

**Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan
Part 1 – Core Strategy (June 2014)
Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment
Post Adoption Statement**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council adopted the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan 'Part 1 Core Strategy' on the 22nd and 28th April 2014 respectively.

2.0 Why has this statement been prepared?

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

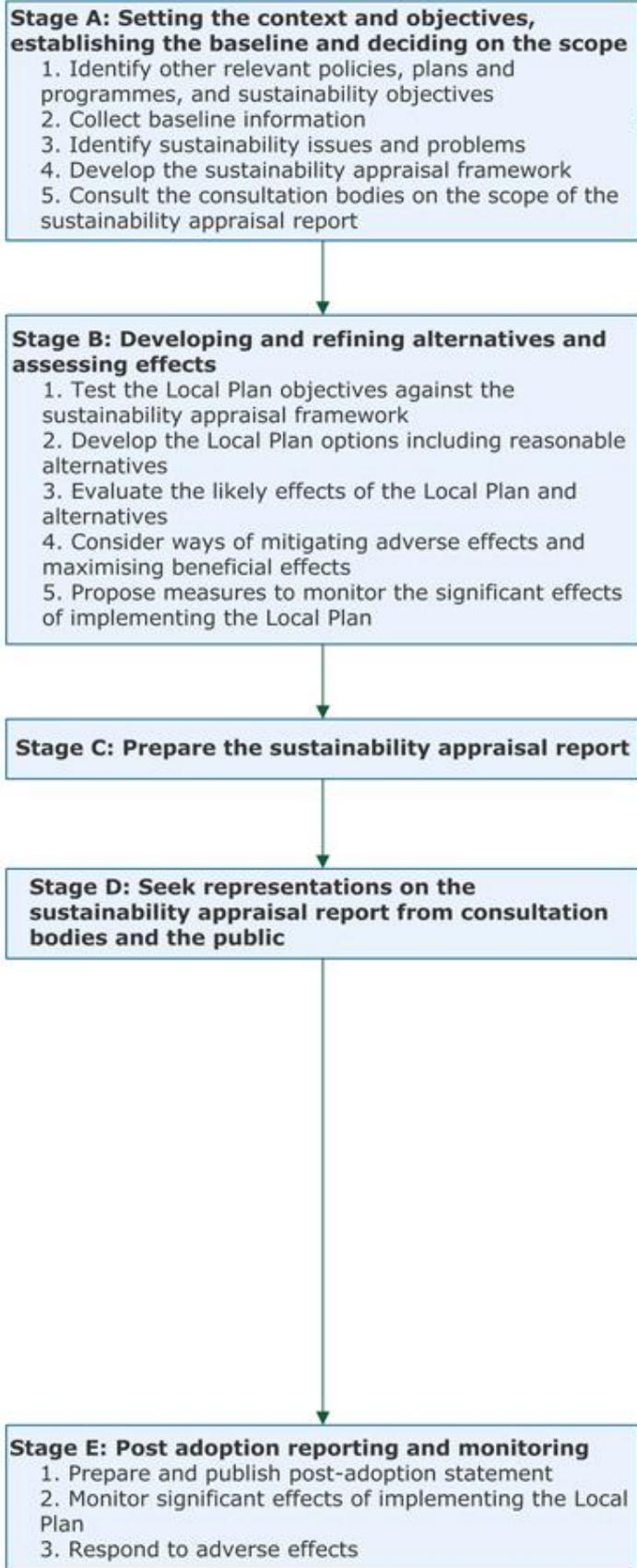
- 1) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- 2) How the environmental report has been taken into account;
- 3) How opinions expressed through public consultation (on the SEA and SA process) have been taken into account;
- 4) The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with;
- 5) The measures that are taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

2.2 The main purpose of this statement is to set out a summary of the findings of the SA at each stage to demonstrate that sites and policies in the Core Strategy have been subject to comprehensive assessment of social, economic and environmental impacts to ensure the sustainability of the adopted Core Strategy.

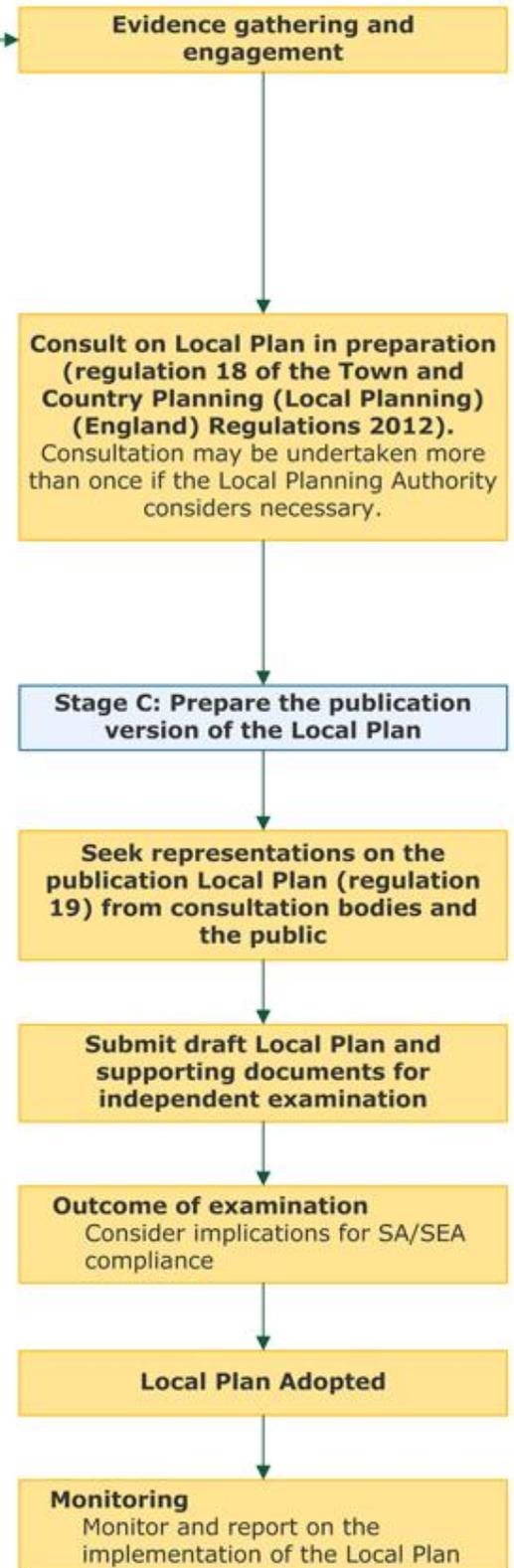
3.0 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

3.1 Under Section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 local authorities must produce a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for any new or revised plan or programme. The overall purpose of the SA is to promote sustainable development through consideration of social, environmental and economic concerns in the preparation of plans or programmes and to evaluate reasonable alternatives, or options. SA is an iterative, ongoing process and was integral to preparation of the Core Strategy. The flowchart diagram below illustrates the entire SA/SEA process, from the initial scoping stage (Stage A), through the stages of developing and refining options (Stage B), preparing the SA report (Stage C), consultation on the SA and plan (Stage D) and monitoring of the plan's implementation (Stage E).

Sustainability appraisal process



Local Plan preparation



4) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme

The SA Scoping Report

4.1 As part of Stage (A) the Councils produced an appraisal framework, which identifies the key environmental, social and economic issues affecting East Dorset District and the Borough of Christchurch. The scoping stage of the SA commenced in 2005 and an SA Scoping Report was produced in consultation with statutory consultees and key stakeholders. The Scoping Report was published in 2008 in parallel with production of the Issues and Options Core Strategy with further revisions made in 2010 and 2013. The purpose of this Scoping Report is to:

- identify environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other plans and programmes that are relevant to the Local Plan;
- assess the existing broad environmental, social and economic characteristics of Christchurch and East Dorset, and how these are changing, taking a long term view of whether, and how, the area is expected to develop;
- in the light of these reviews, consider key issues and problems that the Local Plan should address in the pursuit of sustainable development; and to set out an appropriate framework for carrying out the remainder of the Sustainability Appraisal, including objectives against which draft policies and options may be assessed, and indicators against which progress towards meeting those objectives can be monitored in future.

The Sustainability Appraisal Process for the Core Strategy

4.2 The Sustainability Appraisal for the Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy has been undertaken for each stage in the preparation of the plan with SA reports produced for the following stages:

- Issues and Options (2008)
- Options for Consideration (2010)
- Pre Submission (2012)
- Proposed Changes to the Core Strategy Pre Submission (2012)
- Schedule of Main Modifications to the Submitted Core Strategy (2013)

4.3 The findings of the SA reports have informed the preparation of the Core Strategy in identifying the social, economic and environmental impacts of policies and site allocations. All sustainability appraisal work has been undertaken by the Christchurch and East Dorset Councils planning policy team.

4.4 In accordance with Regulation 22(1) (c) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 the Councils prepared a Submission Statement. This document, published in March 2013 with the Submission of the Core Strategy, provides full details of all the consultation exercises undertaken as part of preparing the CS and SA and states which

persons and organisations were invited to make representations on these documents and how the representations were taken into account.

- 4.5 The Submission Statement taken together with the appraisal of alternative options effectively fulfils the requirement under paragraph 16(4)(c) of the SEA Regulations, for the local planning authority to indicate how the environmental report (the SA and the SA Scoping Report) and representations on the CS and 'relevant documents' were taken into account.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.6 Articles 6 (3) and (4) of Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the 'Habitats Directive'), transposed into UK law through Regulation 61(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) ('The Habitat Regulations'), impose a requirement on local planning authorities to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for spatial plans to determine whether the effects of those plans would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the conservation objectives of a European-level protected site.
- 4.7 Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy was undertaken for the Councils by 'Land Use Consultants'. HRA reports were produced for the following stages of the Core Strategy:
- Options for Consideration (2010)
 - Pre Submission (2012)
 - Proposed Changes to the Core Strategy Pre Submission (2012)
 - Schedule of Main Modifications to the Submitted Core Strategy (2013)

5) How the Environmental Report has been taken into account

SA of Issues and Options (Discussion Paper) (March 2008)

- 5.1 The Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation was undertaken between March and May 2008. Alongside the Core Strategy, the Councils produced an Interim Sustainability Statement to assess the impact of options considered at this stage. All options published at this stage were tested against a range of 24 sustainability objectives to assess their potential environmental, social and economic impacts. The Councils' SA Scoping Report (2008) provided the basis for assessing the impact of the Issues and Options Core Strategy.

SA of Options for Consideration (October 2010)

- 5.2 As part of the second stage of Issues and Options the Councils published the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy and accompanying SA report. In September 2010, a revised SA Scoping Report was published which provided the basis for assessing the social, economic and environmental impact of the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy. The updated Scoping Report refined the original 24 Sustainability Objectives to 12.

- 5.3 In order to comply with the SEA Directive, the SA assessment has taken account of:
- The likely significance and timeframe of any impacts
 - Cumulative effects
 - Mitigation measures required to overcome and minimise adverse impacts
- 5.4 A number of thematic 'Key Issue Papers' were published at this stage of consultation. These 'key Issue Papers' set out how options / alternative options have been considered following the initial stage of consultation in 2008. In particular the 'Key Issue Papers' set out the issues raised through the SA/SEA assessment and how this has been taken into account in preparing this stage of the Core Strategy and the identification of appropriate mitigation measures. The 'Key Issue Papers' are available from the Councils' website: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/399361>

SA of the Pre Submission Core Strategy (April 2012)

- 5.5 As part of consultation on the Pre Submission Core Strategy an SA report was published incorporating Sustainability Appraisal, Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment. The SA Report provided an assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the Pre Submission Core Strategy.
- 5.6 The Pre –Submission SA Report provides a summary of the SA/SEA process undertaken throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy from the Issues and Options stage and how these assessments have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan.
- 5.7 Core Strategy Chapter specific Background Papers were produced which set out the process of how draft policy within the Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy have been developed following the Options for Consideration consultation between October 2010 - January 2011. In particular the background papers identify the issues arising from the SA and HRA process and how this has informed the preparation of the Pre Submission Core Strategy. The Pre Submission Background Papers are available on the Councils' website <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/404580>.

SA of the Proposed Changes to the Pre Submission Core Strategy (November 2012)

- 5.8 As part of consultation on the Pre Submission Core Strategy an SA report was published incorporating Sustainability Appraisal, Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment. The SA Report provided an assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Pre Submission Core Strategy.
- 5.9 The Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Pre –Submission Core Strategy SA Report provides a summary of the SA/SEA process undertaken throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy from the Issues and Options

stage and how these assessments have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan to this stage.

Schedule of Main Modifications to the Submitted Core Strategy (December 2013)

5.10 An SA Report was published which assessed the social, economic and environmental impacts of the Main Modifications to the submitted Core Strategy incorporating Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment. This SA report should be read in conjunction with the Sustainability Report of the Proposed Changes to the Core Strategy Pre-Submission (November 2012).

6) How opinions expressed through public consultation (on the SEA and SA process) have been taken into account

- 6.1 Sustainability Appraisals have been undertaken for each stage in the production of the Core Strategy as follows:
- Issues and Options (2008)
 - Options for Consideration (2010)
 - Pre Submission (2012)
 - Proposed Changes to the Core Strategy Pre Submission (2012)
 - Schedule of Main Modifications to the Submitted Core Strategy (2013)
- 6.2 Responses were invited on the Sustainability Appraisal for each stage in the production of the Core Strategy as part of the consultation process.
- 6.3 It is a requirement to demonstrate that extensive consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Councils' adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2006).
- 6.4 At Submission stage the Councils published a Submission Statement (SD5) which sets out how stakeholders and the wider community have been invited to make representations at each stage of the process. The Submission Statement also provides a summary of the main issues raised and how these have been taken into account through the consultation process.
- 6.5 Key Issue Papers / Background Papers have been produced between 'Issues and Options', 'Options for Consideration' and the Pre Submission Core Strategy. These background papers include how responses regarding the sustainability appraisal have been taken into account.

7) The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

- 7.1 Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken for each stage of consultation on the Core Strategy from Issues and Options (2008) to Main Modifications 2013. During the preparation of the Core Strategy preferred and alternative policy and site allocation options have been assessed. Reasonable alternative options have been considered through the consultation stages of the Core Strategy.
- 7.2 The SA assessment for each stage has also included the appraisal of alternative options and sites that have been put forward through the consultation process but not included in the Core Strategy. In this respect the SA assessment of these alternative sites provided the reasoning for why these sites have not been included in the plan.
- 7.3 Key Issue Papers / Background Papers have been produced between 'Issues and Options' (2008), 'Options for Consideration' (2010) and the Pre Submission Core Strategy (2012) as discussed above. These background papers set out the reasoning for the selection of the adopted strategy in the light of reasonable alternatives. These Background Papers include assessment of how the SA and HRA have informed the preferred strategy and the assessment of reasonable alternatives.
- 7.4 These papers also set out how the preferred strategy has been based on a robust evidence base and in accordance with the tests of soundness. This has ensured that the plan represents the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives.

- **Core Strategy 'Options for Consideration' Key Issue Papers (2010):**<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/399361>
- **Core Strategy Pre Submission Background Papers (2012):**
<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/404580>.

8) The measures that are taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

- 8.1 Appendix 6 of the Core Strategy includes a Monitoring Framework which sets out the framework for how the implementation of the Core Strategy will be monitored, including relevant monitoring indicators.
- 8.2 Christchurch and East Dorset Councils produce Annual Monitoring Reports which will monitor the implementation and sustainability of the Core Strategy policies. This provides the mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the policies and the appropriate timing for any review that may be required. The Inspector, in her report concluded that the monitoring framework ensures the plan is 'effective' in setting out clear indicators, targets and methodologies. The Monitoring Framework and the preparation of AMRs ensure the monitoring of environmental effects to ensure that these are minimised.