



**HAMBLETON DISTRICT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL
OF THE DRAFT
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SPD
NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

**Prepared for
Hambleton District Council
by
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1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Land Use Consultants was appointed by Hambleton District Council (HDC) in July 2008 to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), part of Hambleton's Local Development Framework (LDF). The purpose of SA is to integrate social, environmental, and economic considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans, with the aim to promote sustainable development.
- 1.2. This report constitutes the SA report for Hambleton District Council's Sustainable Development SPD. It takes account of the aims and requirements of SA and of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive¹ (the SEA Directive), and sets out the findings to date of the SA of the Sustainable Development SPD. The report is supplemented by a number of appendices forming an accompanying report. **Appendix 1** lists the SA objectives and sub-questions that were used in the appraisal. **Appendices 2 and 3** review relevant plans and programmes and **Appendix 4** lists baseline trends and indicators. **Appendix 5** provides the detailed appraisal of the SPD.

The Sustainable Development SPD

- 1.3. Hambleton's Sustainable Development SPD aims to guide implementation of relevant LDF policies; the SPD cannot set new policy, but is to be taken into account as a material consideration in determining planning applications.² The SPD concerns itself purely with the design and construction stages of new development, from large commercial units to residential extensions, and provides further guidance for landowners, developers, applicants, agents and Council officers on how to increase the sustainability of development.
- 1.4. The SPD details preferred measures for implementing a variety of the Council's LDF policies as they pertain to new development. Measures are described in detail, from energy efficient light fixtures to sustainable drainage systems, with background information on the general usefulness or constraints of measures and a reference to relevant LDF policies.

METHODOLOGY

Stage A: Setting the Context and Scope

- 1.5. In February 2004 LUC facilitated, on behalf of Hambleton District Council, a stakeholder workshop to devise the sustainability objectives for the SA of the Local Development Framework. A set of objectives and sub-questions were agreed and refined at the workshop, and are listed in **Appendix 1**.

¹ European Directive 2001/42/EC (EC, 2001)

² *Draft Sustainable Development SPD*. Hambleton District Council (June-August 2008), para.1.5.

- 1.6. Given this background, we have adopted the same SA framework for the appraisal of this SPD and drawn on the baseline information gathered as part of the scoping process, which has been periodically updated, rather than to produce a separate scoping report for this SPD. We have contacted stakeholders on this approach, and those that have responded have agreed it to be appropriate given the scope and nature of the SA.

Stage B: Developing and Refining Options

- 1.7. SPD objectives were compared to the SA framework to assess compatibility. In our assessment we found strong compatibility between the SPD and SA objectives, and no changes to the SPD objectives were proposed.
- 1.8. Several SA objectives were found to have no link to any of the SPD objectives, and have not been included in further appraisal of the SPD. This is to ensure as relevant and concise a SA as possible, as supported by ODPM guidance.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

- 1.9. This draft SA Report, completed in September 2008, details the results of the appraisal of the draft Sustainable Development SPD. A final report will be completed after a period of public consultation, as discussed below.

Stage D: Consultation on draft SPD

- 1.10. The draft Sustainable Development SPD and this draft SA report will be issued for public consultation for a six week period during September and October 2008. The consultation will be designed to comply with the Statement of Community Involvement and requirements of the SEA Directive. The outcomes of the consultation will be incorporated into a final SPD and SA report.

Stage E: Incorporate changes to the Plan

- 1.11. Following the consultation period, Hambleton District Council will prepare a final Sustainable Development SPD, and an updated SA report will appraise any significant change to the plan. A final SPD and accompanying SA report are expected to be published in February 2009.

Stage F: Monitoring Implementation of the SPD

- 1.12. This draft SA Report sets out recommendations for monitoring significant sustainability effects of the SPD. These are discussed in Chapter 7 (p.49) of this report.

SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES IN HAMBLETON DISTRICT

- 1.13. A number of plans and programmes, international, European Union, and national policy statements include environmental, social and economic policy objectives that need to be taken into account in the Sustainable Development SPD. These are reviewed in **Chapter 3** of the main report. Relevant international and national plans, programmes and sustainability objectives reviewed are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Regional, county and local plans and programmes have been reviewed in more detail in relation to a full range of sustainability topics, and are provided in **Appendix 3**.

Sustainability Characterisation of Hambleton

Overview

- 1.14. Hambleton is one of the largest Districts in England. It is essentially rural in character, with agriculture being a dominating influence on the landscape. Northallerton and Thirsk are the main towns in the District, supported by three other market towns of Bedale, Easingwold and Stokesley. 51% of the 86,500 population live in these five historic Market Towns dispersed across the District. The remaining population is scattered throughout the District in villages and agricultural settlements.
- 1.15. The District is relatively prosperous, with unemployment levels roughly half the national average. There are low levels of deprivation, with the District ranked in the bottom quartile of districts in terms of indices of deprivation in the UK.

Key environmental issues

Key Issue	SA Framework Objective
Need to protect existing high quality landscape and enhance lower quality landscape	Objective A To maintain and enhance landscape and townscape quality
Relatively low nature conservation value due to deteriorating effect of agricultural activities	Objective B To maintain and enhance biodiversity, flora and fauna and geological interests
Need to improve the number and diversity of biodiversity sites	
Need to conserve the historic environment for future generations	Objective C To conserve and enhance the District's historic environment
High quality built environment under pressure from development	Objective D To ensure that new development is located in the most sustainable locations that are appropriate to settlement character
Re-use of land within settlements to avoid sprawl	
Noise pollution and its potential to increase with airfield expansions	
Impacts of climate change	Objective F To develop a managed response to the effects of climate change
Potential risk of flooding	
Potential to develop appropriate forms of renewable energy in the right locations to offset greenhouse gas emissions	

Key economic issues

Key Issue	SA Framework Objective
Provision of a suitable range of employment land and premises	Objective J: To provide a range of premises suitable to support the economy
Provision of training to improve skills	Objective M: To improve the skills-base of Hambleton
Renaissance of market towns	Objective H: To make the most of Hambleton's economic strengths
Diversification of the rural economy	
Reducing out-commuting	
Diversity of employment – more manufacturing	

Key Issue	SA Framework Objective
and knowledge based employment required – greater range and higher quality of jobs	
Need to address digital divide (those with or without broadband access)	Objective K: To encourage sustainable distribution and communication systems

Key social issues

Key Issue	SA Framework Objective
Fear of crime	Objective Q: To reduce levels of crime
Needs of young people e.g. affordable housing, local jobs	Objective O: To provide support to deprived areas and disadvantaged groups Objective R: To provide housing to meet local needs Objective S: To improve education and skills of the population overall
Need for affordable housing for local residents	Objective R: To provide housing to meet local needs
Ageing population	Objective O: To provide support to deprived areas and disadvantaged groups Objective P: To improve the health of the population Objective R: To provide housing to meet local needs
Education and skills/training to support local employment	Objective S: To improve education and skills of the population overall
Rural service provision, access to countryside and open space	Objective T: To improve access to a range of services and facilities
Need to speed up the roll-out of broadband	Objective K: To encourage sustainable distribution and communication systems
Need for community-led social enterprises	Objective N: To enable improved community participation

Key transport and access issues

Key Issue	SA Framework Objective
Need to address transport and access barriers faced by elderly and young people, people with disabilities and the socially/economically disadvantaged.	Objective T: To improve access to a range of services and facilities
Heavy dependency on the private car	Objective T: To improve access to a range of services and facilities Objective D: To ensure that new development is located in the most sustainable locations that are appropriate to settlement character
Poor provision of public transport particularly in rural areas	
Reverse commuting between Hambleton and surrounding urban areas	Objective I: To provide for closer links between where people live and where they work

APPRAISAL AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 1.16. A detailed appraisal of the SPD is provided as a series of tables, one for each chapter of the SPD, in **Appendix 5**. Due to the detailed nature of the guidance contained in the SPD, the only alternative option assessed was the 'do nothing' option. This made for a useful comparison to highlight where the SPD will add value to the existing LDF policy framework. Significant effects of the SPD on each SA objective are summarized below. **Table 1.1** provides a short summary of the appraisal.

A: To maintain and enhance landscape and townscape quality

- 1.17. The SPD is predicted to have a positive effect on landscape and townscape quality. Biodiversity measures in particular reiterate the Council's requirement for applicants to endeavour to retain biodiversity interest, no matter how small, and encourage incorporation of garden space and green roofs or walls into housing design. Surface water run-off measures require applicants to avoid large areas of paved surfaces and by encouraging the use of naturalized draining systems, improving landscape quality, and material selection measures require accordance with context and setting.
- 1.18. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a neutral or negative effect on landscape and townscape quality. Failure to implement measures on biodiversity and material selection in particular will have a negative effect as these measures influence the appearance of new development, which has an important impact on landscape and townscape quality. There will also be a minor negative effect by failing to encourage the use of materials that have a low environmental impact throughout their lifecycle.

B: To protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of flora and fauna and geological interests.

- 1.19. The SPD is predicted to have a positive effect on protecting wildlife and geological interests. Biodiversity measures require developments to enhance biodiversity and valuable habitats and encourage the incorporation local habitats in garden design. Water run-off measures also allow for slow drainage and reduce the impact of flash flooding, which protects habitats and water-dependant species.
- 1.20. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a minor negative effect, resulting in a lost opportunity to protect and enhance biodiversity by carefully guiding the design of development. This is predicted to result in continued losses of biodiversity, due to the impact of greenfield development on natural spaces.

Table 1.1: Summary of Appraisal.

SA Objectives		Score						
		Energy & CO₂ Emissions	Water Reduction & Efficiency	Surface Water Run-off	Material Selection	Biodiversity	Waste	
A	To maintain and enhance landscape and townscape quality	0 / ?	0 / +	+	+	++	+	
B	To protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of flora and fauna and geological interests	0	0	+	0	++	0	
C	To preserve and enhance the District's historic environment	0	0	0	0	+	0	
D	To ensure that new development is located in the most sustainable locations that are appropriate to settlement character	0	0	+	0	+	0	
E	To encourage the prudent use of natural resources	++	++	++	++	+	++	
F	To develop a managed response to the effects of climate change.	++	++	+	+	+	+	
H	To make the most of Hambleton's economic strengths	0	0	0	0	+	0	
K	To encourage sustainable distribution and communication systems	0	0	0	+	0	0	
P	Improve the health of the population	0 / +	0	0	0	+	0	

Legend	
++	Significant positive effect (normally direct)
+	Minor positive effect (normally indirect)
0	Neutral effect
-	Minor negative effect (normally indirect)
--	Significant negative effect (normally direct)
?	Uncertain effect

C: To preserve and enhance the District's historic environment

- 1.21. The SPD is predicted overall to have a neutral effect in enhancing Hambleton's historic environment. However, biodiversity measures are predicted to have a minor positive effect in enhancing heritage assets by encouraging the extension of existing networks of green spaces, which may lie near or adjacent to historic sites.
- 1.22. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect; however, failure to implement biodiversity measures in the SPD is predicted to have an indirect negative effect on the success of policies to protect heritage open spaces, especially those affected by new development.

D: To ensure that new development is located in the most sustainable locations that are appropriate to settlement character

- 1.23. The SPD is predicted to have a minor positive effect on ensuring the sustainable location of development. Water run-off and biodiversity measures in the SPD avoid loss of open space and mitigate against flash flooding.
- 1.24. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect overall, as only location-restraining policies, beyond the remit of the SPD, will have a direct effect on ensuring development is located in a sustainable location. Nonetheless, failure to implement biodiversity measures that encourage the retention and creation of green space is predicted to have a negative effect because of its importance in avoiding excessive intensification in urban areas.

E: Encourage the prudent use of natural resources

- 1.25. The SPD is predicted to have a significant positive effect in encouraging the prudent use of natural resources in Hambleton. SPD measures are predicted to improve air quality, both locally and regionally (encouraging natural ventilation systems and renewable energy generation). The SPD is predicted to protect and enhance the quality of controlled waters by promoting significant measures to slow and clean surface water run-off, encourage the use of water efficiently and with care (from water-saving devices to storage ponds), and provides strong re-emphasis of LDF policy DP32's requirement for applicants to consider the use of greywater systems. Measures also encourage greater use of alternatives to primary resources such as by reducing energy consumption (e.g.: passive solar gain) and promoting the use of recycled and recyclable building materials. SPD measures are predicted to result in reduced waste, by planning for waste management during construction, and prioritizing recycling and composting in homes and work places. The SPD is also predicted to have a significant positive effect on the provision of locally available and widely accessible waste facilities by encouraging the inclusion of recycling and composting facilities in homes and workplaces.
- 1.26. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a significant negative effect. Failure to implement various measures would result in several lost opportunities that are easiest to implement during the design stage of development. This could result in the lost opportunity to significantly reduce water consumption, as new development (including 3,700 new dwellings by 2021) will continue to increase demand of water

resources while climate change is expected to stress Hambleton's drainage system and increase the probability of drought. It will also result in lost opportunities to decrease demolition waste from development, and encourage responsible waste management in the home and workplace. There is also predicted to be a negative impact on the quality of air and water, as the incorporation of areas of biodiversity interest encouraged by the SPD have the cumulative effect of protecting flora and fauna, and improving the quality of wider relevant resources, such as air and water.

F: Develop a managed response to the effects of climate change.

- 1.27. The SPD is predicted to have a significant positive effect in developing a managed response to climate change. SPD measures strongly encourage the prudent and efficient use of energy, and prioritize reducing energy consumption and energy efficiency. The SPD encourages the use of renewable energy and reiterates LDF policy DP34 (Sustainable energy) requirement for 10% on-site renewable generation from certain developments. Other measures contribute toward minimising pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy consumption in the transport or treatment of water, waste, and building materials, and indirectly by supporting the creation of natural habitats, which help filter land, water, and air-based pollution. SPD measures are also predicted to reduce the risk of flooding, especially flash floods which are expected to increase due to climate change.
- 1.28. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a negative effect on developing a managed response to climate change, in large part because development is a significant contributor to total energy consumption (10% of UK energy consumption is used in the production and transport of construction materials) and CO₂ emissions (energy consumed in building services accounts for about 50% of the UK's CO₂ emissions)³. Not implementing the SPD will result in lost opportunities to reduce the risk of flooding, especially valuable at the design stage, and to encourage prudent use of energy, an important mitigation factor against climate change.

H: Make the most of Hambleton's economic strengths

- 1.29. The SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect on Hambleton's economic strength. The SPD may have a minor positive effect on the renaissance of market towns by encouraging an enhancement of existing networks of green space, which can add value to the amenity of settlements. Overall, however, the SPD's measures are not predicted to have a notable effect on this SA objective.
- 1.30. Failure to implement the SPD is not predicted to have any effect on Hambleton's economic strengths.

K: To encourage sustainable distribution and communication systems

- 1.31. The SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect overall on sustainable distribution and communication systems in Hambleton. However, it is predicted to have a minor positive effect on encouraging local supply chains by requiring applicants to attempt

³ *Sustainable Construction: Position Statement*. Environment Agency, August 2003

to source materials and tools locally wherever possible, with the aim to ensure transportation is kept to a minimum.

- 1.32. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to have a minor negative effect in encouraging sustainable distribution systems, because the SPD encourages sustainable measures for the construction industry, which constitutes a significant distribution system within the overall economy.

P: Improve the health of the population

- 1.33. The SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect overall on the health of the population. The SPD does recognize that natural spaces within developments can have a beneficial effect on the health and well-being of people, and biodiversity measures to enhance networks of greenspace and provide gardens are predicted to have a minor positive effect on supporting healthy lifestyles.
- 1.34. Not implementing the SPD is predicted to decrease the likelihood of green networks and gardens being included in development, but these measures are not predicted in themselves to improve the health of the population. As such, failure to implement the SPD is predicted to have a neutral effect.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- 1.35. Cumulative positive impacts are predicted to emerge from the SPD, and from the SPD's biodiversity measures in particular. Biodiversity measures positively address the majority of SA objectives, and significantly so for enhancing landscape and townscape quality (SA objective A) and protecting flora and fauna (SA objective B). The SPD aims to retain biodiversity interest on site regardless of how small it may be, and recognize the benefits to health and well-being that natural spaces provide. Measures include retaining existing vegetation, providing gardens, incorporating green roofs, and replicating BAP-priority habitats where appropriate.

MITIGATION

- 1.36. The SPD is not predicted to have any significant or minor negative effects on Hambleton's SA objectives. A small number of recommendations have been made to strengthen certain measures (see 'Recommendations' in the appraisal matrix in **Appendix 5**), but no mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.37. The SPD is predicted to have a positive effect on Hambleton's sustainability objectives. Hambleton District Council is commended for producing a thorough guidance document that, if properly used, will make a significant contribution to the achievement of more sustainable development in the District.
- 1.38. In order to benefit from the range of positive effects it will be important for the SPD to be widely communicated and consistently referred to as a material consideration in determining planning applications for new residential and commercial development. This will enable the SPD to be most effective in strengthening Hambleton's performance in sustainable development.

- 1.39. The Council will need to ensure that residential development achieves the minimum standards set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH), with reference to an emerging timetable to achieve zero-carbon new homes by 2016. We recommend that close attention is paid to the standards achieved by Eco-Towns. Whilst the standards are not mandatory in the context of Hambleton District, the Council should be aspiring to achieve as high a standard of development as possible in the District, given the need to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change in particular. This also recognises that the feasibility of incorporating environmentally sensitive planning and design measures continues to be tested and improved and that standards set now are likely to have been raised by the time a substantial proportion of development planned in the LDF comes to fruition.
- 1.40. Hambleton should continually monitor local priorities for sustainable development, by collecting data and monitoring relevant indicators, and by consultation with residents.

MONITORING

- 1.41. Monitoring the sustainability effects of implementing the SPD should be carried out as part of the Annual Monitoring process for the whole of the LDF. In order to gauge the significant environmental effects of the SPD, measures to monitor could include:
- Energy consumption in homes
 - Proportion of eligible development (100m²+ or 10+ units) with 10% on-site renewable energy generation
 - Potable water consumption per capita in homes
 - Change in run-off rates
 - Environmental impact of building materials
 - Retention of existing vegetation on-site
 - Area of replicated BAP habitat
 - Proportion of approved schemes that incorporate recycling or composting facilities on-site
- 1.42. Measures without easily available indicators could be monitored indirectly (e.g.: use area of car parking as proxy for the amount of hard landscaping) or by including a 'catchment' sentence in the planning application (e.g.: require applicants to specify proportion of hardscape outside of the building footprint).
- 1.43. It is recommended that Hambleton District Council invite the statutory environmental consultees and other stakeholders involved in the SA process to enter into a dialogue on the monitoring proposals for the SPD.