



## **Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement**

### **Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes Regulations 2004**

#### **Introduction**

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. This statement outlines how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Local Plan, how the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account, how consultation responses have been taken into account, the reasons for choosing the adopted Local Plan policies in light of alternative options and the measures that will be taken to monitor the effects of the Local Plan.

East Suffolk Council adopted the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan on 23 September 2020. Further details on the development of the Local Plan can be found on the Council's website at: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplan).

#### **How environmental and sustainability considerations have been integrated into the new Suffolk Coastal Local Plan**

The Sustainability Appraisal has been conducted in such a way that it meets the requirements of the EU Strategic Environment Assessment Directives (including through EU exit legislation) and UK Government guidance on the preparation of Sustainability Appraisals.

As required by the regulations, the Sustainability Appraisal has been developed through an iterative process and has informed decision making at every stage of developing the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.

The first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal was the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report included a review of other relevant plans, programmes and strategies that have an influence on sustainability and provide the policy context for the Local Plan. The social, environmental and economic baselines were established which identified the key sustainability issues to be

addressed and provided the basis from which the potential effects of the Local Plan could be assessed. The report was subject to consultation between 18th August and 30th October 2017 alongside initial assessments of potential sites for inclusion in the Local Plan.

In Summer 2018, the Council published an Interim Sustainability Appraisal report. This included appraisals of all the policy and site options considered through the preparation of the first draft Local Plan. Each option was assessed against the social, environmental and economic indicators in the SA framework in order to establish whether they would have a positive or negative effect. The cumulative impact of the policies and sites was also considered to establish the overall effect of the Local Plan. These appraisals were then used to inform the progression of the plan to draft stage. This interim report also included updates to the Scoping Report based on the responses received during the Scoping Report consultation. Consultation on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal took place between 20<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018, alongside consultation on the First Draft Local Plan.

Following the consultation on the First Draft Local Plan, further work was undertaken to refine the Local Plan and further options were assessed. The Sustainability Appraisal Report was published with the Final Draft Local Plan (under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plans) (England) Regulations 2012 and was subject to consultation between 14<sup>th</sup> January and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The Sustainability Appraisal Report outlined the options assessed and their appraisals and made clear the reasons why alternative options had been discounted. The report analysed the overall effects of the Local Plan and identified three significant effects, two of which were positive significant effects and one which was negative. The report included proposals for monitoring.

Following the Regulation 19 consultation, the Sustainability Appraisal Report was submitted with all other relevant Local Plan documents to the Secretary of State for examination on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Following the public hearings which we were held between the 20<sup>th</sup> August and 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the Inspector concluded that 'Main Modifications' would be required to make the Local Plan sound. An Addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal was produced in order to assess whether any of these Main Modifications had an effect on the Sustainability Appraisal Report. The Main Modifications and the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum were consulted on between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## How the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account

The policies and sites within the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal throughout the development of the plan along with reasonable alternative options. Each policy and proposal has been assessed against the social, environmental and economic objectives in the SA framework in order to establish the positive and negative effects. Where significant effects were found potential mitigation measures were identified wherever possible. The results of the appraisals were used to

inform the decision making process and establish appropriate options to take forward into the new Local Plan.

Each stage of developing the Local Plan has included undertaking Sustainability Appraisal to take account of new evidence and new policy options. These updates helped further refine the options to include in the Local Plan.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report included the individual appraisals for each policy option taken forward into the Local Plan as well as all of the reasonable alternative options considered. The reasons for discounting alternative options was clearly set out in section 6 of the final Sustainability Appraisal Report (December 2018).

The final SA report also included an overview of all of the policies included in the final draft Local Plan to show the cumulative impact of the policies (section 7). In most cases, the cumulative impact of the Plan on SA objective was found to be either a minor or significant positive effect.

## How the results of consultation have been taken into account

The SEA Directive requires that opinions expressed by consultees be taken into account during the development of a plan before the plan is adopted. The Sustainability Appraisal was consulted on alongside consultation on the draft Plan at each stage. All comments and representations were taken into account and used to further refine the Sustainability Appraisal.

The Scoping Report, was published for consultation between 18th August and 30th October 2017 alongside initial assessments of potential sites for inclusion in the Local Plan. Comments received on this during the consultation informed the Interim Sustainability Appraisal report which was published in July 2018. Comments on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal were invited alongside the first draft Local Plan which was published for consultation between Friday 20 July to Friday 14 September 2018. All comments received on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal were made available on the Council's website and used to inform the final Sustainability Appraisal report and the further preparation of the Plan to Final Draft Local Plan stage. The final Sustainability Appraisal report included a summary of the consultation responses that were received on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report alongside a council response to each comment.

The comments received on the final Sustainability Appraisal report (Regulation 19 stage) were submitted to the Secretary of State as part of the submission of the Local Plan on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Following the completion of the public hearings as part of the Local Plan Examination, an Addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal was published with the Main Modifications for the Local Plan and was subject to consultation between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Responses to this consultation were submitted to the Inspector for his consideration.

## The reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in light of reasonable alternatives considered

The various stages of developing the Sustainability Appraisal have provided an iterative and rational method for refining the options considered throughout the Local Plan process. The various Sustainability Appraisal reports published during the preparation of the plan have shown that reasonable and alternative options have been considered and evaluated. The reports have clearly set out the objectives that each option has been evaluated against and the process of selection and rejection.

The full assessments and their results are included in the appendices of the Sustainability Appraisal Report. Section 6 of the Sustainability Appraisal Report makes clear the reasons each alternative option was discounted. The alternative options considered generally performed less well against the sustainability appraisal framework than the proposed options.

## Measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan

A monitoring framework is included in the final Sustainability Appraisal Report (section 8). This enables the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan sites and policies to be assessed and compared to those predicted in this Sustainability Appraisal report. It helps to ensure that any unforeseen adverse effects can be identified, and remedial action taken if required.

As set out in the report, some indicators will be monitored annually by the Council or external bodies, while others will be monitored less frequently for example through the national Census. Results for some indicators will change rapidly to signal recent changes such as housing completions or employment figures. Others such as health will show changes and trends over a longer timescale.

The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement are available on the Council's website at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplan).

Due to the current restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council has approved a Temporary Suspension of Parts of the Statement of Community Involvement for Planning Policy Purposes – Adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. In accordance with this, for those that are not able to view the Local Plan or supporting documents above online, hard copies will be made available and posted out where possible (free of charge) on request. This provision is subject to review in relation to the practicality and possibility for documents to be made available in the Council's offices and in libraries for public inspection. To request hard copies of documents please contact the Planning Policy and Delivery Team at:

Email: [PlanningPolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningPolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

Phone: 01394 444557

Post: East Suffolk Council, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ

Please note if contacting us on the number above, we are currently operating under a voicemail service. Please leave a message including your contact details and your call will be returned as soon as possible.