

Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document

SA/ SEA Adoption Statement

July 2015



1. Introduction

Southend Borough Council adopted the Development Management Document (DMD) on 23 July 2015. As an integral part of the preparation of the DMD, and in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 19 (5), the DMD has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the plan.

Good practice and national Planning Practice Guidance advises that the SA can include the SEA and this is the approach used in the assessment of the DMD. Therefore, throughout the remainder of this statement reference to SA implies both SA and SEA. SA is a systematic process designed to evaluate the social, environmental and economic impacts of a plan to identify potential significant effect, the SA can then identify mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects and secure sustainability benefits.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The Regulations require that a statement be made available to accompany the Adopted DMD in order to provide the following information:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the development plan document and the environmental report has been taken into account;
- how the opinions and consultation responses received on the development plan document and sustainability appraisal reports have been taken into account;
- the reasons for choosing the development plan document in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- monitoring measures.

Each of the above matters is considered in turn within this SA Statement. It should also be noted that further information on each SA process can be found in the SA reports, consultation reports and the Planning Inspector's Report. All reports can be found on the Council's website www.southend.gov.uk.

2. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the development plan document and the environmental report been taken into account

The SA was prepared on behalf of Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils by independent consultants, which means that the SA was produced independently from the DMD itself, ensuring impartiality. SA reporting has been undertaken to inform all stages of plan preparation. This reporting and discussion between those undertaking the SA and those preparing the DMD, have allowed for sustainability matters to be incorporated iteratively into the plan as it has been prepared.

The following stages of SA have been undertaken in the preparation of the DMD. More information on each stage can be found in each of the SA Reports referred to, which are available on Southend Council's DMD website.

SA Scoping Report (May 2010)

The Scoping Report was the first stage in the preparation of the SA, it set out the sustainability framework, identifying the main sustainability issues in the area. The Scoping Stage and baseline information was informed by Core Strategy DPD and Southend Central AAP.

The sustainability objectives of the sustainability framework form the basis of all stages of assessment, at each iteration options, policies and proposals are assessed against them. The coverage of environmental and sustainability issues in the objectives means that the DMD has been systematically and consistently assessed to identify effects and ensure the matters identified are considered as part of the DMD. Table 1 shows the full set of objectives:

Table 1: Sustainability Objectives

Topic	Objective
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone	
Accessibility	maintain Southend town centre as services, as the most accessible location improve accessibility to the town centre improvement in public transport accessibility along the entire length of the seafront
Housing	ensure a sufficient number of dwellings encourage a suitable mix of dwellings, including tenure and size
Education & Skills	improve accessibility to employment and education facilities support continued development of the University campus in the town centre
Health, safety and security	improvements to reduce fear of crime in the town centre, especially at night improve pedestrian routes through the town centre and seafront to help design out crime
Community	improve the viability and distinctive character of Southend town centre provide public art and improvements to the design of seafront tourist buildings, such as beach huts and kiosks to provide a recognisable unified approach for Southend provide new community open spaces in the town centre and seafront
Effective protection of the environment	
Biodiversity	protect undeveloped parts of the coastline protect key habitats directly or indirectly from developments which may harm them ensure new development brings enhancements to the built environment where appropriate ensure 'appropriate assessment' of all development is carried out where appropriate
Landscape character	protect undeveloped parts of the coastline retain notable features and areas of open space along the coast line protect views of the estuary

Built environment	enhance and protect land mark and listed buildings on the sea front enhance and protect listed buildings and those of interest in the town centre improve urban design quality through policy protect existing and create new open and green space
Prudent use of natural resources	
Air	reduce traffic congestion in the town centre encourage freight modal shift and encourage a reduction in emissions of new buildings
Water	ensure no increased risk of coastal flooding acknowledge the risk to water quality from on-shore developments
Land	protect undeveloped coastline in the borough encourage development on previously developed land encourage high density residential development and mixed use development in the town centre
Soil	protect productive soil where applicable (little overall impact likely)
Minerals and other raw materials	minimise use of aggregates for new development (relevance to sea defences)
Energy sources	reduce the growth in car use and congestion within borough
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment	
Local economy	improve the viability and vitality of the town centre as economic hub for the borough improve the viability and vitality of the seafront as a major and flexible tourist destination identify sites for local business start-ups in accessible locations
Employment	work to create new jobs in a range of sectors within the borough work to make the coast a major destination for conferences (as in Community Strategy) support a diverse range of businesses premises to meet different needs, as well as supporting existing business clusters
Wealth creation	contribute to creating attractive environment for business to flourish improve access for all residents to a range of jobs

Sustainability Appraisal of the Development Management Document - Issues and Options (June 2010)

This was the SA for the first iteration of the DMD, the Issues and Options DMD (June 2010). The SA assessed the various options proposed in the plan against the sustainability objectives of the sustainability framework, using the baseline information established through the Scoping Report.

For the DMD the Issues and Options version presented alternatives for all of the policy issues. One or more options were presented for policy wording or implementation. These options were appraised as part of the sustainability matrices of the Issues and Options version SA. In the majority of cases the suggested preferred option was found to be most compatible with sustainable development. However, in some instances the SA comments

that the options presented identified that they were not really viable alternatives, examples included:

- where policy is set nationally therefore alternatives cannot be considered
- options were given that were not really either/or choices
- options were given that were not reasonable with one option clearly noticeably preferable and not pursuing it would have no benefit.

The SA also stated that where no options exist it would have been reasonable not to include any alternatives.

The SA at that time did suggest a further alternative, which looked at a different way of presenting the plan. The suggestion was that as part of making a comprehensive, but at the same time readily understandable, set of policies there may be an alternative way of creating a set of development management policies. In taking forward the policy areas identified as being important to tackling local issues this alternative approach may be effective in helping make a more usable plan for officers, applicants and consultees.

The approach taken to setting some of the policies of the Issues and Options DPD was to identify a development type, e.g. houses in multiple occupation, tall buildings, and then create a policy to set criteria for its delivery. This method is useful as it allows developers to find policies that directly relate to their needs. However, it created some repetition between policies, for example access and design. The repetition of similar criteria through multiple policies resulted in a long plan. It total this version of the plan contained 25 policy issues, meaning 25 potential policies. A long plan would be more difficult to use, for developers and development management officers. It would also risk some of the principle messages about delivering sustainable development becoming lost, therefore be of less benefit in securing sustainable development.

The alternative approach was suggested in the Issues and Option SA. The alternative, which has been used in other parts of the country, is to identify a limited number of topic based policies that act as a catch-all for all development.

Pursuing this 'catch-all' alternative method of developing policies would not have resulted in any major changes to the overall sustainability coverage of the Southend SDS. It is only an alternative way of presenting many of the development criteria that have been developed as part of the Issues and Options version DPD. The Issues and Options SA gave examples of the topics the DPD could cover.

Sustainability Appraisal of the Development Management Document - Proposed Submission (March 2011)

The Proposed Submission DMD was informed by SA and subsequently published for public consultation in March 2011.

In the Proposed Submission version the policies the number of policies has been reduced. The policy on 'Tall Buildings' remains, but additional policy detail means that the purpose of this policy is clearer, with guidance aimed directly at the form of these buildings. In many instances policies have been combined to simplify the DMD. This makes the

document more usable helping people find the policies that they will need to take into account of with ease. This should help ensure that planning applications are of a good quality and can move smoothly through the application process.

The iteration of policies as the Proposed Submission version emerged also has allowed for amendment and refining of policy wording. This alternative policy wording can help deliver more sustainable development. Appendix A of the final SA shows the iteration of policies the implications for changes for policy's sustainability performance.

Sustainability Appraisal of the Development Management Document - Revised Proposed Submission (March 2014)

The DMD Revised Submission Draft was published in April 2014. It was accompanied by SA and was subject to public consultation.

Detailed recommendations and possible ways to mitigate potential impacts of the policy are covered in the matrices of Appendix A of the final SA. This appendix should be read for a complete picture of the SA of the DMD.

Through the iterations of policies as part of preparing the Revised Proposed Submission recommendations of the SA have played a role in forming the policy, alongside other consideration. For example:

- the need to reduce waste at construction stage of development has been incorporated into Policy DM2;
- Policy DM5 has been amended to ensure architectural as well as historic heritage is considered when protecting the built environmental;
- Ensuring there is flexibility in the application of housing mix in Policy DM7 to allow for the particular characteristics of the site to be taken into account; and
- Greater clarity has been provided in Policy DM12 on how viability of visitor accommodation is tested to ensure that consideration is given to the viability of the hotel, this includes credible evidence to ensure the hotel takes measures to actively encourage visitor and that no one is willing to buy the hotel even after it has been marketed. These measures should help avoid change of use simply for financial purposes.

The plan makers have taken into account SA comments on the Issues and Options, original proposed submission and on this Revised Submission DPD. The review of policies as part of the SA identifies the following sustainability implications of the DMD:

- Policies including DM1 and DM15 recognise the importance of helping create places that are attractive for non-car users and encourage walking and cycling and therefore have the potential to secure environmental and social sustainability benefits. Making sure car parking does not exceed maximum standards in the town centre and out-of-centre location will be essential as part of this, as will making sure all places are attractive to those arriving on foot.
- Policies DM2 and DM3 should help achieve more efficient use of resources, including water use and energy.
- The residential mix of housing types set out in Policy DM8 should be regularly updated to reflect current needs and any update in the Strategy Housing Market

Assessment, risk of oversupply of any one housing type should be monitored, taking into account the demographic structure of Southend.

- Policies of the plan are also clear on the need to protect the economy of the borough. The town centre focus for employment development (Policy DM10/DM11) is supported in securing sustainable development, as this is the most accessible location in the borough and has good potential to support objectives for reducing car use. Policy DM13 also sets out how retail areas will be protected from change of use that would impact on viability.
- Policy DM12 provides detail on how viability of visitor accommodation will be tested. The DMD now includes details that require the applicant to show how the hotel is marketed to secure visitor numbers and/or marketed for sale. This clarity may help protect visitor accommodation in its current use where it is an important part of the character of the town.
- Several of the policies aim to protect and enhance the built character of the borough. For instance Policy DM1 reference the standards and guidance that should be applied to the design of new development and Policy DM5 sets the principles of protection of built heritage. In addition, Policy DM6 covers the Seafront and the specific measures to manage this as one of the borough's greatest assets. The design of tall and large buildings is covered in Policy DM4, with the potential for ensuring these make a positive contribution to the townscape.

Sustainability Appraisal of the Development Management Document Addendum - Proposed Schedule of Modification to the Revised Proposed Submission (December 2014)

Following consultation on the DM Revised Proposed Submission, the plan was submitted to Government for Examination in Public. The examination process resulted in a number of modifications being made to the DMD, set out in the DMD Schedule of Modifications.

The modifications were subject to SA in the form of an addendum to the SA of the DMD Revised Proposed Submission.

The SA of the proposed modifications identifies that there is potential for some changes to deliver further positive benefits for sustainable development. This includes:

- Policy DM3: provides greater clarification on why bungalows should be protected from redevelopment as it will help in the continued provision of single storey homes that meet the needs of older residents;
- Policy DM6: the additional information provided on important seafront buildings may help in the protection and enhancement of these, maintaining and improving their contribution to seafront character and therefore Southend's sense of place;
- Policy DM7: the changes mean that the previous SA recommendation on this policy, that housing mix should be applied flexibly, is resolved and therefore no longer applicable;
- Policy DM8: clarity on the type of outdoor space suitable for flats may have benefits in terms of providing good quality housing for all;
- Policy DM11: office use has been removed as a type of development that could have 'unacceptable environmental problems' and could therefore be a reason for

the change of use of employment areas, which could aid the protection of these sites from inappropriate change of use;

- Policy DM13: the inclusion of plans showing secondary shopping frontages could benefit their protection and thereby protect accessible local services.

The potential for some more negative impacts has also been identified. Policy DM4 on tall buildings no longer includes a policy provision to ensure extensive consultation with the Council takes place and the involvement of third parties in design, which has the potential to have an impact on the quality of these landmark features.

Policy DM15 has also been amended to set criteria in policy of the circumstances when car parking could be delivered at levels below the standards. In addition to sustainable locations this now also includes allowance for reduced provision where it would have a 'clear detrimental impact on local character and context'. Therefore, the SA now recommends that this test is applied carefully to ensure the impact of additional on-street parking on the local character and context is also taken into consideration when making decision based on the policy.

3. How the opinions and consultation responses received on the development plan document and sustainability appraisal reports have been taken into account

Consultation was undertaken on the SA at a number of stages. In accordance with the SEA Regulations, the DMD and its supporting documents, including SA, were made available for consultation throughout the plan preparation process. At each stage consultation was used to inform the following stage of DMD and SA.

Table 2.

DMD Preparation Stage	SA Stage	Date
Pre-production	SA Scoping Stage	May 2010
Issues and Options	SA Issues and Options	June 2010
Proposed Submission	Sa Proposed Submission	March 2011
Revised Proposed Submission	SA Revised Proposed Submission	April 2014
Post Submission	SA Addendum – Proposed Schedule of Modifications	Dec 2014

In May 2010 the DMD SA Scoping Report was consulted upon with the statutory consultees; Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage. This consultation stage allowed statutory consultees to review the sustainability framework that forms the core of the Sustainability Appraisal.

Formal consultation on the DMD Issues and Options Report took place between 21 June and 9 August 2010. The SA was published for consultation alongside the Issues and Option document. In total, 301 consultation comments were received at the Issues and Options stage. A summary of the comments and Council's response was prepared and published (available to view online via www.southend.gov.uk). The results of this

consultation were fed into the preparation of the Proposed Submission iteration of the plan.

The DMD Submission Document and its accompanying SA were first published for pre-submission consultation on 18 March 2011. 81 representations were received at this stage. A summary of the comments and Council's response was prepared and published. The results of this consultation were fed into the preparation of the Revised Proposed Submission iteration of the plan.

The DMD Revised Submission Draft and its accompanying SA were published for consultation between 4 April and 16 May 2014. The Issues and Options and first Proposed Submission SAs were also published at this time as part of the evidence base demonstrating how options have been considered.

The results of this were considered through the examination process, culminating in the modifications to the Plan as set out in the Schedule of Modifications.

The Schedule of Modifications and its accompanying SA Addendum were published for consultation between 19 December 2014 and 13 February 2015. The results of this consultation were fed into the examination process, which concluded with a receipt of the Inspector's report confirming that the Councils could adopt the DMD.

4. The reasons for choosing the development plan document in light of other reasonable alternatives

The DMD provides detailed policies to manage individual development proposals in a way that meets local needs, both economic and social, while protecting the environment. Following the examination the Inspector concluded that with the recommended Main Modifications, the DMD satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the NPPF. These tests included the test that the document must be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

5. Monitoring Measures

The DMD was adopted at a meeting of the Council on 23 July 2015. The Council will monitor the effectiveness of the DMD in delivering its objectives by assessing its performance against a series of indicators which are set out in Appendix 1 of DMD. These will be reported on through the Authorities Monitoring report.

