accessibility to service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision. SC4. Develop a positive sense of place both physically and	Accessibility modelling

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
		are not are commonly unable to gain access via public transport.		socially.	
Economic vitality Areas of concentrated disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 	Poor: North Somerset has the 11 th highest range of inequality in the country. Disadvantage is concentrated in inner Weston.	Improving: There has been significant Government investment in various initiatives (e.g. SRB) that should produce an improving long-term trend.	SC12. Improve the life chances of those living in areas of concentrated disadvantage.	Access to employment and training
Low demand for, and supply of, employment land and premises need to be rectified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSS requires economic growth 	Moderate: Take-up of employment land allocations has been good in the Clevedon and Portishead areas but slower in Weston and the villages. Some Weston sites have been developed for uses	Stable: Major regeneration projects moving forward but overall progress potentially hindered by continuing economic restructuring	SC2. Improve accessibility to service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision. EC1. Meet economic development needs, including sufficient new jobs to at least match	Employment land provision

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
		outside the B use classes.		the increase in homes. EC2. Harness the particular economic opportunities of North Somerset. EC6. Increase prosperity, especially in areas of concentrated disadvantage. EC8. Diversify employment structure, improve choice of employment and produce greater opportunities to participate in society, paid or unpaid. EC9. Increase ability to work from home.	

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
Lack of small workspaces and opportunities for home working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 	Poor: Most North Somerset businesses employ less than 10 people but the proportion of businesses in high technology knowledge-based industries (19%) is comparatively low. Although 43% of the workforce are 'knowledge workers' (above average), many work outside North Somerset. Office floorspace is very limited.	Stable: NSRLP Policy H/7 may expand opportunities for home working but overall progress could be hindered by continuing economic restructuring leading to loss of small workspaces. Office development remains slow.	EC10. Protect and expand genuine opportunities for small businesses.	Opportunities for small businesses
Use of local resources to meet local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Somerset Community Strategy 2004-2025 	Moderate: Some elements of the local economy utilise and	Declining: Planning use classes constrain possibilities for local	EC3. Protect and expand opportunities for local businesses to	Opportunities for small businesses to utilise local resources,

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
		add value to local raw materials (particularly from farming). Tourism is another significant sector based on local resources (coast and countryside). Quarrying for building stone can also enhance local distinctiveness, subject to acceptable landscape impact. Waste can be used as a resource close to source. Environmental quality, to the extent that it attracts and retains professionals with knowledge-based skills, can also be seen as a local resource.	preference. Consolidation in retail and construction sectors may be expected to reinforce decline. Specialist providers may offset to some extent, e.g. farmers markets.	utilise local resources, especially sustainable resources.	especially sustainable resources

Key issues and problems <i>Existing and projected: those marked * are 'existing environmental problems' within the meaning of the SEA Directive, Annex 1</i>	Evidence/Context	Baseline State <i>Present (or most recent) state:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Moderate • Poor 	Baseline Trends <i>Future trends in the absence of changes in planning policy:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving • Stable • Declining 	Objectives <i>Objectives should be capable of being formed into the question 'Does Option X...?'</i> <i>A numbered list of the objectives is provided for reference at Appendix B</i>	Indicators/Targets <i>Achievement of objectives is normally measured by using indicators. Otherwise, direction of change can be used.</i> <i>Note: These indicators relate to appraisal of options, not to monitoring of outcomes. They are projections, not observed data.</i>
		North Somerset has the 5 th most well educated workforce in the SW.			
Peak hour congestion is perceived as a disincentive to locate in North Somerset, especially in Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint LTP, Fig. 3.2 	Poor: AM peak period congestion on roads leading from central Weston to M5 Jcn 21, also locally on the edges of other towns and on A38 and A370.	Declining: Even with JLTP measures in place, congestion in the former Avon will worsen by 7% by 2011 as traffic growth exceeds opportunities for modal shift	EC11. Reduce queuing and over-crowding on the road and rail networks. EC12. Locate new development on sites – and access them in ways – that will not add to traffic congestion.	Congestion modelling

Appendix B: Summary of Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

Environmental – protecting and managing the natural/cultural resource base of economic and social development

- EN1. Maximise self-containment of the urban areas.
- EN2. Minimise average travel-to-work distance.
- EN3. Limit rural development to that meeting local needs, or infrastructure needs unavoidably requiring a rural location.
- EN4. Minimise loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile farmland.
- EN5. Minimise development in floodplain.
- EN6. Promote sustainable drainage and protect existing permeable surfaces.
- EN7. Enable design to minimise resource use and contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.
- EN8. Enable design to take account of higher temperatures and more extreme weather conditions.
- EN9. Increase the life expectancy of buildings.
- EN10. Achieve a net gain in cultural, heritage and landscape features and biodiversity of North Somerset.
- EN11. Avoid major development in the most environmentally sensitive areas.
- EN12. Avoid damage to irreplaceable valued features.

Economic – promoting more sustainable patterns of production and consumption

- EC1. Meet economic development needs, including sufficient new jobs to at least match the increase in homes.
- EC2. Harness the particular economic opportunities of North Somerset.
- EC3. Protect and expand opportunities for local businesses to utilise local resources, especially sustainable resources.
- EC4. Maximise opportunities for regeneration and renewal within the Strategically Significant Cities & Towns, ahead of new development, especially ahead of major new housing.
- EC5. Avoid prejudicing, by phasing or otherwise, the achievement of other sustainable development objectives for regeneration and quality of life.
- EC6. Increase prosperity, especially in areas of concentrated disadvantage.
- EC7. Make fuller use of urban spaces and promote a balanced night-time economy in town centres.
- EC8. Diversify employment structure, improve choice of employment and produce greater opportunities to participate in society, paid or unpaid.
- EC9. Increase ability to work from home.
- EC10. Protect and expand genuine opportunities for small businesses.
- EC11. Reduce queuing and over-crowding on the road and rail networks.
- EC12. Locate new development on sites – and access them in ways – that will not add to traffic congestion.

Social – widening opportunities for all individuals and communities

- SC1. Meet local needs locally.
- SC2. Improve accessibility to service, retail, educational, leisure and social provision.
- SC3. Increase opportunities for active lifestyles and sustainable outdoor leisure pursuits.
- SC4. Develop a positive sense of place both physically and socially.
- SC5. Promote positive wellbeing.
- SC6. Reduce health inequalities.
- SC7. Reduce crime and fear of crime, likewise anti-social behaviour.
- SC8. Minimise risk to health and safety.
- SC9. Avoid exposure to pollution/noise.
- SC10. Meet housing requirement.
- SC11. Narrow the gap between income and house prices/rents.
- SC12. Improve the life chances of those living in areas of concentrated disadvantage.

North Somerset Local Development Framework

Response Form – Sustainability Appraisal Template September 2007

We would welcome your views on the Sustainability Appraisal Template and associated documents. You can comment on any aspect of these documents but the following are issues on which we are especially keen to receive responses. Please use these questions as a guide in preparing your response.

- a) Do you consider there are other key sustainability issues and problems (Appendix A, specifically columns 1 and 2) which should be identified? If so, can you please provide the evidence which substantiates this issue/problem?

- b) Regarding the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (Appendix A, specifically columns 5 and 6), do you consider the sustainability objectives chosen are appropriate and can you suggest alternative or additional indicators?

- c) Regarding the Strategies and Initiatives Document, do you consider:
 - (i) the council has correctly identified the main objectives of the policies, plans or programmes listed?
 - (ii) there are other policies, plans or programmes which should be considered?

- d) Regarding the Topic Papers, do you consider there is other baseline data that should be identified?

- e) If we were to seek external stakeholder involvement in carrying out future appraisal work (e.g. workshop events), would your organisation be interested in participating?
If "Yes", who is the most appropriate contact?
- f) Are there any other bodies to which you feel we should have sent this Sustainability Appraisal Template and associated documents?
If "Yes", please specify.
- g) Please use the space below to provide any other comments in the space below (please use an additional sheet if necessary).

Please give your name and address details

Name:
Email address:
Position (where appropriate):
Organisation (where appropriate):
Postal Address:

Daytime tel. no.

Postcode:
Fax no.

Signature:

Date:...../...../.....

Please return this form before the end of Friday, 30 November 2007 to either:

Planning Policy Team
North Somerset Council
Somerset House
Oxford Street
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset BS23 1TG

Or:

localplan@n-somerset.gov.uk

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information in languages other than English.

Please contact 01275 888 545



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