

The logo for 'place services' is located in the top left corner. It consists of a solid blue square with the words 'place' and 'services' stacked vertically in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

**Essex County Council & Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Replacement Waste Local Plan: Pre-Submission**

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Environmental Report: Annex – Quality Assurance Checklist

February 2016

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	The Waste Local Plan: Pre-Submission 2016.....	1
1.3	Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment	1
2	Quality Assurance checklist	3

List of Tables

Table 1: Quality Assurance Checklist.....	3
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Essex County Council (ECC) and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) commissioned Place Services to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the Replacement Waste Local Plan: Pre-Submission 2016.

This document is Annex F to the Environmental Report which sets out the Quality Assurance Checklist for the full SA/SEA Environmental Report.

1.2 The Waste Local Plan: Pre-Submission 2016

SEA Directive requires: 'An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.' Annex I (a)

As part of its work on the new Waste Local Plan, ECC and SBC as Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs) have prepared a Replacement Waste Local Plan Pre-Submission document for public consultation.

The Pre-Submission document builds on the WPAs' previous progress towards a Waste Development Document (WDD), incorporating a Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, under the previous planning system. The change from a WDD to a WLP brings the document in line with current planning policy terminology, including revisions in approach to reflect new policy requirements, hence the need for a new consultation. The components of the plan are the same, and the WLP contains:

- Site allocations for waste management facilities
- Strategic Objectives and policy direction
- Development management policies

The Plan has been through a number of stages to get to this point. These are:

- WDD Issues and Options (2010)
- WDD Preferred Approach (2011)
- RWLP Revised Preferred Approach (2015)

All of these iterations of the Plan have been made available for consultation and have been accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.

1.3 Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

The requirement for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) emanates from a high level national and international commitment to sustainable development. The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is that drawn up by the World Trade Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 which states that sustainable development is:

'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

This definition is consistent with the themes of the NPPF, which draws upon The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future's five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

SEA originates from the European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of

certain plans and programmes on the environment” (the ‘SEA Directive’) which came into force in 2001. It seeks to increase the level of protection for the environment; integrate environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes; and promote sustainable development.

The Directive was transposed into English legislation in 2004 by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the ‘SEA Regulation’) which requires an SEA to be carried out for plans or programmes

‘subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions’.

This includes Local Plans. The aim of the SEA is to identify potentially significant environmental effects created as a result of the implementation of the plan or programme on issues such as *‘biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors’* as specified in Annex 1(f) of the Directive.

SA examines the effects of proposed plans and programmes in a wider context, taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations in order to promote sustainable development. It is mandatory for Local Plans to undergo a Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, and in accordance with paragraph 165 of the NPPF.

Whilst the requirements to produce a SA and SEA are distinct, Government guidance considers that it is possible to satisfy the two requirements through a single approach providing that the requirements of the SEA Directive are met. This integrated appraisal process will hereafter be referred to as SA.

2 Quality Assurance checklist

A quality assurance checklist is an important tool which allows the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) to be reviewed to ensure that the requirements of the SEA Directive have been met. It also shows how effectively the appraisal has integrated sustainability considerations into the plan making process.

The following table shows the checklist carried out after completion of the Environmental Report. It has been divided into the different stages of the SA process.

Table 1: Quality Assurance Checklist

Does the final report ...		
Describe the emerging plan and summarise the Scoping Report		
Account for the recommendations included in the review of the scoping report?	Annex A and Annex C show how the recommendations made by the Statutory Consultees have been factored into the appraisal process.	
Adequately summarise the scoping report?	Section 2 of the Environmental Report outlines the key findings of the Scoping Report which includes an outline of the plans and programmes, the baseline information profile for the Plan Area, together with the Sustainability Objectives.	
Describe findings of stage b1 of the SA process		
Test the compatibility of the plan objectives with the SA objectives?	Section 3.2 of the Environmental Report tests and assess the compatibility of the plan objectives with the SA objectives	
Include reasonable options/alternatives in line with stage b2 of the SA process		
Document the reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives of the plan?	The Environmental Report documents the reasonable alternatives explored for all elements of the Plan. Annex D also offers an audit trail of all the alternatives explored throughout the SA and the plan-making process	
Include an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with?	The Environmental Report documents the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with explored for all elements of the Plan alongside their reason for rejection. Annex D also offers an audit trail of reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with for throughout the SA and the plan-making process.	
Describe the findings of stage b3-b5 of the SA process		
Ensure that all significant effects on the economy, community and environment are considered including on issues such as	The SA Environmental Report sets out those sustainability issues relevant to the Plan and assesses the Plan's content in accordance with	

biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors?	the Sustainability Framework and Site Pro Forma. Annex C sets out the detailed Sustainability Framework and Site Pro Forma
Predict effects in terms of their magnitude, geographical scale, the time period over which they will occur, whether they are permanent or temporary, positive or negative, probable or improbable, frequent or rare and whether or not there are secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects?	The Environmental Report sets out all the impacts of the Plan in regard to magnitude, geographical scale, the time period over which they will occur, whether they are permanent or temporary, positive or negative, probable or improbable, frequent or rare and whether or not there are secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects.
Quantify predictions and evaluations of significance where possible, taking care to avoid false precision?	The SA Environmental report quantifies predictions where possible and avoids false precision in the appraisal of all elements of the Plan's content.
Ensure that qualitative judgement of predictions and evaluation of significance is supported by baseline evidence such as likely effects on specific indicators, trends, targets or other evidence?	The SA Environmental report ensures assessment is supported by baseline evidence such as likely effects on specific indicators, trends, targets in the appraisal of all elements of the Plan's content where possible
Highlight where a number of small, less significant effects may act in a cumulative or synergistic fashion to result in a significant effect?	The SA Environmental Report explores the cumulative impacts of all elements of the Plan.
Compare options against sustainability criteria and each other and possibly a business-as-usual option?	A Robust appraisal of all options and alternatives has been subject to SA throughout the plan-making process in order to inform the Plan.
Consider and document ways of mitigating significant adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects?	Mitigation measures and recommendations have been considered and documented in the Environmental Report and throughout the plan-making process. these have been documented throughout the Environmental Report and Conclusions.
Document any uncertainties or limitations in the information underlying both quantitative and qualitative predictions and evaluations of significance?	Uncertainties and limitations have been documented throughout the Environmental Report in the appraisal of the Plan's content.
Document stage b6 of the SA guidance	
Include a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring?	Section 9 of the Environmental Report and Annex C both describe a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.
Other	
Contain a non-technical summary that is written in a way most likely to engage	A separate Non-Technical Summary has been provided.

prospective readers?	
Use simple, clear language and avoids or explains technical terms?	Although the nature of the Plan is technical by nature, the SA goes to great lengths to summarise and describe complex issues to inform public consultation.
Is clear and concise in its layout and presentation?	The SA Environmental Report is clear in its layout and presentation. A series of Annexes are provided to supplement the SA in order to separate certain issues and requirements of the SA.
Use maps and other illustrations where appropriate?	Annex B regarding the Baseline Information of the Plan Area uses maps to illustrate issues. The SA Environmental Report tabulates information for ease of understanding.
Set out what happens next in the SA process?	Section 10 sets out what happens next in the SA process.

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