

Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Version

Sustainability Appraisal Non-technical Summary

July 2014



GOSPORT
Borough Council

Gosport Borough Local Plan (2011-2029)

Publication Version

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Non-technical Summary

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Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a non-technical summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process carried out during the preparation of the Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 (the draft Local Plan). It simply provides a broad overview of the process and the full SA report for the pre-submission version of the draft Local Plan should be read for further details. These documents can be found at: www.gosport.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal

Why a Local Plan?

- 1.2 Prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Borough Council intended to publish two development plan documents (DPD), a separate Core Strategy and a Site Allocations and Delivery DPD in line with previous Government guidance. However due to the need to gather further evidence on strategic sites it was considered that there was an opportunity to prepare a comprehensive single document in line with the NPPF. It was therefore considered that it would be quicker to publish a single Local Plan than two separate DPDs. It is important to note that the Publication Version of the Local Plan has been informed by the previous work undertaken on the earlier stages of the Core Strategy and the findings of the SA assessment for both the Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages have been taken into account in shaping the content of the policies of the draft Local Plan.

What is a sustainability appraisal?

- 1.3 The Sustainability Appraisal identifies and records the likely significant effects of the draft Local Plan on social, economic and environmental objectives. This provides an opportunity to remove or mitigate any identified adverse impacts, or enhance positive also identified through the SA process.

When was the sustainability appraisal carried out?

- 1.4 The preparation of the Local Plan has passed through a number of stages as it has focussed on the issues identified and addressing this through the formulation of policies. A SA has been undertaken alongside each of the key stages. In broad terms these stages have been:

- Core Strategy Issues and Options (2006);
- Core Strategy Preferred Options (2009);
- Consultation Draft Local Plan (2012); and
- Publication draft Local Plan (2014).

- 1.5 From the Core Strategy Issues and Options and Preferred Option stages, three options for the Local Plan were developed and tested:

- Employment –led regeneration;
- Employment – led with mixed-use enabling development; and
- Dormitory town.

- 1.6 In testing these options, the SA process showed that the second option – with its ‘employment-led regeneration with a greater emphasis of enabling mixed-use development on key regeneration sites, would deliver the highest number

of significant positive effects. This is due largely to this option having the greater potential to locate housing close to jobs and services.

- 1.7 The provision of more jobs in the Borough together with the provision of a range of facilities has the potential to reduce trips out of the Borough with the opportunities this brings to reduce congestion and pollution. A full assessment of these options can be found in Section 5 of the main SA report.
- 1.8 As a result of this process there should not be any significant changes between the Publication and submission stages. There were two significant changes from the Consultation draft to the Publication version. The first was the deletion of the policy on sustainable construction with consequent amendment of the other policies to incorporate the relevant elements of the deleted policy. The second was a small upward adjustment of the housing quantum. However these changes have not resulted in any significant changes to the overall effects of the draft Local Plan.
- 1.9 The SA is conducted in line with a national framework which was first devised in 2005 and updated in 2006 and 2010. The framework incorporates the requirements of the European directive on sustainability and includes a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The 2010 update contains ten sustainability objectives and each draft Local Plan objective and policy has been tested to ensure that it contributes towards achieving them. Further details about testing local plan objectives and policies can be found in section 4 of the main SA Report (2014). In summary the main objectives are set out below:
 - Natural Resources and Climate Change;
 - Flood Risk;
 - Biodiversity;
 - Landscape and Townscape Quality;
 - Heritage;
 - Homes for Everyone;
 - Education, Employment and Economy;
 - Health and Wellbeing;
 - Culture, Leisure and Recreation; and
 - Social Inclusion and Quality of Life.
- 1.10 The policy is given a score against each objective and there are a number of possible outcomes as a result of this. For example, the policy can have a positive effect, a possible positive effect, an uncertain effect, a possible negative effect, a negative effect or have neutral effect on meeting the identified objectives. Once the effects have been identified, the policy can be amended to either increase the positive effects or remove, where possible the negative effects. Where it is not possible to do this, the SA can be used to identify how negative effects can be mitigated throughout other parts of the draft Local Plan.
- 1.11 This process of testing policy formulation is carried out throughout the preparation of the draft Local Plan. The conclusions of the results of this process are set out in the next section. The full results can be found in Section 6 of the main SA report.

Conclusions of the SA on the Publication version of the Local Plan

Positive Effects

- 2.1 The SA assessment undertaken for each of the 48 Local Plan policies shows that on balance each of these would contribute a number of positive effects. The cumulative effects of the Local Plan policies, when considered in combination, shows that the effects of the Local Plan are largely positive in delivering sustainable development.

Negative Effects

- 2.2 The only policies showing potential negative effects are the Tourism and the Marina and Moorings policies (LP18 & LP19), in respect of the sustainability objective of reducing the effects of travel (objective 1) and encouraging modal transfer away from the private car (SA objective 2). Potential impacts have also been identified in relation to the Regeneration Area and Allocation policies upon reducing water consumption where development is proposed (SA objective 27).

Mitigation of Negative Impacts

- 2.3 The process of on-going sustainability appraisal during the Local Plan preparation process has resulted in elimination of most potential negative effects, however some have remained. The identified effects which are detailed for each of the policies in the SA Report give reasons why changes have not been made to these policies where appropriate.

- 2.4 The process of preparing the Local Plan is largely reiterative, and the process involves constant testing of the Plan, as it progresses, against the SA objectives, in order to ensure that its impact is acceptable in general terms. Consequently the negative effects arising from the draft Local Plan are minor and fall into two categories:

- **Effects which can be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable or manageable level.** These can be achieved through the preparation of the supplementary planning documents (SPDs) which will accompany the Local Plan. Additional guidance emphasises that the Local Plan by itself is not enough to ensure a satisfactory outcome, and shows the importance of the role of SPDs in forming part of the local development framework, along with the Local Plan.

- **Unavoidable negative impacts** arising from a policy which is otherwise beneficial and of which no other policy will reduce the adverse impacts. This shows the need for trade-offs. Whilst the ideal plan would have no negative effects, it is sometimes necessary to accept small negative effects in order to secure larger overall benefits.

- 2.5 Potential negative impacts have generally remained because other sustainability considerations indicate the policy is necessary. The appraisal indicates where mitigation of these potential negative impacts has been built into other policies in the Local Plan. For example, possible adverse impacts have been recorded for the objective of Flood Risk, as the strategy does not totally exclude development in flood risk areas. However, the flooding policy makes clear the criteria that development will have to meet in order to reduce

and manage any flood risk and reducing the risk of flooding is accounted for in each of the policies for the Regeneration Areas.

Next steps

- 3.1 Following a six week period of consultation, the Publication version of the draft Local Plan (along with the SA and other supporting documents) will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination-in-public. An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the plan, will consider any representations when deciding whether the plan is legally compliant and sound.
- 3.2 If you need further information on the SA please email planning.policy@gosport.gov.uk.

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**If you need this document in large print, on tape, CD,
in Braille or in another language, please ask.**

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