

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL
OF THE
BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET
GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE
SITE ALLOCATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD)
PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION PAPER**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY
APRIL 2012**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for the Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Preferred Options.
- 1.2 The SA Report outlines the significant effects in relation to environmental, social and economic factors of the appraisal of options throughout the development of the Site Allocations DPD and includes the findings of the SA of the Issues and Options consultation paper. It outlines the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant effects of implementing the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD.
- 1.3 Through undertaking SA, the impacts of a plan on the environment and on social and economic issues can be understood. The SA is undertaken as an integral part of the planmaking process, helping to inform and guide decisions on options and preferences.
- 1.4 The purpose of the NTS is to summarise the content and main findings of the SA report in a clear and concise manner to assist decision-makers in understanding what the potential environmental, social and economic effects of the B&NES Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD are likely to be.
- 1.5 The SA Report is being published for consultation alongside the Bath & North East Somerset Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD to demonstrate the significant sustainability effects of plan and the alternatives considered in developing the plan. The consultation period runs from 23 May 2012 to 18 July 2012.
- 1.6 The purpose of the consultation is to provide the statutory environmental bodies and other interested parties the opportunity to express their opinion on the SA Report. It also enables them to use the information within the SA Report to guide their deliberations on the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD.
- 1.7 Please send your comments on this report by the 18 July 2012 to:

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- 2.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Bath and North East Somerset will replace the existing Local Plan. The LDF acts as a folder of documents that will set the policy and context for development in the district for the period leading up to 2026. Amongst other plans the LDF will contain a number of statutory plans (Development Plan Documents or DPDs), which carry the full weight of the development plan.
- 2.2 The Government guidance document ‘Planning for Traveller Sites’ and the National Planning Policy Framework set out the obligation for Local Authorities to allocate sufficient sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in site allocation DPDs. The Site Allocations DPD seeks to meet that obligation by identifying suitable, available and achievable land for allocation as Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople residential and transit accommodation.
- 2.3 The Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD must undergo a **Sustainability Appraisal** (see below).

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.4 SA involves the identification and evaluation of the Strategy’s impacts on economic, social and environmental objectives – the three dimensions of sustainable development. The SA process incorporates the requirements of a new European law on the environmental assessment of plans (referred to as the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’).
- 2.5 Stage A of the SA process involved establishing the framework for undertaking the SA, setting a number of sustainable development objectives against which the DPD could be assessed, together with an evidence base to help inform the appraisal. The framework and evidence base are documented in the Bath and North East Somerset

Core Strategy Scoping Report, which has been subject to consultation, and is available on the Council's website. Furthermore, an addendum to that Scoping Report was prepared relating specifically to the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD. This was subject to consultation between 19 July and 27 August 2010. That document and the Council's responses to all consultation responses received are available on the Council's dedicated DPD webpages at www.bathnes.gov.uk/planningfortravellers.

- 2.6 This report, Stage B in the SA process, focuses on the preferred options for developing the draft DPD. This is not a formal requirement of the SEA Directive but has been prepared to demonstrate that sustainability considerations have been incorporated throughout the development of the Site Allocations DPD, and to provide information for stakeholders as well as an audit trail of the appraisal process. The appraisal findings documented in the SA report will be taken into account by the Council in the development and choice of the preferred options that will provide the basis for the Site Allocations DPD.

Preferred Options

- 2.7 The appraisal of different options in preparing the DPD is one of the central roles of the SA. The SA is used to help inform the decision maker on developing a draft DPD on what trade-offs are required and what the associated environmental, social and economic impacts are likely to be. This information should assist Bath and North East Somerset Council in preparing a plan that finds an optimal balance of economic, environmental and social objectives in delivering its aims.
- 2.8 Sustainability appraisals focus on the consideration of different options. The background to the Preferred Options consultation paper for the Bath and North East Somerset Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD is a list of 23 site options which have been the subject of this appraisal.

2.9 The Scoping Report Addendum developed for the Site Allocations DPD provides an overview of the social, environmental and economic factors that have been considered in determining the site assessment criteria set out in the Issues and Options consultation paper and in selecting the most suitable sites for public consultation in the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD paper.

Reasons for Selecting Sites (Alternatives)

- 2.10 The previous SA recommended that each site be subject to rigorous SA due to concerns raised on the site selection matrix proposed in the Issues and Options consultation document. Section 3 of the SA Report for the Preferred Options consultation paper sets out the appraisal methodology used to identify preferred sites from the list of 23 site options.
- 2.11 The process of plan preparation has been one of ‘narrowing down’ from a range of options. SA has been part of this iterative process. Appraisal of options is reported in Section 4 of the SA Report, with related appraisal matrices presented in Appendix D. The results of the appraisal of each site option has given some clear conclusions and recommendations:
- Site options **GT.4**, **GT.7** and **GT.17** perform best against the SA objectives, identifying a large number of significant positive benefits from the allocation of these sites for development as Gypsy / Traveller pitches or a Travelling Showmen’s yard. These options **are recommended** for bringing forward for allocation where they are available for development.
 - In addition to those sites identified above, site options **GT.1**, **GT.2**, **GT.6**, **GT.8**, **GT.14**, **GT.18**, **GT.19** and **GT.20** **are recommended** for bringing forward for allocation where they are available for development.

- Site options **GT.13** and **GT.23** perform worst against the SA objectives, identifying a large number of significant negative impacts from allocation for development. These sites are **not recommended** for allocation.
- The remaining site options **GT.3, GT.5, GT.9, GT.10, GT.11, GT.12, GT.15, GT.16, GT.21** and **GT.22** are **not recommended** for allocation.

2.12 Where mitigation or enhancement measures have been identified, these are recommended as being taken forward through the next draft of the DPD, the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document.

2.13 The findings of the SA of options were an integral part of the process of considering site options and selecting preferred options. The general approach was for the SA to present the individual impacts of options in terms of environmental, social and economic SA Objectives and make recommendations on how an option might be made more sustainable through mitigation and enhancement measures. Direct comparisons between alternatives has not been carried out due to the need to assess individual land parcels on their merits, and to select a range of sites to meet the full identified accommodation need.

Likely Effects of the Site Allocations DPD

2.14 Of the 23 sites assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal, a total of 8 sites are recommended in Section 4 of the report as being suitable to take forward as site allocations for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople residential or transit accommodation. The appraisal matrices included at Appendix D of the SA Report are summarised at Table 4.1 of that report.

2.15 A number of potential significant positive effects were identified during the appraisal of the sites considered for the Preferred Options paper. The sites that are identified as likely to have significant positive effects are set out below, in Table NTS.1

Site	Potential Significant Positive Effects identified in relation to the following SA Objectives
GT.1 Parcel 7100, Woppard Lane, Whitchurch	Access to local services; health; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; rural ways of life.
GT.2 Old Colliery Buildings, Stanton Wick	Affordable housing; education; sustainable construction; landscape and rural ways of life.
GT.4 Former Radstock Infant School canteen, Radstock	Affordable housing; education; sustainable construction and waste management; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; sustainable transport; landscape.
GT.6 Station Road, Newbridge	Access to local services; health; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; sustainable transport; landscape, diversity and historic assets; flood risk.
GT.8 Lower Bristol Road, Twerton	Access to local services; health; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; flood risk.
GT.14 Land near Ellsbridge House, Keynsham	Access to local services; health; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; sustainable transport.
GT.16 Braysdown Depot, Braysdown Lane	Affordable housing; sustainable construction and waste management; diversity and rural ways of life.
GT.17 Newbridge Marina and Caravan Park	Affordable housing; education; sustainable construction and waste management; stronger communities; business and education; sustainable construction and waste management; sustainable transport; landscape and diversity; pollution.

- 2.16 A number of uncertain, major and minor negative effects were identified during the appraisal of sites. Mitigation and enhancement measures were recommended to deal with any potential uncertain and negative effects identified where these were considered suitable, proportionate and achievable. A number of those mitigation measures are included within the summary of significant effects at Table 4.1 of the SA Report. Measures for the sites recommended for inclusion within the Preferred Options consultation paper will be considered by Council officers in determining individual site policies in the Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations DPD.

- 2.17 Cumulative effects were also assessed as part of the individual site assessment. All identified cumulative effects are set out within the summary of significant effects at Table 4.1 of the SA Report. Potential cumulative effects have been identified in relation to negative social, environmental and economic impacts having a greater negative social impact than individual effects. Similarly, positive social, environmental and economic effects have been identified as having a cumulative positive impact on health and well-being and social integration.
- 2.18 These cumulative impacts have been taken into account when determining which sites are recommended for allocation and will be used to inform the site policies in the Pre-Submission version Site Allocations DPD.

Next Steps

- 2.19 Following consultation on the SA Report and the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD, responses will be used to inform the next stage, of drafting the Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD. This will include finalising sites for allocation and drafting individual site policies, taking into account all mitigation and enhancement measures identified in the SA assessment and any significant issues raised at consultation.
- 2.20 The Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations DPD will then be drawn up and subject to a further Sustainability Appraisal and public consultation. Any further changes arising from those processes will then be made prior to submitting the DPD for Examination in Public.