

Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL / STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – SCOPING REPORT SUMMARY

Background and Aims

The Introductory Topic Paper provides the background to the Local Development Framework (LDF), the progress made on the Core Strategy for Lewes District to date and how the content of all the Topic Papers has been formulated. This included engagement with District Councillors and representatives from Town and Parish Councils.

The aim of this consultation stage is to present the emerging work on the Core Strategy and seek the views of the public and key stakeholders on the various elements of this work. The consultation will last **8 weeks**, running from the 21st May 2010 to the 16th July 2010. At the end of this paper there are a number of questions that we are keen for individuals and organisations to respond to. Details on how to respond can also be found in this part of the paper.

Purpose of this Topic Paper

In accordance with European and national legislation, documents prepared under the LDF must be subject to the Sustainability Appraisal process and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Therefore, the Sustainability Appraisal and SEA requirements will need to apply to the development of the Core Strategy. The purpose of this paper is to summarise what a Sustainability Appraisal and SEA is, as well as identifying and seeking views on the work that has been undertaken on these processes to date.





What is a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

A Sustainability Appraisal aims to predict and assess the economic, social and environmental effects that are likely to arise from Local Development Documents, such as a Core Strategy. It is a process for understanding whether policies, strategies or plans promote sustainable development, and for improving those policies to deliver more sustainable outcomes.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aims to predict and assess the environmental effects that are likely to arise from plans, policies and strategies, such as Local Development Documents. It is a process for assessing and mitigating the negative environmental impacts of specific plans and programmes. The SEA process has been incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal process. Therefore, where this topic paper refers to the Sustainability Appraisal it can be assumed that this also means the SEA.

Sustainability Appraisal / SEA Scoping Report

In tandem with the Topic Papers prepared for the emerging Core Strategy, a Sustainability Appraisal / SEA Scoping Report has been prepared. The Scoping Report proposes the methodology that will be applied in undertaking the Sustainability Appraisal / SEA of the emerging Core Strategy. The full Scoping Report has been published alongside this series of Topic Papers and can be viewed at

www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy. This topic paper summarises the content of the Scoping Report as follows.

Key Sustainability Issues

By examining the baseline data relevant to the District, as well as the plans, programmes and strategies relevant to the Core Strategy, it has been possible to identify the current key sustainability issues facing Lewes District. These issues are summarised as follows:

- There is pressure to supply additional housing within Lewes District, particularly in the affordable housing sector, whilst there is also a need to provide housing suitable for smaller households.
- There is a need to protect and enhance the District's important landscapes, areas of biodiversity and other protected areas.
- The recent designation of the South Downs National Park, of which Lewes District is a part, is likely to increase the attractiveness of the area as a place to visit. A key issue will be ensuring that the economic benefits to be gained from this are realised without being to the detriment of the National Park or surrounding area.
- It is important to ensure that the District's Historic Buildings and features are conserved and enhanced.

- The amount of waste that goes to landfill is comparatively high, however this is likely to be addressed by the Energy from Waste Incinerator being built in Newhaven. Despite this, there is a need to further promote prudent use of resources, including water, energy and waste materials by increasing the amount of recycling of waste and, where possible, the re-use of waste materials in new developments.
- There is pressure from Government to build as much new housing development on previously developed land, thus avoiding the unnecessary loss of greenfield land and valuable agricultural land.
- Flooding presents a clear risk to many parts of the District, including significant areas of many of the settlements. Along the coast there are also areas that are at a significant risk from coastal erosion.
- There are clear disparities between the most deprived areas and more prosperous parts of the District. Accessibility to important services and facilities is also a significant issue in parts of the District, particularly some rural areas.
- The ageing population of Lewes District, which is already high, is likely to increase further, resulting in an additional strain on health and social care, particularly residential nursing care and intensive home care.
- It is forecasted that the population of Lewes District will grow which will provide an additional strain on the current infrastructure.
- A high proportion of adults in Lewes District have no recognised qualifications, impacting on their ability to secure employment.
- Industry and business are suffering in parts of Lewes District, partly because of the recession, causing damage to local economies. This is particularly evident in areas along the coastal strip.
- Car ownership in the District is comparatively high and a number of key highway routes often suffer from congestion during peak hours including the A259, A27 and the A26.

Sustainability Objectives and Indicators

In order to address the issues identified in the previous section of this topic paper a set of sustainability objectives have been proposed that will be used to appraise options considered for the Core Strategy, as well as identifying potential mitigation measures that could offset any detrimental social, economic and environmental impacts of policies. The proposed indicators, alongside the objectives, will enable the Council to identify a qualitative impact of strategy/policy proposals as well as providing a way of monitoring the impacts of the Core Strategy document that is eventually adopted. The objectives and indicators that are set out in the Scoping Report are as follows:



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Number	Objective	Indicator(s)
1	To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home and maintain a good supply of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing completions per annum (Net) • Affordable housing completions per annum (net) • House prices to earnings ratio • Households on waiting list for local authority housing • Number of unfit homes per 1000 dwellings • Financial contributions towards affordable housing provision • Number of key worker (homebuy) households delivered per annum
2	To reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public wellbeing, the economy and the environment (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of properties at risk from flooding • Number of new developments with sustainable drainage systems • Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on flood risk/flood defence grounds
3	To ensure that the District is prepared for the impacts of coastal erosion, thereby minimising the risk of the loss of property and ensuring that existing infrastructure is not adversely impacted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of agreed actions to implement long term flood and coastal erosion risk management plans that are being undertaken satisfactorily
4	To reduce poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas and the rest of the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in rank of deprived areas (Index of Multiple Deprivation)
5	To create and sustain vibrant, safe, distinctive and healthy communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live • Change in number of community meeting facilities • Change in public open space • Number of vacant units in town centres • Levels of crime

Number	Objective	Indicator(s)
6	To increase travel choice and accessibility to all services and facilities, and to reduce pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of new developments built within 800 metres of a railway station and 400 metres of a bus stop • Percentage of new residential developments located within 30 minutes public transport time of key services and facilities and employment • Number of new footpaths/cycle routes and public transport infrastructure • Number of Air Quality Management Areas • Number of days when air pollution levels are high • Carbon Dioxide emissions per sector
7	To improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings and minimising the loss of valuable greenfield land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land • Number of empty homes • Number of vacant commercial units • Average density of new development • Amount of Grade 1, 2 and 3 Agricultural Land lost to new development
8	To conserve and enhance the District's biodiversity (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and condition of internationally and nationally important wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC & Ramsar) • Number and extent of SNClS and LNRs • Area of ancient woodland • Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the Environment Agency on biodiversity matters
9	To protect, enhance and make accessible the District's countryside and historic environment (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Listed Buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register • Number of major planning applications approved in the SDNP and Conservation Areas • Net change of Rights of Way • Percentage of new homes built within 300 metres of accessible greenspace



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Number	Objective	Indicator(s)
10	To reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic waste produced per head of population • Percentage of waste that is recycled or reused • Number of households covered by kerbside recycling
11	To maintain and improve water quality and encourage its conservation, and to achieve sustainable water resources management (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological water quality • Chemical water quality • Bathing water quality • Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the Environment Agency on water quality grounds • Consumption of water per head of population • Incidents of major and significant water pollution • Number of properties with water meters
12	To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and ensure that the District is prepared for its impacts (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average amount of erosion to coastal areas • Number of properties at risk from flooding • Proportion of journeys to work by public transport, on foot or cycle • Renewable energy installations within Lewes District
13	To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy use per head • Percentage of waste which is converted into energy • Renewable energy installations within Lewes District
14	To promote and sustain economic growth in successful areas, and to revive the economies of the most deprived areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage change in unit vacancy rates • Unemployment rate • Percentage of population who are long-term unemployed or who have never worked, by ward • Percentage change in total number of VAT registered businesses in the area

Number	Objective	Indicator(s)
15	To encourage the growth of a buoyant and sustainable tourism sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of jobs in the tourism sector • Contribution to the District's economy made by visitors
16	To improve the employability of the population, and to increase levels of educational attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students achieving 5 or more GCSEs grade A*-C • Numbers of Adult Learners • Percentage of adults without any qualifications

This is your opportunity to shape your local area and input on how the District develops over the next 15 years. The Council would appreciate and value any comments you have on this document. With regards to this Topic Paper we would particularly appreciate your answers to the following questions:

- ***Has the Council correctly identified the key issues facing the District?***
- ***Do the proposed sustainability objectives adequately reflect the social, economic and environmental priorities of the District?***
- ***Do the proposed indicators provide a satisfactory monitoring framework?***

Obtaining additional copies of the Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers

Downloading it from www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy

Emailing ldf@lewes.gov.uk

Visiting Lewes District Council at Southover House

Telephoning the Planning Policy Team on **01273 484417**

How to respond to the Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers

Views are invited to the questions that are located at the end of each of the Topic Papers. You need only reply to any part of the questions that are of interest you, or you may introduce other comments.



Comments may be sent to the Council by:

By email to: **ldf@lewes.gov.uk**

By fax to: **01273 484452**

By post to: Lewes District Council

Planning Policy Team

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Comments must be received by the 16th July 2010



**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audiotape,
disk or in another language upon request.**

**Please telephone 01273 484141 or
email lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk**