

## **Allerdale Local Plan (part 1)**

### **Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Post Adoption Statement**

#### **1. Introduction**

Allerdale Borough Council adopted the Allerdale Local Plan (part1) (DPD) on 16 July 2014. The Local Plan (part 1) sets out strategic and development management policies that will guide development up to 2029 for the area of Allerdale outside the Lake District National Park.

#### **2. Why has this statement been produced?**

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4). These regulations transpose into UK legislation European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) which requires a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme
- How the environmental report has been taken into account
- How opinions expressed through public consultation have been taken in to account
- The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and
- The measures that are taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme

#### **3. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan**

Environmental considerations have been built into the preparation of the Local Plan (part 1). Through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process every policy has been tested for its environmental integrity. Sustainability appraisal has performed a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan and has informed the evolution of the plan. The requirements of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment and the Environmental Assessment of the Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 have been incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal exercise undertaken.

Sustainability Appraisal commenced during the pre-production and evidence gathering stage. A scoping report was produced in 2007 and was subject to consultation with statutory consultees. At each stage in the preparation of the Local Plan (part 1) policies have been tested against the Sustainability Appraisal framework to predict and evaluate the effects of the local plan. As the local plan evolved, policies have been refined and ways of mitigating adverse effects, maximising beneficial effects and measures to improve the sustainability outcomes have been considered. A Sustainability Appraisal report was published at each stage of the plan making process cumulating in the final sustainability appraisal document which was submitted for examination alongside the local plan

#### **4. How the environmental report has been taken into account**

##### Issues and Options

The Issues and options document presented a number of questions in terms of policy and strategy options relating to employment, housing, and the natural and historic environment. From this a preferred strategy and policies were developed. A sustainability report on the Issues and Options was completed which then fed into the preferred option stage.

##### Preferred Options

A sustainability appraisal report was published for consultation alongside the preferred options documents in June 2012. All reasonable alternatives in terms of strategy and policies were assessed in terms of overall balance of impacts on an agreed set of Sustainability Appraisal objectives outlined in the scoping report. Each option was appraised to determine whether it would result in development that moves towards or away from the achievement of each sustainability objective. Short commentary was included that explained the likely positive and/or negative effects that may result from each preferred and alternative option. The SA found that in the most part the preferred options would progress the SA objectives.

##### Publication

Following the preferred options consultation the local plan was re-structured and some policies amalgamated and content revised. Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the publication version of the local plan and the final Sustainability Appraisal report was published at the same time as the local plan.

##### Submission of the Local Plan

Following publication of the local plan a number of modifications were proposed by the Council. Prior to submission further SA work was carried on the modifications and this appraisal along with the final SA report was submitted with the local plan for examination.

## **5. How opinions expressed through consultation have been taken into account**

The SEA Directive requires responses to consultation to be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to a legislative procedure. As required by the SEA regulations, the Council undertook consultation on the scope of the sustainability appraisal with the statutory bodies. Comments received helped to improve the SA framework.

The local plan documents have been accompanied by both SA and Habitats Regulations Assessment reports at key consultation stages. Copies have been available on the Council website, the Council Offices and local libraries. Throughout the SA process there have been opportunities for public and stakeholder consultation and comment. Consultation reports have been published after key consultation stages. These reports set out how comments have been considered and have identified where changes have been made as a result. All comments have been considered in detail and have been used to inform the content of the local plan strategy and policies.

## **6. The reason for choosing the plan as adopted**

The Allerdale Local Plan (part 1) was prepared in an iterative process with the Sustainability Appraisal, as well as other evidence, informing plan production at various intervals. Throughout the production process, there was on going scrutiny of reasonable alternative approaches, both for the spatial strategy and supporting policies. The adopted document reflects the most sustainable and deliverable approach to future development, in the light of the alternatives considered.

There were certain limitations on the range of possible alternatives as the plan is required to comply with national planning policy. This requirement to some extent sets the framework for the plan. As such, any reasonable alternatives needed to be set in regard of higher level policy.

Four growth options and five spatial options were considered. The growth options ranged from meeting forecasted population and household growth through to aspirational growth aligned to increasing levels of employment in the Borough. The spatial options ranged from urban concentration to rurally sparse. The preferred options document set out the preferred option and alternative options in more detail. Both the preferred option and alternatives were assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal. Similarly the supporting policy options were subject to the same assessment process.

In evaluating and selecting the preferred approach, the Council considered the social, environmental and economic implications of pursuing the alternative options. The reasons for choosing the plan is based on the most appropriate alternative.

## **7. Measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of plan**

Appendix 7 of the adopted local plan sets out the monitoring framework for the strategy and policies. The SA scoping report, appendix 4a, also contains a monitoring framework. Both elements of the monitoring framework will be incorporated in the Annual Monitoring Report.

The monitoring framework has been designed to assist the Council in assessing the performance of the local plan policies and evaluating progress in plan delivery. It is based upon clearly defined and measurable indicators. This approach will ensure that where monitoring indicates any significant threat to the environment or where development may prejudice the achievement of sustainability objectives, the Council is able to take informed and appropriate action.