South Staffordshire Sustainability Appraisal

Overview
South Staffordshire Council is required to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of its Local Development Framework (LDF). This Non-Technical Summary, summarises the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which has been produced to accompany the emerging Issues and Options Report of the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of the LDF. The role of the SA Scoping Report is to provide the context for the Core Strategy and associated DPDs, considering the issues and opportunities which may impact upon the development of policies and proposals in the LDF.

Why Sustainability Appraisal?
Sustainability appraisal is mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for the production of LDFs. In other words, it requires local planning authorities, when producing a plan for the future development of their area, to consider the wider social, environmental and economic effects that its implementation may have on the conditions that currently exist, otherwise known as the environmental baseline. In addition local planning authorities are also required under European Directive, to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Whilst the requirements to produce an SA and SEA are distinct, Government guidance considers that it is possible to satisfy the two requirements through a single approach.

What is Sustainability?
Sustainability can be defined as: ‘Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Local Authorities, in conjunction with all public bodies, should seek to support sustainable development with particular attention being given to the four priority areas for immediate action, and long-term improvement outlined within the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy: Securing the Future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy (Defra, March 2005). The four areas for action are:

1. Sustainable Consumption and Production.
2. Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.
4. Sustainable Communities.

Using these topics, and sustainability themes derived from the West Midlands Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF), a series of sustainability objectives for South Staffordshire have been developed.

What are the Key Sustainability Issues in South Staffordshire?
The key sustainability issues that face the District have emerged following a review of relevant plans and programmes and through the collection of data held by a wide range of agencies and organisations, including the Council. Tables 1-4 summarise the key sustainability issues facing the District.

Sustainability Issues in South Staffordshire

1: Sustainable Consumption and Production

Sustainable Consumption and Production

Objectives

1. Encourage actions leading to improving energy efficiency and encourage the production and use of renewable energy.
2. Reduce and recycle.
3. Reduce the amount of materials used (refurbishment and new development).
4. Give proper consideration to the sustainability of materials, products and processes.

2: Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Objectives

1. Increase the amount of energy used from sustainable sources.
2. Foster the use of energy efficient buildings.
3. Encourage energy efficient behaviour.
4. Promote the use of renewable energy sources.

3: Resource Management

Resource Management

Objectives

1. Increase the amount of materials used (refurbishment and new development).
2. Reduce and recycle.
3. Increase the amount of energy used from sustainable sources.
4. Foster the use of energy efficient buildings.

4: Sustainable Communities

Sustainable Communities

Objectives

1. Promote sustainable travel and transport.
2. Foster the use of energy efficient buildings.
3. Foster the use of energy efficient behaviour.
4. Support local businesses.

Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal

Consultation is an integral part of the sustainability appraisal process and helps to ensure that the appraisal is sufficiently robust to support the DPDs during full public consultation. The four statutory consultation bodies (The Environment Agency; The Countryside Agency; English Heritage; and English Nature) have been directly involved with the early stages of preparing this scoping report. Other non-statutory bodies will be consulted alongside the Council. Tables 1-4 summarise the key sustainability issues for South Staffordshire that have been developed.
How should the Local Development Framework take sustainability issues into account?

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report highlights issues which should be taken into account by the emerging South Staffordshire Local Development Framework (LDF). These are illustrated below...

OBJECTIVE 1: Promote high quality design of new developments, the efficient use of resources and opportunities to design out crime.
  - Promote high quality design, energy and resource efficiency in new developments in relation to Ecohomes and other BREEAM standards.
  - Promote use of environmental management techniques such as SEUs.
  - Include policies and conditions to planning applications that encourage developments that reduce opportunities for crime.
  - Consider preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on design and buildings covering these issues.

OBJECTIVE 2: To reduce the amount of waste generated and encourage sustainable waste management.
  - Consider sustainable construction methods in terms of encouraging the use of recycled aggregates and building materials, and modern methods of construction to reduce waste.
  - Ensure that new developments include on-site facilities for recycling (allowing for separation of various types of waste).
  - Support the development of further recycling facilities/sites.

OBJECTIVE 3: To reduce energy use by improving energy efficiency and encourage the production and use of renewable energy.
  - Ensure higher standards of resource efficiency (see Objective 1 – Ecohomes and BREEAM).
  - Monitor and increase the level of resource efficient building completions.
  - Consider a policy requiring a % of energy to be used in a development.
  - Scheme to be generated from an on-site renewable energy source.

OBJECTIVE 4: To protect and enhance biodiversity.
  - Include policies to encourage the protection and enhancement of existing designated features and encourage public involvement wherever possible.
  - Respond to the objectives and targets set in the BAP.
  - Consider the potential for future LDR allocation to meet English Nature needs.
  - Include policies to reinforce District-led economic growth.

OBJECTIVE 5: To protect and enhance historic buildings, conservation areas and other features of historic, architectural or landscape importance.
  - Include policies on the protection and enhancement of the historic and built environment.
  - Consider the impact of new development on landscape character.

OBJECTIVE 6: To reduce all pollution, including noise, light, air, water and soil.
  - Reduce pollution through the sustainable design of buildings (see Objectives 1 and 3 – Ecohomes and BREEAM).
  - Consider other opportunities to influence levels of pollution, such as through conditions attached to planning consents.

OBJECTIVE 7: To maintain and improve air and water quality and the efficient use of water resources.
  - Encourage, through criteria-based policies and/or conditions, the maintenance and improvement of the quality of air and water resources.
  - Consider the way in which new and existing developments relate to one another in respect of opportunities to improve the use of shared resources such as water bodies.

OBJECTIVE 8: To promote local stewardship of natural resources.
  - Include policies on the enhancement of existing community assets that might benefit from greater input from local communities.

OBJECTIVE 9: To promote sustainable forms of development and the efficient use of land.
  - Consider policies on maintaining the current high level of Previously Developed Land (PDL) and conversion residential completions.
  - Set a realistic target for PDL and conversion completions over the LDP period.
  - Increase the accessibility of new developments to services by public transport, walking and cycling.
  - Encourage the development of high quality cycle and pedestrian routes.
  - Include transport policies based on the Local Transport Plan (LTP).

OBJECTIVE 10: To reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and make South Staffordshire safer.
  - Include policies and conditions to planning applications that encourage developments that reduce opportunities for crime and fear of it (see Objective 1).
  - Consider the preparation of an SPD on this topic (see Objective 1).

OBJECTIVE 11: To improve the health and well-being of the people of South Staffordshire.
  - Include policies to address the shortfalls in meeting the RSS annual housing requirement.
  - Include policies on a suitable affordable housing target based on an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.
  - Include policies relating to the improvement of housing quality and sense of community.

OBJECTIVE 12: To improve access for all to services and facilities including education and lifelong learning, healthy, employment and leisure opportunities.
  - Carefully consider the location and type of residential development in respect of equitable service provision.
  - Include policies which make clear the need for new development to demonstrate its ability to be strongly related to service provision.
  - Relate to transport considerations under Objective 14.

OBJECTIVE 13: To improve the health and well-being of the people of South Staffordshire.
  - Include policies to address the shortfall in meeting the RSS annual housing requirement.
  - Include policies on a suitable affordable housing target based on an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.
  - Include policies relating to the improvement of housing quality and sense of community.

OBJECTIVE 14: To reduce the need to travel, encourage walking and cycling and the use of public transport.
  - Set out aspirations for sustainable patterns of living and working and, by implication, changes in travel behaviour.
  - Include policies on the enhanced provision of cycleways and greenroutes to enable changes in travel behaviour.
  - Ensure the connections are made between travel and transport and other areas of the LDF.

OBJECTIVE 15: To reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and make South Staffordshire safer.
  - Include policies and conditions to planning applications that encourage developments that reduce opportunities for crime and fear of it (see Objective 1).
  - Consider the preparation of an SPD on this topic (see Objective 1).

OBJECTIVE 16: To improve the health and well-being of the people of South Staffordshire.
  - Include policies to address the shortfall in meeting the RSS annual housing requirement.
  - Include policies on a suitable affordable housing target based on an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.
  - Include policies relating to the improvement of housing quality and sense of community.

OBJECTIVE 17: To encourage the provision of employment opportunities to meet the needs of the local population, encourage the development of skills and support local enterprises.
  - Set policies for employment provision which is well located and appropriate to current and future population needs.
  - Include policies relating to the provision of employment provision which is well located and appropriate to current and future population needs.

OBJECTIVE 18: To encourage increased participation in cultural and recreational activities for all sectors of the community and ensure access to local greenpace.
  - Develop policies with respect to a sound evidence base – a PPG17 compliant open space assessment is a fundamental starting point, which will indicate standards of provision and quality of facilities.

OBJECTIVE 19: To provide opportunities for all sections of the community to participate in decision making.
  - Address actual and perceived demand for decision making through the SCI and consultation on the emerging LDF.

OBJECTIVE 20: To reduce poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most and least disadvantaged communities.
  - Contribute to a wide-ranging social agenda through policies that are sensitive to, and where possible address, social disadvantage.

Do you agree with these objectives and actions?