

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

TRANSPORTATION CONTRIBUTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

January 2006

**NORWICH CITY
COUNCIL**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to provide an assessment of each document and integrate sustainability considerations into the preparation of plans and policies. It can be a means of highlighting problem areas where a plan or policy may not contribute fully to sustainable development, or requires mitigation to be built in. More usually it shows how the policy or plan needs to be monitored to assess whether it is successfully achieving sustainable development in practice.
- 1.2 Sustainability has been built into the process of preparing supplementary planning guidance, from the appraisal of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan. Reports were published as part of that process at First Deposit stage (July 2001), Second Deposit stage (September 2002) and Modifications stage (June 2004).
- 1.3 The Planning Policy team at Norwich City Council have extended that appraisal to assess the revised Supplementary Guidance reports, which are now being produced as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) under the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).
- 1.4 We are now seeking comments on the appraisal of these documents as set out in this and similar documents published alongside drafts of the new SPD's. If you have any comments, please write to

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or e-mail them to localplans@norwich.gov.uk

The deadline for comments is 17th March 2006

2. Background

Sustainable Development

2.1 Sustainable development sets out to promote a better quality of life for everyone, for both present and future generations. It seeks to protect and where possible enhance the environment through an integrated approach to social, economic and environmental issues. In March 2005 the government produced the new Sustainable Development Strategy for the UK. This established guiding principles for sustainable development:

- Living within Environmental Limits
- Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society
- Achieving a Sustainable Economy
- Promoting Good Governance
- Using Sound Science Responsibly.

2.2 This represents the government's overarching strategy to achieving international and national commitments to sustainable development. This commitment has been incorporated into planning legislation and statements that make the achievement of sustainable development a priority of the planning system.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

2.3 In order to ensure that plans produced under the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 help in the overarching aim of achieving sustainable development, a requirement that plans commenced after June 2004 should go through Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been established. This process ensures that significant environmental effects arising from policies, plans and programmes are identified and assessed. Possible mitigation measures can be considered where it is predicted that plans may produce negative effects on sustainable development and the plans can be changed.

2.4 The process involves:

- identifying key guidance in relation to the policy or document and the scope of relevant central, regional and local government guidance and strategies;
- Establishing sustainability objectives and indicators based on this 'scoping', against which the likely sustainability implications of the SPD can be measured.

2.5 The objectives and indicators also enable the success of the policy and SPD to be tested into the future through monitoring of key indicators.

- 2.6 In the case of Supplementary Planning Documents SA takes the form of an SA Report, which accompanies and assesses the Draft Supplementary Planning Document and provides opportunities for public involvement in the process through this flexible and iterative process.
- 2.7 In addition to these requirements for a SA, EU legislation (SEA Directive 2001/42/EC) requires an assessment of the environmental effects of major planning documents to be undertaken, known as SEA. There is a large amount of overlap between the SEA and the SA process and the government has therefore decided that the SA process will normally incorporate the SEA requirements. In the case of this SPD a screening report has been prepared and submitted to the Consultation Bodies.

Appraisal Methodology

- 3.1 The approach that Norwich City Council has adopted to evaluate the SPD's is to review the appraisal undertaken previously on the relevant parent policy(ies) in the adopted Local Plan and consider whether any additional sustainability issues arise for the SPD itself. The effects of the draft SPD have been evaluated and, as a comparative option, the effects of 'doing nothing' – i.e. leaving the policy to be interpreted without any formal guidance for either the authority or the public and applicants.
- 3.2 The report therefore includes the detailed assessment of the SPD on this basis, proposals for monitoring potential effects of the document and any proposed mitigation of adverse effects.
- 3.3 Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal is taking place alongside consultation on the draft SPD and a revised version will be published once the SPD is proposed for adoption, reflecting any revisions as a result of consultation.

4. Baseline, Context and Objectives

Links to Other Strategies, Plans and Programmes

- 4.1 As a Supplementary Planning Document the Transport Contributions SPD is required to be supplementary to the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (November 2004). In addition it must also be in accordance with national guidance and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England.
- 4.2 Appendix 2 provides a comprehensive outline of other plans and programmes that have influenced the preparation of the SPD on Transport Contributions. A brief summary of these is included here.
- 4.3 The most important plan regionally is the Regional Transport Strategy, which has been incorporated in the draft East of England Plan (December 2004). This is being tested through an Examination in Public process (November 2005 – March 2006) and will then be adopted by the Secretary of State. Locally the Local Transport Plan fulfils a similar function setting out the proposed transport measures for the coming year for Norfolk.
- 4.4 An important background document was the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy. This was produced by the Norfolk County Council in partnership with Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk District Council. The standards contained in the Local Plan are based on its strategy.
- 4.5 Design issues have been the subject of a number of national reports, which are important in setting guidelines for how open spaces should be designed within any particular development scheme. These include 'By Design', 'Better Places to Live', 'Places Streets and Movement'.

Baseline Characteristics and Issues

- 4.6 It is important that sustainability appraisal is based on an understanding of the state of the environment (in its widest sense) of the area, so that future monitoring can be assessed against that to show progress or regression.
- 4.7 Clearly the baseline information will be substantially updated for the new Local Development Framework and its sustainability appraisal. The information available for this SPD is based on earlier work for the Local Plan.
- 4.8 The Norwich Area Transport Strategy (NATS) is supported by baseline information on the transportation system in the City (and the

surrounding area). Monitoring in 2005 demonstrated that traffic levels in the City have remained reasonably constant since 1995, with marginal increases in movement across the outer ring road, and an annual decrease in traffic across the inner ring road of 2.7% since 1998, with increasing use of public transport, particularly Park and Ride. This is consistent with the strategy's overall aim of catering for increasing transport demand by means other than the private car.

- 4.9 More general information on the state of the environment is contained in the City Council's monitoring reports (e.g. Annual Monitoring Report, December 2005). Norfolk County Council in partnership with the Environment Agency has published a "Norfolk State of the Environment" (2003) (available on www.norfolk.gov.uk), which gives background information on the range of sustainability issues for the whole County, including Norwich.
- 4.10 The primary issue for the Transport Contributions SPD is the need for development to mitigate the effects of additional car journeys on an already congested transport network. This in itself is a sustainable development objective, but the monitoring will have to assess the effectiveness of the particular measures proposed.
- 4.11 Target indicators were set out in the adopted Local Plan (Appendix 15). The most relevant indicator for this SPD was one relating to policies TRA10 and TRA11, which will measure the amount of contributions collected to enhance the transport system. A target of £250,000 per annum (including 'in-kind' contributions) is included in the Local Plan. This will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Reports (from December 2005).
- 4.12 The list of indicators will be refined through the process of identifying the baseline for Sustainability Appraisal of the new Local Development Framework system.

Objectives for Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.13 Resource objectives were defined for the Local Plan appraisal, based on the environmental, social and economic resources on which the Local Plan has some influence or impact. Each objective represents an aim relating to these resources for sustainability of development in the City. Objectives were defined in relation to land, air, water, biodiversity, other natural resources, quality of life, accessibility, identity, culture, a diverse and competitive economy, employment land supply, and the labour market.
- 4.14 The most significant objectives with respect to transport contributions provision are the following :

Environmental

- Prevent the deterioration of air quality in the City
- To minimise the impact of the City's development on the global climate through emissions of carbon dioxide.
- Reduce consumption of fossil fuel energy;

Social

- Ensure a high standard of amenity and no unacceptable impact through noise, smell, disturbance or visual effects;
- Ensure development contributes to a healthier living environment;
- Reduce reliance on the private car by promoting accessibility by other modes of travel;
- Provide for equality of opportunity for all residents regardless of age or disability;

Economic

- Improvement of the physical infrastructure within Norwich and linkages to the wider region.

4.13 The objectives of the SPD are to provide details to ensure that policies seeking to obtain contributions to the wider transportation system from development are implemented effectively and consistently. These policies are based on reducing the impact of development on the environment, promoting accessibility by other modes of transport and enhancing amenity and equal opportunity.

4.14 These objectives are more detailed than the broad sustainability objectives but are consistent with them, specifically in relation to reducing energy consumption, reducing emissions in future, a healthier environment and enhancing physical infrastructure. There are no potential conflicts between the SPD objective and the sustainability objectives.

5. Issues, Options and Policies

Strategic Options Considered

- 5.1 The Transport Contributions SPD is intended to provide guidance to developers on how the policies TRA10 and TRA11 in the adopted Local Plan will be implemented. It is supplementary to those two policies in principle, though it does refer to other policies in the adopted plan.
- 5.2 In order to compare with a realistic alternative strategy for the SPD, the option of not producing/ adopting such guidance has been evaluated, in order to demonstrate whether the SPD provides any significant benefits over the 'do-nothing' situation.
- 5.3 The appraisal of these options is set out in Appendix 1. The alternatives are assessed to see whether they support or conflict with each sustainability objective and the broad scale of such impact. Each detailed assessment is supported by comments to explain or clarify the rating.
- 5.4 In summary the results show that Option 1 (adoption of SPD) achieves significant improvements in sustainability assessment. This is chiefly because the SPD enables the Council to direct the use of resources through commuted sums or via agreed infrastructure improvements provided at developer's expense, in a coordinated manner to achieve strategic objectives. In particular this will assist the enhancement of public transport, cycling and pedestrian accessibility.

Preferred Option

- 5.5 The preferred option is therefore to proceed with the adoption of this SPD in order to achieve the benefits shown by the appraisal, through the use of directed resources arising from development.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- 5.6 There is potential that the additional development costs could encourage development beyond the urban boundary in less sustainable locations. However, a strong policy framework should ensure that this does not happen and hence it is not considered that any mitigating measures need to be taken to offset this factor at present.

Uncertainties and Risks

- 5.7 No uncertainties and risks have been identified.

6. Implementation and Monitoring

Links to Other Plans and Programmes

- 6.1 It is a requirement that the Transport Contributions Supplementary Planning Document conforms generally to higher level plans in the plan-making hierarchy. In this case the SPD is particularly related to policies TRA10 and TRA11 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan. It must therefore be in conformity with the Local Plan generally and those policies specifically.
- 6.2 It follows that, when new policies replace the relevant Local Plan policies, through documents brought forward under the Local Development Framework for Norwich, this SPD will need to be reviewed and this Sustainability Appraisal reassessed.
- 6.3 In addition it will be important to ensure that the guidance in the SPD remains relevant to the strategy of the bodies implementing it – Norfolk County Council through its Local Transport Strategy and NATS; and local community bodies that may have a role in provision for local transport enhancement measures.

Proposals for Monitoring

- 6.4 It is important to monitor the results and use of the Transport Contributions SPD. This will be aimed at identifying any unforeseen effects on sustainability, as well as the extent of implementation of the policy and use of additional transport contributions. Monitoring will help to assess the actual impact of the SPD against those effects predicted through the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 6.5 Monitoring will cover the indicators identified in Appendix 15 of the Local Plan and the use of planning contributions through section 106. This will enable the Council to ensure that the positive benefits predicted in the appraisal do occur.
- 6.6 It is intended that the monitoring will be incorporated into the existing monitoring arrangements and published through the Annual Monitoring Report, which the Council is required to produce at the end of each calendar year (relating to the previous financial year). If monitoring identifies any unforeseen adverse effects, it will be appropriate to consider in the Annual Monitoring Report whether any remedial action needs to be taken. This could involve reviewing the SPD or making recommendations to members on the implementation of certain policies.

APPENDIX 1

APPRAISAL OF SPD OPTIONS

The options for the Transport Contributions SPD have been appraised as follows :

1. Adoption of the SPD as presented to interpret Local Plan policies
2. To do nothing and interpret the Local Plan policy without consistent and up to date SPD guidance.

Key to Appraisal of Impacts



major positive impact



positive impact



major negative impact



negative impact

0

neutral impact

?

uncertain impact

Appraisal of Option 1 – Transport Contributions SPD adopted.

| Sustainability Objective | Baseline Indicators | Nature of Impact Predicted | Assessed Impact | Comments |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Environmental Resource Goals | | | | |
| Air Quality | Level of pollutants in the atmosphere | Positive impact (cf future position with development) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Contributions aimed to mitigate effects of development |
| Global Climatic Impact | Carbon dioxide emissions | Positive impact (cf future position with development) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Contributions aimed to mitigate effects of development |
| Energy Consumption | Reduction in fossil fuel use | Positive impact (cf future position with development) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Contributions aimed to mitigate effects of development |
| Social Resource Goals | | | | |
| Quality of Life - Amenity | Complaints about amenity issues | Neutral or no impact | 0 | SPD contributions can be used fro traffic calming and management, which can have a beneficial impact on amenity. |
| | Enhancement of transport environment | Positive impact – use of resources to enhance local network | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

| Sustainability Objective | Baseline Indicators | Nature of Impact Predicted | Assessed Impact | Comments |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Quality of Life – health and social development | Health of child population | Positive impact - reduction in use of vehicles impacts on local pollution impact. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Contributions expected to be used to reduce traffic in local areas. |
| | Increased use of cycling and walking | Positive impact – c.f. position without mitigating measures | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | As assessed in RLP appraisal |
| Reduce Reliance on Private Car | Proportion of households reliant on private cars for journeys to work, school and shop. | Positive Impact - SPD can be used to enable non-car modes to be useable | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The contributions will be devoted to ways in which this can be encouraged. |
| Equality of Opportunity | Constraints to mobility for disabled people. | Uncertain Impact – policy unlikely to have much impact on this. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Infrastructure improvements can be used to increase accessibility for the disabled or other groups. |
| Economic Resource Goals | | | | |
| Economic Regeneration | Infrastructure improvements | Positive Impact – potential for commuted sums to be invested. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | SPD gives the potential to use commuted sums in appropriate areas for this purpose |

Appraisal of Option 2 – Do Nothing (no SPD adopted)

| Sustainability Objective | Baseline Indicators | Nature of Impact Predicted | Assessed Impact | Comments |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| Environmental Resource Goals | | | | |
| Air Quality | Level of pollutants in the atmosphere | Use of private car will grow as a consequence of development | X | See Note 1 |
| Global Climatic Impact | Carbon dioxide emissions | Use of private car will grow as a consequence of development | X | See Note 1 |
| Energy Consumption | Reduction in fossil fuel use | Use of private car will grow as a consequence of development | X | See Note 1 |
| Economic Resource Goals | | | | |
| Economic Regeneration | Infrastructure improvements | Neutral or No Impact | 0 | No SPD – hence no direction of resources. |

| Sustainability Objective | Baseline Indicators | Nature of Impact Predicted | Assessed Impact | Comments |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Social Resource Goals | | | | |
| Quality of Life - Amenity | Complaints about amenity issues | Neutral or no impact | 0 | No ability to direct resources without SPD |
| | Enhancement of transport environment | Neutral or no impact | 0 | |
| Quality of Life – health and social development | Health of child population | Negative impact – private transport use grows with development | X | See Note 1. |
| | Increased use of cycling and walking | Negative impact – quality of walking and cycling environment will decline as traffic levels increase. | X | See Note 1. |
| Reduce Reliance on Private Car | Proportion of households reliant on private cars for journeys to work, school and shop. | Positive Impact - design can also be used to this effect without SPD | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|----------|------------|
| Equality of Opportunity | Constraints to mobility for disabled people. | Neutral of No Impact – accessibility improvements would not be programmed | 0 | See note 1 |
|-------------------------|--|---|----------|------------|

Note 1 – This appraisal assumes that no transport contributions can be collected, when there is no SPD framework for ensuring they are fairly and equally calculated. There would be an exception, where particular local circumstances justified such a contribution, but they could no longer be systematic across all uses and areas.

APPENDIX 2

PLANS AND STRATEGIES INFLUENCING THE TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTIONS SPD.

The following lists the plans and strategies that have been taken into consideration in the preparation of the Transport Contributions SPD.

Norwich City Council, City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan, November 2004.

EERA, Draft East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy), December 2004

Norfolk County Council, Local Transport Plan, July 2005

Norfolk County Council, Norwich Area Transportation Strategy, October 2004

DTLR/ CABE, By Design, September 2001.

DETR, Encouraging Walking, 2000

DETR, Places, Streets and Movement (Companion Guide to Design Bulletin 32), 1998

ODPM, Circular 5/2005, July 2005