

Open Space
Development Plan
Document

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

(incorporating Strategic Environmental
Assessment)

March 2011

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I INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is to be carried out for the Hart District Open Space Development Plan Document.
- 1.2 The Open Space Development Plan Document will form part of the Hart District Local Development Framework (LDF) which comprises a number of documents that together guide the future of development in the District. There are two types of document in the LDF which help guide development:
 - Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which contain policies and proposals; and
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which contain detail and guidance on how to implement policies where this is considered necessary.
- 1.3 The Open Space DPD will set out the required contribution towards open space from development proposals within the District.

Sustainable Development

- 1.4 The term 'sustainable development' has been used in policy-making since 1987 following the publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development Report 'Our Common Future'¹, commonly referred to as the Brundtland Report. The report developed guiding principles for sustainable development as it is generally understood today, and contained the following definition of sustainable development:

'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
- 1.5 The concept of sustainable development gained additional momentum after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, which encouraged the UK government to develop its own themes for sustainable development. The initial themes for sustainable development were presented in a document entitled 'A Better Quality of Life: a Strategy for Sustainable Development in the United Kingdom'². This was updated in 2005, when the Government produced a new UK Framework for sustainable development 'Securing the Future'³. This document listed the following five principles of sustainable development

¹ World commission on Environment and Development (1987) 'Our Common Future'

² Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (1999) 'A Better Quality of Life: a Strategy for Sustainable Development in the United Kingdom'

³ HM Government (2005) 'Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy'

which are used to guide the implementation of sustainable development in the UK:

- Living with environment limits;
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- Achieving a sustainable economy;
- Promoting good governance; and
- Using sound science responsibly.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.6** Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is required in the UK by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁴. All DPDs are subject to SA, but SA is not required for SPDs, it is optional. The SA considers how the principles of sustainable development have been taken into account in the development of the document being appraised.
- 1.7** Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in the EU by an EU Directive, commonly referred to as the “SEA Directive”⁵, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Plans and programmes with the potential to have significant environmental effects (positive or negative) are required to undergo SEA. All DPDs are subject to SEA, and SPDs have the potential for significant environmental effects, therefore may be subject to SEA.
- 1.8** SA and SEA are required by separate legislation, however, as there are many cross-overs between the two processes, government guidance⁶ has recommended that the two processes be undertaken simultaneously. This approach will be taken for Hart’s Open Space DPD, therefore where SA is referred to this incorporates the requirements of SEA.

Stages of the SA Process

- 1.9** Government guidance on SA identifies the various stages of SA and how these relate to the different stages of preparing a DPD. The stages are shown in Table I.1, taken from the ODPM guidance.
- 1.10** This report represents Stage A. The following section will outline in more detail the methodology that has been followed for this SA Scoping Report.

⁴ HM Government(2004) ‘Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004’

⁵ EU (2001) ‘Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment’

⁶ ODPM (2005) ‘Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents’

DPD Stage 1: Pre-production – Evidence Gathering
SA stages and tasks
<p>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. • A2: Collecting baseline information. • A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems. • A4: Developing the SA framework. • A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA
DPD Stage 2: Production
SA Stages and tasks
<p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework/ • B2: Developing the DPD options • B3: Predicting the effects of the DPD. • B4: Evaluating the effects of the DPD. • B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects. • B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implement the DPDs.
<p>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1: Preparing the SA Report
<p>Stage D: Consulting on the preferred options of the DPD and SA Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D1: Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and the SA Report. • D2(i): Appraising significant changes.
DPD Stage 3: Examination
SA stages and tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D2(ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations.
DPD Stage 4: Adoption and Monitoring
SA stages and tasks
<p>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E1: Finalising aims and methods of monitoring. • E2: Responding to adverse effects.

Table I Incorporating SA within the DPD Process (Taken from Figure 5 of the ODPM Guidance⁷)

⁷ ODPM (2005) ‘Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents’

2 STAGE A: SCOPING

Introduction

- 2.1 This section of the report sets out how the scoping stages of the SA has been carried out, with reference to tasks listed under Stage A in Table 1 in the previous section.
- 2.2 It is important to note that for the scoping stage for this SA it has been possible to draw on the Scoping Report for the SA of the overall LDF and Core Strategy which is being consulted upon in tandem with this document. This Scoping Report only includes information specific to the Open Space DPD as it supplements the Scoping Report for the LDF rather than repeating large sections of it.

Task A1: Identify relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives

- 2.3 This task requires a review of policies, plans and programmes relevant to the Open Space DPD to establish the sustainability objectives which need to be considered.
- 2.4 A comprehensive review of relevant policies, plans and programmes for the Hart District LDF has been undertaken as part of the LDF SA Scoping Report. In preparing the SA Scoping Report for the Open Space DPD consideration has been given to whether there are additional plans or programmes which should be considered specific to the DPD.
- 2.5 A review of the policies, plans and programmes considered to be relevant, additional to those considered in the LDF SA Scoping Report is set out in Table 2, below.

Plans and Programmes Summary
<p>Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17): Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (ODPM 2002) and its Companion Guide (ODPM 2002) PPG17 requires all local authorities to undertake assessments of existing and future needs for open space, sport and recreation provision. The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends that all open spaces (except for private gardens) irrespective of ownership and public access, should be included in the assessment. Using this information locally derived standards for provision should be set for open space, sport and recreation facilities.</p>
<p>Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPSI): Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005) PPSI states that development should ensure an appropriate mix of uses, including the incorporation of green space.</p>
<p>Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (Supplement to PPS1) (DCLG 2007) The PPS Supplement states that spatial strategies and any development should help deliver amongst other things green infrastructure and biodiversity as part of a</p>

<p>strategy to address climate change, mitigation and adaptation.</p>
<p>Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Spatial Planning (DCLG 2008) PPS12 states that the core strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution.</p>
<p>Urban Green Spaces Task Force Report (DTLR 2002) The report states that ‘strategic planning for parks and green spaces must take place alongside strategies for housing, community development and safety and economic regeneration’ and that local authorities should recognise that most open spaces can be multifunctional.</p>
<p>Green Spaces, Better Places – The Final Report of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (DTLR 2002) The Urban White Paper called for a ‘vision for the future of our parks, play areas and green spaces’. The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce looked at developing that vision. This final report identified the importance of green spaces to urban life and outlines the concerns about parks and other green spaces, with proposals for overcoming them.</p>
<p>Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Green Space (DTLR 2002) This report accompanies the Green Spaces, Better Places (DTLR 2002). It looks at patterns of use, barriers to open space, the ideal open space and the wider role of open space in urban renewal.</p>
<p>Open Space Strategies – Best Practice Guidance (CABE, 2004) The CABE guidance sets out that great parks, squares and streets make for a better quality of life. The document provides guidance for local authorities in producing an open space strategy and highlights that the preparation of a strategy will protect and create a network of high quality open space.</p>
<p>The Value of Public Space (CABE, 2004) Highlights how cities in the UK and around the world have found economic, health and social benefits from making the best of their public spaces.</p>
<p>Planning for Open Space (Sport England, 2002) Provides guidance on good practice, based upon PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.</p>
<p>‘Nature Nearby’ Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance (Natural England 2010) States that everyone should have access to a good quality natural greenspace near to where they live i.e. ‘Nature Nearby’ due to the range of benefits to people’s quality of life. It proposes the adoption of three key standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGst) • Visitor Service Standards • Greenspace Quality Standard
<p>National Play Strategy for England (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008) The Government’s aim is for all children to be able to enjoy a range of safe and exciting places to play close to where they live. Through children and communities’ involvement in the design and planning of these spaces, play areas will be valued locally and continue to reflect the distinct needs of each community. The strategy sets out a number of means to deliver the strategy’s vision.</p>
<p>Regional Spatial Strategy: The South East Plan (DCLG 2009) Since the publication of the South East Plan there has been a change in Government</p>

and the new Government has expressed an intention to revoke the South East Plan, however the Plan is still a current planning document at the time of writing.

The Region's strategic vision for 2026 is for a socially and economically strong, healthy and just South East that respects the limits of the global environment. To achieve this the region must facilitate the development of health, education, cultural and leisure amenities, necessary to meet the needs of a growing population, and manage the implications of demographic and settlement change.

The key policies to be taken into consideration are:

Policy S1: Supporting Healthy Communities

Policy S5: Cultural and Sporting Activity

South East Green Infrastructure Framework from Policy into Practice
(Natural England 2009)

The framework seeks to establish green infrastructure as an integral and essential component of sustainable communities, develop a common understanding of the role and importance of green infrastructure, and provides detailed guidance on how green infrastructure can be delivered through the planning system and local partnerships, including funding for its creation and long term maintenance.

Blackwater Valley Strategy (Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership 2011-16)

The current strategy is the fifth review of the original strategy – The Blackwater River Valley Landscape Restoration and Recreation Study (1971). The vision for the Valley remains unchanged as '*A continuous green space along the Blackwater Valley; attractive to wildlife and the community.*' The focus of the study is on the enhancement of the landscape, the provision of an alternative recreation venue, to improve the valley for biodiversity, improve the riparian habitat and water quality of the River Blackwater, and maximise participation from all sections of the community in decision making and practical action.

Table 2: Relevant policies, plans and programmes

Task A2: Collecting baseline information

2.6 This task requires the collection of baseline information about the plan area, and anywhere outside the plan area which may be relevant. A large amount of baseline data is presented in the LDF SA Scoping Report. Additional baseline information specifically relating to the Open Space DPD is set out below.

PPG17 Assessment (Kit Campbell Associates, 2006)

2.7 In 2006 a PPG17 Assessment for the District was carried out by consultants (Kit Campbell Associates) on behalf of the Council to form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

2.8 The assessment sets out the quality, quantity and accessibility standards based upon the findings from an audit of provision and consultation with local residents, town and parish councils and key stakeholders. The key recommendation from the report was that the Council's priority should be to enhance quality rather than quantity.

- 2.9 In terms of planning policies for open space, sport and recreation the report recommends that, due to the need to enhance provision across the District, the Council should adopt a more positive approach and that one of the Council's core LDF objectives should be to ensure that Hart has a network of accessible, high quality greenspace, sport and recreation facilities which meet local needs and enhance the 'liveability' of the District, promote sustainability, support biodiversity and make the best use of land.
- 2.10 Due to a number of limitations identified in the original 2006 assessment the Council have decided to produce an update which will provide a clear picture of the current existing provision and future needs within the District, and assess the current provision in meeting future needs in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. Further baseline information will therefore be collected to inform the preparation of the Open Space DPD.

Task A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems

- 2.7 This task requires the identification of key sustainability issues and problems relevant to the plan in question based on the review of plans and programmes and the baseline information collected as part of the previous tasks.
- 2.8 The LDF SA Scoping Report identifies a number of significant sustainability issues within Hart. No additional issues have been identified for the Open Space DPD. Sustainability issues highlighted in the LDF SA Scoping Report have therefore been selected for consideration for this SA as appropriate. The key sustainability issues considered of most relevance to the Open Space DPD are listed below:

Health and Well-Being, Cultural Activity, Leisure, and Recreation
There is a need for additional leisure facilities
Historic Environment
There are important historical assets in the District's settlements, particularly in Hartley Wintney and Odiham, and some of the smaller rural settlements
Biodiversity
There are various sites designated for nature conservation across the District which affect all the main settlements
Landscape
The landscape is largely rural and encompasses a range of landscape types; there are no statutory landscape designations
Flooding
There are small areas with a higher risk of fluvial flooding and these affect all of Hart's main

settlements, particularly Yateley and Blackwater

Task A4: Developing the SA Framework

- 2.9 The SA framework is made up of a number of SA objectives which are then used to test the plan against. A set of 21 objectives have been identified as part of the LDF SA Scoping Report based on the review of plans and programmes and the baseline information for the District.
- 2.10 As the Open Space DPD relates to a specific topic, it is possible that not all the SA objectives will be relevant. Table 3 lists the SA objectives from the LDF SA Scoping Report and indicates which are considered relevant to the Open Space DPD. The DPD will only be tested against the SA objectives which are considered relevant.

Hart District Council SA Objectives	Can this objective be delivered by the DPD?
SA1 To provide all residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home which meets their needs	No
SA2 To protect and enhance the health and well-being of the population	Yes
SA3 To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity, leisure, and recreation across all sections of the community	Yes
SA4 To reduce inequality, poverty and social exclusion	No
SA5 To improve community safety by reducing crime and the fear of crime	No
SA6 To create and sustain vibrant and locally distinctive settlements and communities	Yes
SA7 To protect and enhance the District's historic environment	Yes
SA8 To protect and enhance biodiversity	Yes
SA9 To protect and enhance the District's countryside and rural landscape	Yes
SA10 To maintain and improve the water quality of the District's rivers and groundwaters and other water bodies	No
SA11 To maintain and improve soil quality	No
SA12 To reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases and manage the impacts of climate change	No
SA13 To reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to the local community, environment and economy	No
SA14 To increase energy efficiency, security and diversity of supply and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources	No
SA15 To promote the efficient use of land through the	No

appropriate re-use of previously developed land	
SA16 To improve the efficiency of resource use and achieve sustainable resource management	No
SA17 To improve accessibility to all services and facilities	Yes
SA18 To improve efficiency of transport networks by enhancing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and promoting policies which reduce the need to travel	No
SA19 To maintain and improve opportunities for everyone to acquire the education and skills they need to find and remain in work	No
SA20 To maintain high and stable levels of employment and promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness	No
SA21 To stimulate regeneration where appropriate and encourage urban renaissance	No

Table 3: Relevance of SA Objectives to the Open Space DPD

2.11 When the DPD is assessed, scores are awarded against each of the SA objectives considered to be relevant. The scores are chosen from the following:

Scoring	Explanation
+++	Major positive effect – proposed approach likely to contribute significantly to meeting this SA objective
++	Moderate positive effect – proposed approach likely to contribute moderately to meeting this SA objective
+	Minor positive effect – proposed approach likely to contribute slightly to meeting this SA objective
0	Neutral / No impact – proposed approach unlikely to have any effect on meeting this SA objective
-	Minor negative effect - proposed approach likely to contribute slightly to meeting this SA objective
--	Moderate negative effect – proposed approach likely to contribute moderately to meeting this SA objective
---	Major negative effect – proposed approach likely to contribute significantly to meeting this SA objective
?	Uncertain – effects on the SA objective unclear

Table 4: Scoring Mechanism

2.12 The assessment of the policies and options of the plan uses the SA objectives listed in Table 3 above and is informed by the information collected at previous stages, notably the review of plans and programmes, and the baseline data. However, it is also based on the professional judgement of officers at Hart District Council.

2.13 The SA scoring is not a quantitative process but a qualitative one, and therefore does not entail simply adding up how many pluses or minuses an option has over another, it also involves in-depth analysis which accompanies

the assessment in order to help interpret the results and to inform decision-making. It may be the case that a single negative score against an objective could be so significant that even if other scores are positive, an option may be rejected, or a policy may require amendment.

- 2.14 The full results of the SA will be provided in tables such as the one in Table 5 below, including an explanation as to why each score has been awarded, how likely the effects are to occur, the spatial scale of the effects predicted, the permanence of the effects predicted, and how long term they are thought likely to be.

SA Objective	Assessment of Effect	Commentary
SA2 To protect and enhance the health and well-being of the population	++	<p>Comments: This policy will benefit the health and well being of the population</p> <p>Likelihood of effect: Likely</p> <p>Spatial Scale: Hart District</p> <p>Temporary/Permanent: Permanent</p> <p>Short, medium, long term: Medium to long term</p>
SA3 To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity, leisure, and recreation across all sections of the community	etc	

Table 5: Example Scoring Table

Task A5: Consulting on the Scope of the SA

- 2.15 This Scoping Report will now be consulted upon for a minimum of five weeks. The statutory environmental consultees (Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage) are to be consulted as well as other relevant organisations and the general public.

3 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE TASKS

Conclusion

- 3.1 This Scoping Report represents the findings of the Stage A tasks undertaken for the SA of the Open Space DPD.
- 3.2 This document is now subject to five weeks consultation which will close on **13th May 2011**. Please email any comments to the planning policy team at planningpolicy@hart.gov.uk or if you prefer to respond in writing please send your comments to the following address:

Planning Policy Team
Hart District Council
Civic Offices
Harlington Way
Fleet
Hants
GU51 4AE

- 3.3 If you have any questions about this document please use the contact details above or call the planning policy team on 01252 774489.

Future Tasks

- 3.4 Following the consultation period, responses will be considered and the report amended as appropriate. The next stage of the SA involves developing and refining options and assessing the effects of the plan. A Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced to present the results of this, and will also include a summary of the responses received from this consultation and the actions taken.

Open Space DPD SA Scoping Report