SEAFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Seaford Town Council

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY TO SUBMISSION SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (INCLUDING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT)

October 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This report forms the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) to the draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the draft Seaford Neighbourhood Plan (SNP). A Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, becomes a formal part of the planning system and will be a Local Development Plan document. The SNP is an important planning tool for shaping the development and growth of the Parish.

1.2 As sustainability is an important consideration in land use planning, a Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken on the contents of the SNP.

1.3 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) involves the evaluation of the environmental impacts of a plan such as the SNP. However, whilst an SEA is concerned with environmental effects, a Sustainability Appraisal is an iterative process that considers the environmental, social and economic consequences of a plan and its policies, and seeks to identify ways of achieving a proper balance between these three considerations. For simplification, this refers to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) throughout.

2.0 APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

2.1 The appraisal methodology has been prepared taking into account the processes set out in the relevant guidance[1]. The table below describes the different stages in the SA process.

STAGE	TASKS
A	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
B	Developing the alternatives and assessing effects
C	Prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Report
D	Consult on the SA Report
E	Monitor implementation of the plan

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK - OBJECTIVES

3.1 The SA seeks to test the contribution the SNP will make towards achieving sustainable development, through the identification of a number of objectives and indicators, known as the Sustainability Framework. These are used to assess the sustainability impacts of the policies within the SNP. The objectives are based on the three strands of sustainability; i.e. social, economic and environmental.

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[1] Sustainability Appraisal guidance within the DCLG Plan making Manual/SEA guidance from ODPM A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2005

Objective	Questions	Indicators
<td colspan="3">**SOCIAL**</td>		
1. Housing To deliver, in the first instance on brownfield sites, high quality new open market and affordable homes that meet the needs of the whole community both now and in the future	1. Does the SNP support the number of homes required by LDC in the Parish? 2. Does it help meet affordable housing needs? 3. Does it encourage the use of brownfield land in the first instance, and land efficiency? 4. Do the allocated sites respect the Parish's setting within the National Park?	• Number of new homes completed; • Number of affordable dwellings completed; • Hectares of brownfield land redeveloped for housing; • Number of people on the housing register. • Percentage of new homes within the existing built up area boundary.
2. Sustainable Transport (including walking/cycling) To ensure that the SNP area benefits from a robust, accessible and sustainable transport system for its residents, visitors and businesses, that: (i) encourages and facilitates sustainable economic development and access to services whilst (ii) reducing the need to travel by car.	1. Does the SNP encourage and support the use of sustainable modes of transport? 2. Are the allocated sites within walking or cycling distance of a school, convenience store, a GP surgery, an existing transport stop – e.g. bus stop or railway station?	• Number of retained and/ or new sustainable and public transport facilities provided in the SNP area. • Number of households /dwellings proposed within a 10-minute walk (approximately 800m) of a transport stop – i.e. bus stop or railway station. • Number of new cycling facilities.
3. Community infrastructure To maintain and enhance community infrastructure within the Parish	1. Will the SNP retain and/or enhance the provision of community services and facilities? 2. Are the allocated sites within walking or cycling distance of a community facility such as a GP surgery, a dentist, a community hall, a place of worship, a sports facility.	• Quantum of new and/ or retained community infrastructure proposed in the Parish. • Number of existing community facilities improved or enhanced
<td colspan="3">**ENVIRONMENT**</td>		
4. Green Infrastructure To maintain and enhance green infrastructure within the parish.	1. Does the SNP enhance and preserve key green spaces within the SNP area? 2. Does the SNP retain and/or improve access to green areas such as open space and recreational facilities, woodlands, ponds, allotments and hedgerows? 3. Does the SNP improve, create or maintain green infrastructure links to the South Downs national Park?	• Number of households within a 10-minute walk (approximately 800m) of public recreational space and open space and/or other public green infrastructure such as allotments, woodlands and ponds. • Number of local green spaces allocated within the SNP area and supported by the community.
5. Heritage Assets To protect or enhance the heritage assets and historic environment of the Parish	1. Does the SNP take account of listed buildings in the SNP area and respect the historic character? 2. Does the approach take account of conservation areas and any locally designated assets, as well as areas known for being rich in archaeological interest in the SNP area?	• Number of heritage assets and their setting enhanced and/ or preserved as part of an overall development scheme. • Number of positive features of local character identified through the character statement protected or enhanced as part of any development proposals.
6. Countryside, Landscape and Key Views To conserve and enhance the countryside of the Parish and surrounding area, including the setting of the National Park	1. Will the SNP enhance and preserve the valued landscape of the SNP area? 2. Is development in keeping with the landscape and existing features, including the setting of the National Park? 3. Does the SNP take account of the key views in and around the SNP area? 4. Does the SNP minimise impact on the countryside?	• Number of sites allocated for development beyond the defined built up area boundary. • Number of landscaping masterplans delivered as part of new development.
7. Flooding To steer new development away from areas at high risk of flooding or where it may cause or increase flooding either on site or elsewhere	1. Does development avoid areas at risk of flooding as defined by the Environment Agency? 2. Does development encourage the removal/ not adversely affect surface water? 3. Does the combination of sites ensure that it will not exacerbate the risk of flooding?	• Number of properties at risk of flooding within the Parish/SNP area, as defined by the Environment Agency Flood Maps. • Number of flood improvement schemes incorporated within development proposals.

8. Biodiversity To protect and enhance the biodiversity of the SNP area.	1. Does the SNP enhance and preserve locally, nationally and internationally designated areas as well as local wildlife sites and priority habitats and species?	• Number of enhancement schemes incorporated into new development. • Number of priority habitats and species impacted by new development.
9. Sustainable Design To encourage high quality design and layout in all new development and promote systems efficiency and local renewable energy production and to reduce the Parish's impact on climate change.	1. Does the SNP promote energy efficiency and the use of renewables within the plan area? 2. Does the SNP promote water efficiency within new development? .	• Number of new developments that incorporate renewable energy systems. • Number of new development incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). • Number of new schemes where measures to ensure the sustainable use of water and energy form part of the overall design
ECONOMIC		
10. Local businesses and tourism Enhance and maintain the local economy by: (i) supporting employment and businesses in the SNP area and (ii) encourage tourism throughout the Parish	1. Will the SNP support local retail and employment opportunities? 2. Will the SNP support tourism initiatives and development?	• Net amount of employment floor space maintained and/ or created in the SNP area. • Number of vacant business spaces • Number of new tourist facilities. • Number of employment and tourist facilities/floorspace lost to new development. •

3.2 The Draft Neighbourhood Plan sets out a number of objectives. An assessment has been made as to whether the 9 Neighbourhood Plan objectives are consistent with the 10 objectives of the sustainability appraisal.

4.0 POLICY APPROACHES AND OPTIONS FOR SITE ALLOCATIONS

4.1 In preparing the SNP, a range of policy areas have been considered and a range of options for each policy have been identified. These have been prepared based on the review of other relevant plans, programmes, policies, strategies and initiatives, the baseline data for the Parish, and the overarching objectives of the neighbourhood plan.

4.2 All policy options have been appraised, to assess the impact on the 10 sustainability objectives as set out in the Sustainability Framework. The overall appraisal ensures that the policies selected and taken forward in the SNP are the most sustainable, given all reasonable alternatives.

4.3 A number of sites have been put forward through the call for sites exercise (undertaken by the Town Council in November 2016) plus from a number of other sources. An initial sifting exercise reduced the long list to a shorter list of 60 sites. The sites were appraised by the Town Council's independent consultants Action in rural Sussex assisted by members of the Neighbourhood Plan steering group. Following this assessment, a short list of preferred sites was compiled. Finally, a total of 7 sites have now been shortlisted through the SA process These all had positive impacts on the Sustainability Objectives and consequently, it is now possible to achieve the 185 target within the built up area boundary.

5.0 APPRAISING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

5.1 A wide range of policy areas were included within an early Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. These have been appraised as to whether they have a positive or negative impact on the future of the parish, using the Sustainability Framework to undertake the evaluation.

5.2 The Table below summarises all of the drafted policies and assesses these against the sustainability objectives. The policies assessed are those that have taken on board any changes following the consideration of reasonable alternatives. Several of the policies were amended to strengthen them so they were even more sustainable.

5.3 The following colours and symbols are used to assess each policy:

++	Greater positive impact on the sustainability objective
+	Possible positive or slight positive impact on the sustainability objective
-	No impact or neutral impact on the sustainability objective
?	Possible negative or slight negative impact on the sustainability objective
??	Greater negative impact on the sustainability objective

Table of assessed policies

POLICY NUMBERS	Sustainability Objectives									
	Obj 1 Housing	Obj 2 Sustainable Transport (including walking/ cycling)	Obj 3 Community Infrastructure	Obj 4 Green Infrastructure	Obj 5 Heritage Assets	Obj 6 Country-side, Landscape and Key Views	Obj 7 Flooding	Obj 8 Biodiversity	Obj 9 Sustainable Design	Obj 10 Local businesses and tourism
Policy SEA1	-	-	-	+	++	++	-	+	-	++
Policy SEA2	-	++	-	+	++	++	-	-	++	+
Policy SEA3	-	-	-	++	++	++	-	-	-	+
Policy SEA4	-	-	-	-	++	++	-	-	-	+
Policy SEA5	-	-	-	-	++	++	-	-	-	-
Policy SEA6	-	++	-	++	+	+	-	++	-	++
Policy SEA7	-	-	++	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Policy SEA8	-	-	++	++	-	+	-	++	-	-
Policy SEA9	-	-	++	++	-	-	-	++	-	-
Policy SEA10	-	-	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Policy SEA11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++
Policy SEA12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++
Policy SEA13	-	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Policy SEA14	-	++	-	-	?	?	-	?	-	++
Policy SEA15	++	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+
Policy SEA16	++	++	-	++	++	-	++	-	++	++
Policy SEA17	++	+	-	-	-	++	-	-	-	-
Policy SEA18	++	++	-	-	++	++	++	-	+	++