

GUILDFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (INCORPORATING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT)

SCOPING REPORT

**FOR SITE ALLOCATIONS AND
SLYFIELD AREA ACTION PLAN
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS
AND SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

August 2007

Executive Summary

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is the process to which most of the Borough Council's new spatial development plan - the Guildford Development Framework (GDF) - is subject. The SA process incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Its aim is to help the Council to understand which of the proposal options that it is preparing are, on balance, the most sustainable, therefore supporting the selection of options, which are compatible with the aims of 'sustainable development':

- Living within environmental limits; respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity.
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society, which meets the diverse needs of existing and future communities.
- Achieving a strong, stable and sustainable economy.
- Using sound science responsibly, ensuring sound evidence supports policies.
- and Promoting good governance. (source: 'Securing The Future', DEFRA, 2005)

The Council is using Sustainability Appraisal to inform the production of the Local Development Documents being prepared as part of the GDF. These include the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, and the Slyfield Area Action Plan, and also various Supplementary Planning Documents (where it is judged that a separate SA is needed), which expand on specific policy topics.

This Scoping Report sets out the scoping process through which the latest SA Framework was developed. This SA Framework, will be used to appraise GDF documents during their production stages. Each stage of the development of the Framework is explained, encompassing:

- Review of Other Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes and Sustainability Objectives (Stage A1)
- Baseline Information (Stage A2)
- Key Sustainability Issues (Stage A3)
- The Sustainability Appraisal Framework: Objectives and Indicators (Stage A4)
- Testing the Plan Objectives against the SA Framework
- Future SA Steps and Consultations

We are seeking your views on this Scoping Report, which is available on the Council's website at www.guildford.gov.uk > Planning and Building Control > Consultations > Sustainability Appraisal, and for inspection at the Council offices, Millmead, Guildford. An electronic or paper copy can also be requested by telephoning 01483 444464.

A response form is enclosed. Please send your completed form to: Tanya Mankoo-Flatt, Principal Policy Planner, Environmental Policy & Design Service, Guildford Borough Council, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4BB. Alternatively, an electronic version is available on the website, completed copies of which can be emailed to: tanya.mankoo-flatt@guildford.gov.uk

The consultation is open from Friday 17th August until noon on 24th September. **Thank you** for your time in reading these details; we look forward to receiving your comments.



Glossary of Terms

DPD	Development Plan Document, a document forming part of the GDF which will be used to make decisions on proposals for development. The Core Strategy and Town Centre Area Action Plan are examples.
GBC	Guildford Borough Council.
GDF	Guildford Development Framework, Guildford Borough Council's emerging Local Development Framework, which plans for the future long-term use of the borough's land and buildings.
GOSE	Government Office for the South East, a regional branch of central government, based in Guildford.
Issues and Options	The early stage of public engagement in producing a LDD.
LDF	The set of documents which will be used to make decisions on development proposals over the next 10 years, comprising DPDs, SPDs and a SCI. Ours is the Guildford Development Framework (GDF).
LDS	The GDF project plan, which explains what documents will be produced and the timescales for preparing them.
Local Plan	The strategy currently used to make decisions on development proposals in the Borough, adopted in 2003.
LPA	Local Planning Authority, such as GBC.
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime-Minister, a central government department.
Preferred Options	The second stage of public engagement in producing a LDD, involving a formal consultation period.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement, the GDF document which explains how the Council is involving people and organisations in decisions on the GDF and planning applications.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment, assessment of environmental impacts required by the SEA Directive and Regulations.
SEERA	South-East England Regional Assembly, based in Guildford.
SEP	South East Plan, regional planning document prepared by SEERA.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document. A document which explains how policies and proposals in DPD(s) and the Local Plan will be applied.
Submission	The third and formal stage of community and stakeholder engagement in producing a LDD.
Sustainability Appraisal	Tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e social, environmental, and economic factors). Required by the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to be undertaken for all LDDs.

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Objectives

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document explains the need for sustainability appraisal (SA), incorporating strategic environmental assessment (SEA), of the emerging Guildford Development Framework (GDF).
- 1.2 The scoping process is explained in Sections 2 - 5, before the resulting SA Framework (Section 6) is presented, which the Council proposes to use to appraise two Development Plan Documents and subsequent topic-based Supplementary Planning Documents (where a separate SA is needed) within the GDF.
- 1.3 Your views are sought on this SA Scoping Report, using the response form provided. Copies of this document and the response form can also be found on the Council's website at www.guildford.gov.uk > Planning and Building Control > Consultations > Sustainability Appraisal. The consultation is open for 5 weeks, until noon on 24th September 2006

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Context

- 2.1 Guildford Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough (the Guildford Development Framework, GDF) in light of changes made to the planning system by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004). The GDF which will guide land use and development in the Borough until 2018.
- 2.2 The GDF will comprise a range of documents, prepared according to a phased programme set out in the Local Development Scheme. During the first three-year phase the Council have and will produce Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including a Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Area Action Plans for Guildford Town Centre and the Slyfield area, together with a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have been produced on subjects including Sustainable Development and Construction (adopted December 2005), Infrastructure and Vehicle Parking Standards (adopted September 2006), and further SPDs will be produced.
- 2.3 The Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS), March 2007 sets out the current timetable for all remaining of the GDF documents.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.4 The European Directive 2001/42/EC, concerning the 'assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment', requires a range of plans and programmes to undergo Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This requirement includes plans such as Local Development Frameworks. With the exceptions of the LDS and SCI, an environmental appraisal must be produced for every DPD and SPD that will make up the GDF. The aim of the SEA process is to provide high-level protection for the environment and to ensure that environmental considerations are fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, which are likely to significantly effect the environment.

SEA and Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.5 Whilst SEA focuses on environmental issues, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) widens the appraisal process to also consider social and economic issues, as well as environmental issues. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for both Development Plan Document (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and also for Regional Spatial Strategies. The SCI and LDS are not subject to SA. The South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) has prepared the South East Plan¹, whilst Guildford Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is preparing the GDF and its various DPDs and SPDs.
- 2.6 In England, the requirements for SA and SEA have been integrated into one process - called Sustainability Appraisal. This is detailed in the Government's guidance on SA procedures². This document has been prepared in accordance with the advice set out in this guide. The intention has been to comply with both SA and SEA requirements throughout.

¹ Details can be viewed at <http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk>

² Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, November 2005): available at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk>

Sustainable Development

- 2.7 The SA process is used to identify and appraise the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of different emerging proposals and policy options. This ensures that sustainable development objectives are integrated in the formulation of policy, and informs decisions on which options should be promoted in LDDs. The terms 'sustainable development' originates from the Brundtland Commission Report of the World Commission of Environment and Development of 1987. This defined sustainable development as:

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

- 2.8 Whilst many definitions now exist, in 2005 the UK Central Government defined sustainable development³ according to five guiding principles:

- **Living Within Environmental Limits** - Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations;
- **Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society** - Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.
- **Achieving a Sustainable Economy** - Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.
- **Using Sound Science Responsibly** - Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.
- **Promoting Good Governance** - Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity.

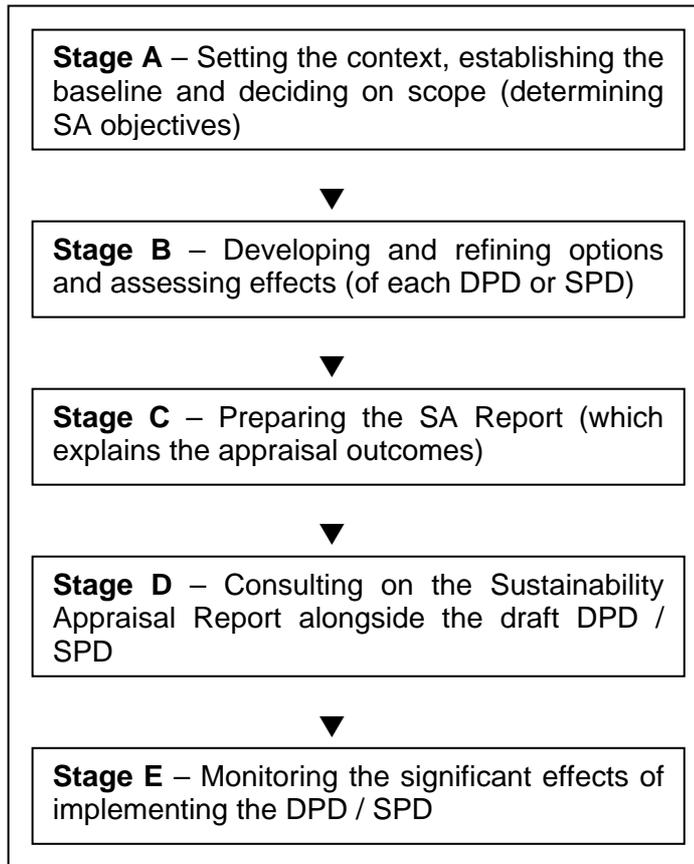
- 2.9 The South East Regional Assembly (SEERA) has used these in defining the objectives for the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF), the Sustainability Appraisal for the South East Plan. Guildford Borough Council has also used the IRF to inform its selection of objectives and indicators.

The SA Process

- 2.10 Figure 2 shows the SA process in full. The purpose of SA is to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are taken fully into account in the GDF's preparation. The SA identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the DPD / SPD and the extent to which implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives of sustainable development. The main objective is to better integrate sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans; testing a plan against the objectives of sustainable development provides a basis for its improvement.

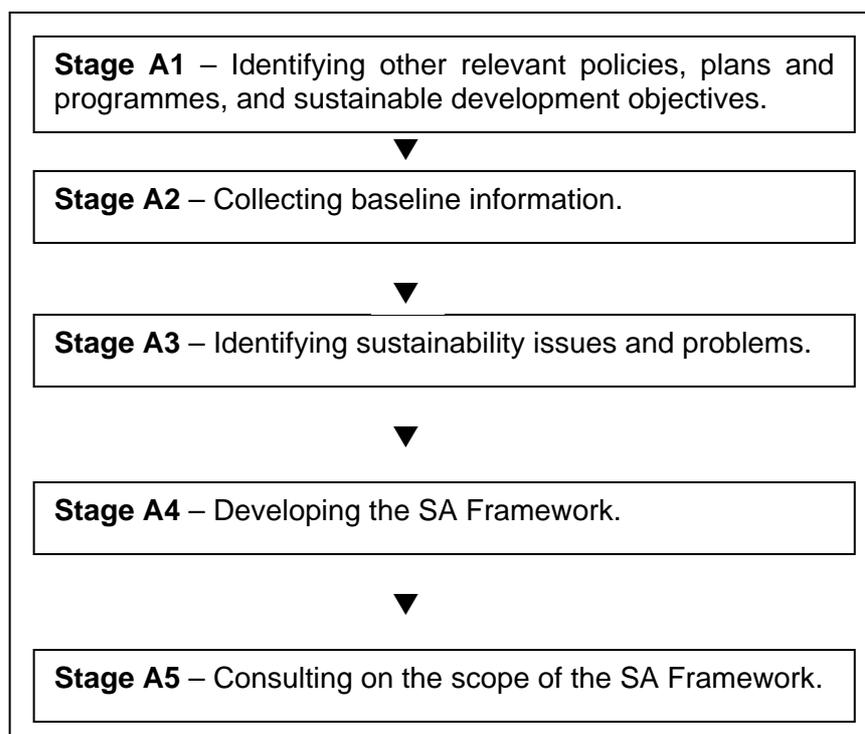
³ 'Securing The Future - delivering UK sustainable development strategy' (2005)

Figure 2: The Sustainability Appraisal Process



2.11 Within this wider SA process, Stage A involves a number of tasks (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Stage A, SA Scoping



Development of the Original Scoping Report

- 2.12 To prepare its first Scoping Report for a GDF Document, The Core Strategy, Guildford Borough Council worked in partnership throughout 2004 with Surrey County Council and other Surrey Borough and District Councils. Information sharing within this network is on-going. The Environmental Consultation Bodies (Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England, previously English Nature) participated in the early stages of this joint-working.
- 2.13 Joint-working helped to inform considerations of the sustainability issues, in particular environmental considerations, taking into account a wider view (beyond borough and topic boundaries). Additional benefits derived from joint-working included efficiency savings (time and financial resources) and mutual verification of the scoping process. Additional work was undertaken by the Council to tailor the scoping and SA Framework to Guildford borough's circumstances and to confirm compliance with the SA guidance.
- 2.14 The first Guildford Scoping Report was subject to consultation in January and February 2005. It can be viewed on the Council's website: www.guildford.gov.uk > Planning and Building Control > Local Development Framework > Sustainability Appraisal.
- 2.15 Updated in light of these responses and supplementary research where applicable, the first Scoping Report provided the SA Framework, which was used in the Sustainability Appraisals of the following documents:
- Core Strategy DPD up to and including Submission Draft
 - Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD, up to and including Preferred OptionsDraft
 - Sustainable Development & Construction SPD
 - Infrastructure SPD
 - Vehicle Parking Standards SPD
- 2.16 Specialist consultants were appointed to carry out these sustainability appraisals. This approach has the advantage of ensuring that the SA appraisal process is conducted independently of DPD / SPD preparation, allowing objective appraisal of the relevant options. The Government's SA and other (Creating Local Development Frameworks⁴) guidance endorses this approach.
- 2.17 For the later documents (appraised later in 2005 and in 2006), additional relevant policies, plans and programmes, together with new and updated baseline information, were sought and a focused scoping exercise was undertaken on each, seeking the views of the statutory environmental consultation bodies. The results of each are recorded in the SA Report for the relevant documents.

Updating and Consulting on the Scoping Report (Stages A1 – A5)

- 2.18 In light of further emerging baseline, plans and sustainability issues since June 2006, the Council considers it an opportune time to repeat scoping stages A1-A4, to update the Scoping Report, and to consult with statutory bodies and other relevant organisations on its strength and suitability for use

⁴ p12, Creating Local Development Frameworks – A Companion Guide to PPS12 (ODPM, November 2004)

for the remaining Site Allocations DPD and Slyfield Area Area Action Plan DPD (stage A5).

- 2.19 Following revisions in light of responses to this consultation, the revised SA Framework will be used to assess the sustainability implications of the Site Allocations and Slyfield Area Area Action Plan DPDs outlined within the LDS. The scoping process and resulting SA Framework explained in this document are considered suitable for the remaining Site Allocations and Slyfield Area Action Plan DPDs and for SPDs, given the requirement for all DPDs to be in conformity with the Core Strategy.

DPD Plan Objectives

- 2.20 Figure 4 shows the spatial visions and plan objectives of the Draft Submission Core Strategy. The ‘spatial vision’ sets out the broad aspirations for future development in the borough, to 2018. The objectives show how the vision will be delivered. These objectives reflect the Community Plan and national and regional planning policy objectives.

Figure 4: Draft Submission Core Strategy - Vision and Plan Objectives

<p><u>Draft Spatial Vision:</u></p> <p>A borough that protects and enhances its high quality environment, whilst meeting the community’s housing, economic, transport, recreational and social needs in the most sustainable way possible.</p>
<p><u>Objective 1</u> - Meeting the housing needs of the area identified in the Surrey Structure Plan and when adopted the South East Plan.</p>
<p><u>Objective 2</u> - To provide affordable housing for those unable to afford market housing.</p>
<p><u>Objective 3</u> - To provide for business and employment development needs, particularly for existing local businesses.</p>
<p><u>Objective 4</u> - To protect and enhance Guildford’s town centre role as a regional shopping centre and as a focal point for commercial, arts, cultural and entertainment facilities.</p>
<p><u>Objective 5</u> - To protect the countryside from inappropriate development and maintain its open rural character.</p>
<p><u>Objective 6</u> - To reduce the need to travel by car to reduce congestion and improve public transport accessibility.</p>
<p><u>Objective 7</u> - To improve environmental quality and protect and enhance the distinctive character of the borough. and ensure development is sustainable</p>
<p><u>Objective 8</u> - To meet the challenge of making the best use of urban land while protecting the character of the existing environment.</p>
<p><u>Objective 9</u> - To ensure sufficient provision of social, cultural and recreational facilities.</p>

- 2.21 The Core Strategy sets out the over-arching spatial policies for the whole of Guildford Borough, including a spatial vision and objectives. The **objectives of the Site Allocations DPD** reflect those of the Core Strategy, which it is required to deliver.
- 2.22 In addition to the Plan Objectives of the Core Strategy, **Slyfield Area Action Plan DPD objectives** are concerned with regeneration, resolving traffic problems in the area, and improving the environmental quality of the area. This will involve the reconfiguring of existing uses within the area to include commercial, waste, and housing uses to benefit the whole area. Should the objectives for the Site Allocations or for Slyfield Area Action Plan DPDs be refined, these will be recorded in the individual SA Report for that DPD.

Consultation

- 2.23 This report and its appendices comprise the draft SA Scoping Report Framework 2007. It is a consultation paper, designed to comply with the Regulations of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and Government guidance on SA⁵. These requirements have also informed preparation of the Council's Adopted SCI.
- 2.24 The revised Scoping Report sets out the:
- Relevant policies, plans and programmes, and the sustainability objectives contained within these, which will significantly influence the GDF;
 - Baseline information for Guildford Borough, including time series data showing trends where this is available;
 - Key sustainability (environmental, economic and social) issues identified through consideration of the above;
 - The SA Framework prepared to address these key issues, which will be used to appraise the Site Allocations DPD and the Slyfield Area Action Plan DPD, including the SA objectives and indicators and how they were chosen;
 - Testing of the draft plan objectives of the Core Strategy against this updated SA Framework, as the remaining DPDs need to be consistent with the Core Strategy Objectives;
 - Explanation of the process for assessment of options and appraising effects of the plan, an outline of the proposed level of detail of the SA Reports, and Monitoring.
- 2.25 The consultation takes account of the SA guidance requirement to consult the Environmental Consultation Bodies and other relevant organisations with a for a period of 5 weeks (ending 24th September 2007).

⁵ Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, November 2005)

- 2.26 We are seeking your comments on the scope of the appraisal, relevant plans and programmes and their targets, together with baseline evidence and the key sustainability issues identified. Specific consultation questions are featured after each section of this report, corresponding with those on the attached response form.
- 2.27 In addition to publication on the Council's web-site (www.guildford.gov.uk), giving wider public access to the document, a consultation notification letter, response form and – for key consultees - a copy of this revised Scoping Report will be sent to the four statutory environmental consultation bodies , together with other organisations (concerned with social, environmental and economic issues) which the Local Planning Authority considers appropriate. A full list of consultees is attached at [Appendix 1](#) of this document.

3.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES, PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES (Stage A1)

Introduction

- 3.1 The Government's SA guidance⁶ requires relationships between the LDDs and other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives, particularly the international, European Community, or national level environmental protection objectives, to be taken into account, as these may influence the options which can be considered in preparation of a DPD. The process allows potential synergies to be exploited and any inconsistencies or constraints to be addressed.
- 3.2 This requirement also accords with the SEA Directive, which requires the environmental report to provide information on the plan's 'relationship with other relevant plans and programmes' and 'the environmental protection objectives, established at international, [European] Community or national level' which are relevant to the plan, together with the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the plans preparation.

Methodology

- 3.3 Joint working with other Surrey Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), particularly those in West Surrey (Surrey Heath, Waverley, Woking, Guildford) resulted in the identification of the original list of relevant other policies, plans and programmes. This list was then refined, through further joint working with other Surrey LPAs, and by Guildford Borough officers, to ensure its relevance to Guildford and DPD / SPD documents being prepared now and in the future. Particular account was taken of the plans identified through SA appraisal at other levels of the planning system; for example, regional level SA, through the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF).
- 3.4 Reference has been made to both Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) as appropriate. Draft PPSs are included, given their direct relevance to the GDF. The following Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes have been omitted for the reasons indicated:
- PPG5 – Simplified Planning Zones – Guildford Borough has none.
 - PPG11 – Regional Planning – provides policy formulation advice, rather than national policy.
 - PPG14 – Development of Unstable Land – Guildford Borough has none.
 - PPG18 – Enforcing Planning Control – provides practical advice, no objectives relevant to plan-making
 - PPG20 – Coastal Planning – Guildford Borough has none.
- 3.5 Environmental protection objectives at every level have been listed, in compliance with the SEA Directive. The list is not exhaustive, but rather seeks to identify the key influences, those which will have a bearing on the likely significant effects of the GDF.

⁶ Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, November 2005)

- 3.6 The implications for the SA and for GDF plans arising from the plans and programmes listed were assessed. The results of this assessment are summarised in Figure 5 [Appendix 2](#).
- 3.7 Work on this stage (A1) is ongoing; additional findings and updates, together with revisions following consultees comments on this Report, will be incorporated within the SA undertaken for future GDF documents, commencing with the Issues and Options stage of the Site Allocations DPD followed by Slyfield Area Action Plan. These SA reports will also take on board the outcomes of the compatibility matrices in the Section 7, which compare the objectives of each plan or programme with each other to identify conflicts. The SA will record any conflicts and, where possible, seek to resolve these. For example, one solution may be where it could be determined that one particular document or issue would take precedence over another; prioritisation of key sustainability issues and the associated SA objectives are described in later Section 6.

Consultation Questions for Section 3:

Q1. Are there any further relevant policies, plans and programmes that you consider will significantly affect or influence the DPDs?

Q2. Are the targets and objectives identified correct and comprehensive in your (organisation's) opinion? If not, what others are missing?

Q3. Are all relevant implications for the sustainability appraisal of the Site Allocations and Slyfield Area Action Plan DPDs and SPDs shown? If not, what others should be included?

Q4. Does your organisation have any other comments to make on the Other Plans and Programme review, set out in Section 3.0 and in Appendix 2?

4.0 BASELINE INFORMATION (Stage A2)

Introduction and methodology

- 4.1 Both the SA guidance and the SEA Directive require that the Scoping Report gives information on relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and their likely evolution with and without implementation of the plan, to discern whether the environmental characteristics of the areas are likely to be significantly affected.
- 4.2 Baseline information provides a basis for predicting and monitoring environmental and other effects. Sufficient data must be collected at the survey and evidence gathering stage of DPD preparation about the current and likely future state of the environment to allow the plan's effects to be adequately predicted. These may include, for example, significant cumulative or synergistic effects over time. The baseline data assists in the identification of sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. The baseline information identified for Guildford is set out in Figure 6 Appendix 3, although this appears in this Scoping Report as a snapshot in time, it will be kept up to date throughout the SA preparation process of each LDD. Key issues arising from this information are explained in Section 5 and Appendix 4.
- 4.3 Joint working with other Surrey Local Planning Authorities and with Surrey County Council helped to identify the original set of quantified baseline data for each of the indicators selected. Many helpful additions were gathered through scoping consultations and this work is on-going. Data availability can be a problem. One difficulty is the variance between the Council's need for borough level or more localised (e.g. Slyfield Area) indicator data, and the availability of some information in only aggregated, higher level form. Similarly, some statistics are not available at both national and local level, preventing direct comparison. Where information is awaited or still to be sourced, this is stated as such. Where no data is currently available, proposals for filling these gaps are identified or will be explained in plans for the monitoring and implementation of each DPD.
- 4.4 The main data sources utilised have been the Internet, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council data, and the Census (2001).

Area Descriptions

- 4.5 The following sections provide a characterisation of the Borough as a whole (extracted from the draft Submission Core Strategy), of Guildford Town Centre and of the Slyfield Area Action Plan Area. They draw on the Council's knowledge of the area and the findings of the above-mentioned SA Baseline data.

Guildford Borough

- 4.6 Guildford Borough is situated in the south-western part of Surrey some 30 miles from Central London and 45 miles from the South Coast.
- 4.7 The Borough of Guildford is Surrey's most populous district with a population of approximately 132,800 (Census projection for 2006). The two principal urban areas are the town of Guildford and in the west of the Borough the urban area of Ash and Tongham. The Borough is the second largest district in Surrey, covering approximately 104 square miles (269 square kilometres).

- 4.8 Approximately half the Borough's population live in Guildford Town, a thriving county town with an attractive historic core and a wide range of commercial, retail and leisure facilities. The University of Surrey is located in the town while Guildford Cathedral is a dominant landmark. The town is situated in a valley at a point where the River Wey flows through the North Downs Ridge. This has been a significant influence in the town's historic development.
- 4.9 Ash and Tongham have a population of approximately 17,500 and are mostly residential in character. Ash has a local shopping centre and some small industrial estates.
- 4.10 Outside of the urban areas most of the Borough is designated as Green Belt, or Countryside Beyond the Green Belt. The western border of the borough is designated as Blackwater Valley, a strategic gap preventing the coalescence of the settlements in the valley. The southern and eastern part of the Borough lies within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which with the valley of the Wey, limits the Town's growth to the south. Other sensitive areas include the borough's 16 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI, totalling 2576.09 ha), 140 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), together with Whitmoor Common to the north of Guildford, part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.
- 4.11 The Borough has a rich and varied architectural heritage with 1,200 listed buildings and 38 Conservation Areas.
- 4.12 The countryside of the Borough is extensive and contains a number of villages, isolated areas of housing, long established businesses, farms and woodland. The landscape is generally attractive, and exceptionally so in the south of the District of which the North Downs forms a part.
- 4.13 Both road and rail routes converge at Guildford. Four major roads pass through the Borough. The M25 enters the Borough briefly at Wisley at its junction with the A3. The A3 runs from north to south through the Borough and provides road links to both London and the South Coast. The A31 runs along the top of the Hogs Back and joins with the A331 Blackwater Valley Road at the western end of the Borough. The A25 also runs in an east west direction between Guildford and Reigate. The Borough is well served by rail with direct lines to London, Portsmouth, Reading and Gatwick. The M25, A3 and Town Centre gyratory are congested at peak hours. The Borough is well served by rail, with direct lines to London, Portsmouth, Reading and Gatwick.
- 4.14 The Borough is one of the safest parts of Surrey, which is itself one of the safest Counties in England.
- 4.15 Unemployment in the Borough is 1.0%, which is below the national average of 3.2%. There is, however, a skills shortage in some sectors. The main employment sectors are service and retail.
- 4.16 Guildford is in the main an affluent area. This is reflected in the high house prices (the average house price in Guildford is £324,265 compared to the national average of £194,584) and high car ownership (there are 1.45 cars per household in the borough compared to 1.11 nationally). However, there are pockets of deprivation, and there is lack of affordable housing, particularly for first time buyers and key workers.

Guildford Town Centre

- 4.17 Guildford's town centre has a strong local identity, characterised by a distinctive historic core focussed on the steeply sloping High Street. It contains a wealth of historic buildings and retains a medieval street layout. Within and adjoining the historic core are modern day facilities. Significant buildings include The Castle and the Guildhall, together with more contemporary examples such as the Debenhams and House of Fraser department stores.
- 4.18 Large parts of the town centre have conservation area status and many of the buildings are listed. The River Wey runs to the west of the centre and is a significant recreational and visual resource. It does flood following heavy and prolonged rainfall and development within the floodplain is restricted.
- 4.19 The resident population of the town centre is approximately 2,948. There is a high proportion of young people, 65% are 44 or younger. Flats provide the main type of accommodation, accounting for 72%. 37% of those who live in the Town Centre are single and 43% are living as a couple. There has been a recent increase in new residential development within the Town Centre, with approximately 900 new dwellings approved between 2002 and 2007. House prices in the town centre are high, which has led to an affordable housing problem. Most new developments are in the form of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The average density of new development is 40 dwellings per hectare (2005 / 2006).
- 4.20 There is a low level of unemployment at around 1.0%, which reflects the Borough average. 37% of the Town Centre's population is employed in professional occupations. There are approximately 12,760 jobs in the town centre with approximately 4,000 in both retail and office sectors. The remaining employers are spread between the culture and entertainment, restaurants and, civic and public administration sectors. The Town Centre provides over 100,000 square metres of office floor space.
- 4.21 According to the 2001 Census, 40% of households in the Town Centre do not own a car (compared to the Borough average of 15%). Over a quarter of residents of the Town Centre walk to work. Guildford's main railway and bus stations are located in the town centre. There is a fast train into London Waterloo (journey time 35-40 minutes) and good links to the south west and west.
- 4.22 There are four major approach roads into Guildford town centre linking with a central one-way system. The Town Centre suffers congestion at peak periods, as car usage increases and the town centre continues to be a preferred location for future development. Steps are being taken to alleviate congestion, including decreasing long-stay parking by diverting cars from the Town Centre utilising Park and Ride.
- 4.23 There are 23 public car parks providing 5,000 spaces. Movement into the Town Centre is facilitated by three Park and Ride sites at Spectrum, Artington and Ladymead. A site in Merrow is currently being constructed, with consideration being given to a site to the north. The town centre is included within Controlled Parking Zones.
- 4.24 The main shopping destination in Surrey is Guildford Town Centre which currently has approximately 120,150 square metres of floorspace. The

significant extension of the Friary Centre, which will add a further 24,700 square metres, has planning permission, and is due to start on site imminently.

- 4.25 There is an increasing range of leisure and cultural facilities within the Town Centre, the main attractions being the eight-screen cinema at Bedford Road, and the numerous pubs, clubs, cafes, bars and restaurants. Arts and cultural facilities include the Yvonne Arnaud and Electric Theatres, the town museum, the library and art exhibitions at the Guildford House and Harvey Galleries. Planning permission was recently granted for replacement of the Civic Hall concert hall facility. Surrey County Council has expressed a desire to provide a new library facility to replace the existing library on North Street.
- 4.26 Significant open spaces in the town centre include Racks Close, the Castle Grounds, Foxenden Quarry, Westnye Gardens and the river environs. There are other areas of open space close by which include Stoke Park, the Mount, the Cathedral, Shalford Meadows and Pewley Down.
- 4.27 Places of Worship comprise several churches (including St Saviours, Guildford United Reform, Holy Trinity & St Mary's and St Nicholas' Churches), together with Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Synagogue in York Road and the Quakers Hall. Many further places of worship lie within the surrounding area, including the Cathedral, whilst groups such as the Bah'ai community meet in various locations.
- 4.28 There are a number of education facilities within or just outside the town centre including: Adult Education Centre, Guildford School of Acting, Academy of Contemporary Music, Guildford College, College of Law and the Royal Grammar School.

Slyfield Area Action Plan Area

- 4.29 The area covered by the Action Plan comprises 41.17h. It includes the Council-owned Woking Road Depot, allotments and land allocated in the Local Plan for the Expansion of the Slyfield Industrial Estate, together with the Thames Water sewage treatment works and Surrey County Council's Civic Amenities site (household waste recycling centre). The main uses being considered for the area include housing, a new Council Depot, employment, a new waste facility, open space and allotments.
- 4.30 The Council is working on the Area Action Plan in partnership with the other two landowners, Surrey County Council and Thames Water, initially considering issues and options for the site, with assistance from consultants. Evidence gathering is underway, and includes a traffic and transport appraisal of the implications of different levels of development.

Consultation Questions for Section 4:

Q5. Does your organisation consider that the baseline information collected is relevant and of sufficient detail to support the Site Allocations DPD and the Slyfield Area Action Plan DPD being produced and any other Supplementary Planning Documents to be produced?

Q6. Does your organisation consider that the baseline information collected is accurate? If not, please advise of any correction that should be made.

Q7. Is there any further baseline that should be added? Please explain the type of information your organisation considers should be included, together with its data source(s).

5.0 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES (Stage A3)

Introduction

- 5.1 The SA Framework must highlight any existing sustainability issues (including environmental problems) that are relevant to the being produced. This provides a base of defined key issues from which to develop sustainable objectives and options for the DPD being prepared.

Methodology

- 5.2 A joint working workshop for the original SA scoping work was held in June 2004 in the Surrey town of Esher, attended by Surrey Local Planning Authorities, the County Council, statutory consultees and pressure groups. This workshop identified a series of 33 key sustainability issues within Surrey, which are set out below:

Figure 7 - Surrey-wide key sustainability issues

ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL
Resource management	Supply/use of resources	Local resource availability
Overheated economy	Climate change	Crime and fear of crime
Traffic congestion	Traffic congestion and volume	Overcrowding
Land property costs	Waste management	Awareness of impacts of lifestyle
Labour shortages	Health effects of pollution from traffic	Employment (type, location)
Range of employment (type, location)	Risk to habitats	Cost of housing
Aviation	Aviation	Loss of community
Development pressures	Globalisation impacts	Population structure (dependency)
Dependence on commuting	Low public awareness of issues	Quality of life
Globalisation		Transport (congestion, access to public transport)
		Areas of social deprivation often a focus for bad neighbour uses (e.g. waste facilities)
		Hierarchy and co-ordination of plans
		Public and community engagement
		Sedentary lifestyles

- 5.3 It was however agreed at that meeting that using these three categories (economic, environmental and social) to group issues was not the best approach, recognising that some issues affect all three categories, whilst some issues affect only one category.

- 5.4 Key issues for Guildford Borough have therefore drawn on the output of this workshop, together with officer experience and local knowledge and the outcomes of earlier Council consultations (for the Guildford Borough Community Plan 2003 and, more recently, GDF documents). The primary source of information for the sustainability issues identified, however, has been consideration of the baseline evidence [Appendix 3](#).
- 5.5 The most up to date list of key (and other) sustainability issues is attached at Figure 8 in [Appendix 4](#). The list does not document all of the issues affecting Guildford Borough, rather it highlights the most significant issues which the SA Framework which subsequent appraisals must address. For completeness, information is however provided on additional topics where this helps to make clear the area's status or performance on relevant topics. Unless otherwise stated, the sources of individual figures quoted in Appendix 4 are to be found in the baseline information ([Appendix 3](#)).

Consultation Questions for Section 5:

- Q8.** Does your organisation agree with the key sustainability issues identified for Guildford Borough which are relevant to your area of responsibility / expertise?
- Q9.** If not, what other issues or aspects do you consider should be included?
Are there any that should be excluded?
- Q10.** Does your organisation agree that the objectives, baseline information and key sustainability issues identified provide an appropriate basis for the appraisal of the Site Allocations DPD, the Slyfield Area Action Plan DPD, and future SPDs?

6.0 THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK: OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS (Stage A4)

Introduction

- 6.1 The Government's SA guidance⁷ recommends the development of sustainability objectives, where possible, expressed in the form of targets, with which to appraise draft options of DPDs. The monitoring of a DPD in meeting its sustainability objectives / targets can be measured using selected indicators.

Methodology

- 6.2 A set of draft sustainability objectives (with targets where possible) and indicators for Guildford have been developed, which seek to address the five key themes of sustainable development:
- Living within environmental limits
 - Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
 - Achieving a sustainable economy
 - Using sound science responsibly
 - Promoting good governance
- 6.3 Good practice suggests that the number of objectives should be limited, to ensure that they do not make the SA process of plans and plan options unmanageable. For this reason, an initial wide range of possible objectives was reduced down to 19 objectives. These draft objectives have been devised through information gathered by the review of other plans and programmes, trends in baseline data, joint working with other Surrey Local Planning Authorities, Surrey County Council and the Statutory Consultee Bodies. Further revision continues as the baseline dataset develops over time.
- 6.4 With reference to role played by the plans and programmes review in developing and subsequently refining the objectives, Figure 10 in [Appendix 5](#) shows how the Council's SA objectives relate to those of six significant other plans and strategies: the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF), the SEA Directive and four key more local strategies (Guildford Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy, Community Plan and Local Plan, together with the Structure Plan).
- 6.5 A range of indicators has been selected for each objective, to allow the borough's performance on that issue to be gauged, now and in the future. The latest objectives and indicators are shown together in Figure 9. Following best practice, it is intended that sub-objectives or decision-aiding criteria /questions will be drafted, linking the objectives and indicators and helping to focus the appraisal process within each topic area covered.

⁷ Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, November 2005)

Figure 9: SA Objectives and Indicators

Objectives (targets)	Indicators
<p>1. To provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Housing completions compared with Surrey Structure Plan allocation b) Percentage of affordable housing delivered per year c) Number of families /individuals / households on the Housing Register d) Average property price compared against average earnings e) Number of unfit homes in the borough
<p>2. To facilitate the improved health and well-being of the population, including enabling people to stay independent and reducing inequalities in health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Death rates from circulatory disease, cancer, accidents and suicide b) Infant mortality rates c) Conceptions among girls under 18 d) Average life expectancy e) % of people who describe their health as good /very good f) Number of people on health referral schemes at leisure centres g) Older people helped to live at home per 1000 over 65
<p>3. To reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well being, the economy and the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of properties at risk from flooding b) Number of buildings within the floodplain of the River Wey c) No. or % of new or redevelopments built with sustainable drainage/SUDS installed d) Number of developments built on floodplains within the borough per year/floodplain area (sq m) developed per year
<p>4. To create and maintain safer and more secure communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The number of recorded offences per 1000 people b) Level of domestic burglaries, violent offences against the person and vehicle crimes c) Percentage of residents expressing fear of crime concerns within the borough d) Pedestrian/cyclists – number killed and seriously injured (KSI) e) Road safety – number of children killed and seriously injured (KSI)

<p>5. To reduce poverty and social exclusion for all sectors of the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Proportion of children under 16 living in income deprived households b) Percentage of population of working age who are claiming key benefits c) % of population who are income deprived d) Average score for Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004 e) Proportion of 19 year olds with Level 2 qualifications (5 GCSEs A*-C or NVQ equivalent) f) Percentage of population of working age qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent g) Proportion of adults (16-60) with poor literacy and numeracy skills h) Percentage of all respondents satisfied with the local bus service i) Access to services j) Number of cultural venues offering concessionary pricing schemes k) Number of people using the Active Leisure card scheme l) Percentage of rural respondents satisfied with transport in the borough, including access to town centre
<p>6. To create and sustain vibrant communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of people who say they are satisfied with their local area b) % turnout in elections c) No. of times GBC has consulted the community within the year d) Amount of floor space for community and leisure use e) No. of areas within Guildford that are in the top 20% deprived areas nationally f) Provision of key services in the most accessible locations
<p>7. To make the best use of previously developed land and existing buildings, encouraging sustainable construction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of dwellings and commercial; development built on previously developed land (PDL) b) Average density on sites with 10 or more dwellings c) % of new build and retrofit homes meeting EcoHomes 'very good' or 'excellent' standard and the % of commercial buildings meeting BREEAM 'very good' standard d) No. / % of construction sites recycling building waste on site e) No. of dwellings incorporating grey water/rainwater harvesting

<p>8. To ensure air quality continues to improve and noise/light pollution is reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) No. or % of properties affected by poor air quality b) Road traffic noise reduction rate (LTP) for each Transport Planning Area c) Days when air pollution is moderate or high c) The number of complaints relating to light pollution e) Number of noise pollution incidents recorded f) No. areas of tranquillity within the borough
<p>9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity within the plan area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Population of wild birds b) Number of internationally and nationally important designated wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites)Area of internationally and nationally important designated wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites) damaged d) Extent and condition of habitats for which Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) have been established e) No., area and condition of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within the borough f) Number of characteristic rare species and priority habitats g) Amount, reported condition, reported levels of damage to, extent of active management of ancient woodland h) No. and area of Special Protection Areas (SPA) within the borough i) No. of species occurring in the borough which have a Species Action Plan j) Area of land actively managed for nature conservation k) Conservation limit for salmon rivers l) Area or length of fluvial or estuarine habitat improvement m) Ecological and chemical water quality and extent and condition of river buffer zones n) Area of land newly dedicated to wildlife in new developments o) No. developments with “green” (e.g. sedum) roofs developed in borough p) No. and percentage (of total) new developments with wildlife friendly Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

<p>10. To protect, enhance, and where appropriate make accessible for enjoyment the natural, archaeological and historic environments and cultural assets of Guildford, for the benefit of both residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Level of cultural activity associated with key local attractions e.g. visitor numbers to Guildford Museum, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. b) Number of listed buildings (statutory and locally listed), historic parks and gardens, areas of high archaeological potential and scheduled ancient monuments c) No. of Conservation Area appraisals completed per year d) Number / % of total no. of statutory listed buildings at risk e) Number / % of total no. of statutory listed buildings demolished or removed from the list owing to approved or unauthorised alterations f) Number / % of total no. of scheduled ancient monuments at risk / lost or damaged g) No. of properties open to the public on heritage open days h) Proportion of planning applications with identified potential archaeological impacts, where acceptable archaeological assessment and/or mitigation occurred. i) Level of recreation activity associated with biodiversity (e.g. recorded visit numbers to wildlife reserves, visitor centres, proportion of ancient and non-ancient woodland having public access) j) Achievement of 'Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards' k) Open space and formal recreational facility assessment – total quantity and qualitative scores e.g. square metres of parks and open space per 1000 population.
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<p>11. To reduce road congestion and pollution levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Level of vehicle emissions b) Traffic reduction (LTP target 1 & RTRA target) c) Proportion of travel by mode d) Proportion of major developments located in accessible urban areas (LTP target 6) e) Proportion of schools with current travel plans f) No. of businesses with travel plans g) Length of cycle tracks and no. of cycling trips h) Accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to town centres i) % households with 2 or more cars/vans j) % people who usually travel to work by car or van k) The number of live work units constructed n) % of new housing within 1km of main jobs and service locations o) % of commercial development in locations within 1km of good public transport links p) No. of Park and Ride sites and level of patronage of park and ride/shuttle bus q) No. and value of planning obligation contributions used to fund public transport projects in the borough. r) % of all housing and commercial development built in the most accessible locations, not more than 30 minutes public transport travel time from a town or shopping centre, business park, health facilities or school.
<p>12. To reduce the area of land affected by contamination and safeguard soil quality and quantity (including agricultural land)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Amount of contaminated land remediated to suitable new use b) The number of developments on grade 1, 2 and 3 agricultural land.
<p>13. To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Emissions of greenhouse gases b) Capacity during 'critical periods' to supply water without the need for additional restrictions c) No. of homes damaged as a result of an extreme weather event (flood, drought) d) No. of homes affected by subsidence
<p>14. To reduce the global, social and environmental impact of consumption of resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Area of allotment sites and % occupancy b) No. of businesses producing local produce c) No. of developments using sustainable building techniques d) Recycling on development sites

<p>15. To reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Total amount of untreated municipal waste (MSW) disposed of in landfill b) Total amount of treated waste going to Landfill c) Waste collected per capita d) % of waste recycled e) % of waste composted f) % energy recovery from waste (e.g. through incineration, etc.) g) Amount of secondary recycled aggregates used as % of total.
<p>16. Maintain and improve the water quality of the region's rivers and groundwater, and to achieve sustainable water resources management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % rivers in plan area whose biological/chemical quality is rated as 'good' or 'fair' b) Quality and quantity of groundwater c) Household per capita consumption d) Water resource supply/demand balance e) No. of dwellings incorporating grey water/rainwater harvesting and other water efficiency measures
<p>17. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Energy use per capita b) Improvement in dwelling SAP rating across borough c) No. of homes incorporating CHP heating d) Installed capacity for energy production from renewable sources e) Energy production from locally sourced biomass f) Proportion of existing woodland used for wood fuel g) % of new build and retrofit homes meeting EcoHomes Very Good standard h) % of commercial buildings meeting BREEAM Very Good standard No. of renewable energy/fuel schemes introduced
<p>18. To maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of economically active people that are unemployed b) Proportion of people claiming unemployment benefits who have been out of work for more than a year c) % of population who are income deprived d) % of people of working age that are economically active e) Net change in the number of VAT registrations and deregistrations f) Industrial breakdown of VAT registrations g) Average annual earnings for full time male and females h) No. of persons registered in adult education classes i) Proportion of businesses / business employment based in urban wards and proportion based in rural wards of the borough j) No. of visitor (tourist and business) accommodation beds available within the borough.

<p>19. To provide for appropriate commercial development opportunities to meet the needs of the economy</p>	<p>a) Amount of commercial floor space lost/gained through planning permissions and completions for commercial development</p> <p>b) No. of employment sites lost to other uses</p> <p>c) No. of rural diversification schemes</p> <p>d) No. of bed spaces and bed space occupancy in serviced and self-catering visitor accommodation.</p>
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6.6 The internal compatibility of these objectives was tested. The outcome of this testing is shown in Figure 11.

Key:	✓	Compatible
	x	Incompatible
	-	No Link / Insignificant
	?	Uncertain / Unknown

1																			
2	✓																		
3	x	✓																	
4	-	✓	✓																
5	-	✓	-	-															
6	-	-	-	✓	✓														
7	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓													
8	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-												
9	x	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓											
10	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓										
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-									
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-								
13	x	?	✓	-	-	-	x	✓	✓	-	✓	-							
14	x	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓						
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	?	?	-	-	✓	✓	✓					
16	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-					
17	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓				
18	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-			
19	-	-	-	-	-	✓	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	-	-	-		✓
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

Figure 11: Internal compatibility of sustainability objectives

Figure 12: Explanation of results from Internal SA Compatibility Matrix

Objectives	Relationship	Concerns highlighted
1 and 3	×	Potential exists for conflict between demand for housing land and pressure to avoid floodplain development
1 and 9	×	Potential impacts of increased housing on biodiversity and designated sites (e.g. SPA, SSSI), although compliance with PPS9 will ensure adverse impacts to designated sites are avoided.
1 and 13 1 and 14	×	More housing potentially increases greenhouse gases and demand for water. The Sustainable Development and Construction SPD (adopted December 2005) encourages the use of more sustainable construction methods, in terms of energy and water efficiency and waste minimisation; future iterations of the SPD in light of stronger policies contained in the emerging GDF Core Strategy will help to enforce (rather than just encourage) adherence to such requirements.
2 and 13	?	The impact of climate change upon human health is a grey area of knowledge. More information is required to determine if a ✓ or – relationship exists between these objectives.
7 and 13 7 and 19	×	More development will increase demand for resources. The Sustainable Development and Construction SPD (December 2005) encourages more sustainable construction methods and will be strengthened in the future.
8 and 15 9 and 15	?	Effects of waste management upon air quality and biodiversity are unclear. More information is required before determining if relationships are ✓ - or X. It is noted that English Nature (now Natural England) responded to the original scoping consultation, advising that it shared biodiversity concerns, particularly potential conflicts between effective nature conservation and proposed housing allocations.
14 and 19	×	More commercial development has potential to increase greenhouse gases and demand for resources like water. The Sustainable Development and Construction SPD (December 2005) encourages more sustainable construction methods and will be further strengthened in the future.

Consultation Questions for Section 6:

Q11. Does your organisation agree with the derivation and interpretation of the SA objectives, within the context of Guildford Borough and specifically Site Allocations and Slyfield Area Action Plan DPDs?

Q12. Do you consider that these objectives are consistent with international, European, national, regional, county and local level policy and guidance?

Q13. Should any further objectives be included?
(bearing in mind the need to ensure a manageable number of objectives)

Q14. Are there any objectives which overlap? Could these be combined?

Q15. Should any of the objectives be removed or revised?

Q16. Are the indicators appropriate for the objectives? Should any be removed or revised? Please indicate which.

Q17. Should any additional indicators be added? Please state what these should be.

Q18. Do you consider that the SEA / SA topics accord with the Indicators?

Q19. Is there anything else which you would suggest we do to improve this SA Framework? For example, are you aware of any best practice which we should consider? Or any further SA publications which could be referred to?

7.0 TESTING THE PLAN OBJECTIVES AGAINST THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

- 7.1 The SA Framework in this Scoping Report will be used to appraise two future GDF documents, the Site Allocations DPD and the Slyfield Area Action Plan, as well as other Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 7.2 The draft plan objectives and visions of both DPD documents (which were listed in Section 2) set the context for developing the options in these documents. It is important that the plan objectives conform to sustainability principles and must therefore themselves be tested against the SA Framework. This process was used to help to improve the plan objectives of both documents and the development of their options. Testing the plan objectives against those of the SA Framework also ensures that the plan objectives are consistent with one another. Where conflicts between objectives are highlighted, the Council will need to determine which must be prioritised. At present, however, the order of the objectives does not imply any ranking of importance or significance.
- 7.3 The results of the testing process in for the Core Strategy objectives are set out in the compatibility matrix at Figure 13. It is acknowledged that this process may need to be repeated as Stage B1.

Core Strategy Objectives

- 7.4 The main findings regarding testing of the Core Strategy Preferred Options objectives are:
- ▷ Competing land uses will be an issue – research is nearing completion on a Guildford Borough Employment Needs Assessment and Housing Potential Study, which will inform intelligent prioritisation of land allocations, helping to address this issue.
 - ▷ Sustainable development in the Borough, primarily through intensification of development within and around Guildford Town Centre must be achieved without unacceptable impacts on the historic environment and loss of local character/distinctiveness. Character Area assessment as part of the development of the Town Centre Area Action Plan and Landscape Character Assessments of the whole Borough (including townscape) contribute to baseline evidence, and assist in the assessment of different option impacts (this issue was highlighted by English Heritage during earlier consultation);
 - ▷ Development and growth have implications for the environment and depletion of scarce resources, including land, through both construction and future travel patterns.
 - ▷ Some issues – such as air quality, contaminated land, and human health – fall outside of the control of the Borough Council as LPA. The first two of these examples are however within the remit of the wider Council.
 - ▷ Topic overlap between Core Strategy plan objectives has, in comparison with earlier iterations, been addressed after identification by earlier scoping work.

▷ The plan objectives must be read in the context of the spatial vision and other plan objectives of the Core Strategy document. For example, encouraging new development (e.g. objectives 1 and 3) appears at face value to be contrary to sustainability principles, given the additional resource demands and other adverse environmental impacts involved. However, other plan objectives also support reducing the need to travel by private car and making best use of urban land (e.g. objectives 6 and 8), therefore negating most such concerns.

▷ Furthermore, just because the objectives are compatible or incompatible, this does not mean that the outcomes also have to be; the exercise has therefore identified the areas where the objectives will need to be carefully balanced to ensure consistent sustainable outcomes and, where possible, to achieve win-win situations.

▷ Decision-aiding criteria /questions - a form of sub-objective - will be a useful tool for assessing the extent to which a plan objective meets SA objectives and in determining how to make a plan's objectives more sustainable. Joint-working with other Surrey LPAs has developed a range of such questions, which will be refined to ensure appropriateness to Guildford borough and the SA Framework and which will be used during appraisals.

▷ Sometimes more information is required to determine the relationship between the two sets of objectives. It is anticipated that further development of the baseline data will help to meet these shortfalls.

▷The subjective nature of this test is acknowledged. Accordingly, the conclusions of these matrices must be read in light of this fact.

Slyfield Area Action Plan Objectives

7.5 Objectives for the Slyfield area are regeneration, resolving traffic problems in the area, and improving the environmental quality of the area. This will involve the reconfiguring of existing uses within the area to include commercial, waste, and housing uses to benefit the whole area.

Figure 13 – Compatibility Matrix for Core Strategy Plan Submission Draft Objectives (vertical axis) and the SA Framework (horizontal axis)

1	✓	✓	✗	✓	-	-	✓	✗	✗	-	-	-	✗	✗	-	✗	✗	-	-
2	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	-	✓	✗	✗	-	-	-	✗	✗	-	✗	✗	-	-
3	✗	-	?	-	-	-	✓	✗	✗	-	?	-	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
4	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	-	?	✗	✓	✓
5	✗	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✗	✗
6	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	?	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
8	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	-	✗	✗	✓	✓
9	✗	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	-	✓	✓	-	✗	✗	-	-	?	✓	✓
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

Key:	✓	Compatible
	✗	Incompatible
	-	No Link / Insignificant
	?	Uncertain / Unknown

Consultation Questions for Section 7:

Q20. Does your organisation agree with the methodology used to test the Plan Objectives against the SA Framework?

Q21. Do you agree with the conclusions that have been drawn from this process?
If not, what other issues should be raised?

8.0 FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL STEPS AND CONSULTATIONS

Introduction

- 8.1 Figure 14 below shows the stages that succeed Stages A1-A5, involving application of the final SA Framework to future GDF documents, at each relevant stage, together with subsequent monitoring:

Figure 14 – SA Stages B through to E

STAGE B – Developing and refining options and assessing effects	
B1	Testing the DPD / SPD objectives against the SA Framework
B2	Developing the DPD / SPD options
B3	Predicting the effects of the DPD / SPD
B4	Evaluating the effects of the DPD / SPD
B5	Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
B6	Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPD / SPD
(Output: Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal)	
STAGE C – Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report	
C1	Preparing the SA Report
(Output: Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report)	
STAGE D – Consulting on the Preferred Options of the DPD / on the SPD and SA Report	
D1	Public participation on the Preferred Options of the DPD /draft SPD and the SA Report
D2(i)	Appraising significant changes (DPD only)
D2(ii)	Appraising significant changes resulting from examination representations (DPD only)
D3	Making decisions and providing information
(Consultation on the Final Sustainability Report, Output: Sustainability Statement)	
STAGE E – Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD/SPD	
E1	Finalising aims and methods of monitoring
E2	Responding to adverse effects
(Output: Section in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR))	

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

- 8.2 There will be a number of ways in which Guildford Borough Council could plan to meet the needs of those who live, work or visit in its area. For this reason, an early stage in the production of any DPD is to establish a range of issues and options. These are assessed against the SA Framework and the best / most sustainable options chosen to form part of an Issues and Options paper for public consultation (Stage B1): this process is similar to the testing carried out earlier in this report. The results of this SA are consulted upon at the same time as the Issues and Options DPD itself (Stage B2). Prior to changes in the SA guidance, this took the form of an 'Initial Sustainability

Appraisal Report' incorporating the draft Environment Report required by the SEA Directive. Specific reference is being made in the SA Report where the components of the SEA Directive are met. The development of Options for the DPD proceeds alongside and is integrated with Stage B of the process shown in Figure 14.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

8.3 Stage C involves documentation of the SA process in a SA report, the content of which will follow a structure and level of detail similar to the example set out in Appendix 15 of the Government's SA guidance⁸:

- Clear sign-posting of compliance with the SEA Directive and 'Environmental Report' requirements throughout;
- Non-technical summary and outcomes;
- Appraisal methodology;
- Background;
- Sustainability objectives, baseline and context;
- Plan issues and options;
- Plan policies;
- Implementation.

8.4 Appraisals will follow a format similar to those set out in Appendix 11 of the Government guidance (ibid.). A simplified version is shown below.

Figure 15 – Indicative appraisal matrix, assessment of alternatives against SA objectives

Sustainability Objective	Performance			Commentary /Explanation
	Short term	Medium term	Long term	
1				
⋮				
19				

8.5 Appraisals consider each option as to its likely effects on the current baseline or its contribution towards meeting stated targets. Options will include a 'business as usual' or 'do nothing' option (typically the Local Plan approach). The outcomes from each table can then be compared to inform the selection of a preferred option(s). By examining the outcomes from all of these tables, the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, positive and negative, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary effects can also be assessed. The SA Report will document these considerations.

8.6 The Site Allocations DPD and the Slyfield Area Action Plan DPD are being prepared by the Planning Policy team of Guildford Borough Council. This SA Scoping Report (updated as appropriate, and taking into account relevant consultation responses) and the Initial SA, will inform the development of Issues and Options for these two DPDs. Whilst the SA / SEA Framework has been developed by that team, joint-working opportunities and the advice of external consultants have assisted with quality assurance. It is anticipated that independent consultants will continue to be employed to carry out the

⁸ Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, November 2005)

appraisals themselves. SA assessment will therefore be carried out independently of policy formation.

- 8.7 SA is an iterative process. It is therefore intended that its effectiveness will be monitored by the continued collation of baseline data according to the identified indicators. A monitoring scheme will be developed and detailed in the SA Report(s).

Consultation Questions for Section 8:

Q22. Does your organisation have any comments to make on the proposed methodology or content of the SA Reports for the Site Allocations and Slyfield Area Action Plan DPDs and the Supplementary Planning Documents being developed as part of the GDF?

Q23. Does your organisation collect any data / information that would be helpful to the SA process and monitoring of the GDF's documents?

Q24. Are there any other comments that you would like to make in relation to any aspect of the scoping process and this report?

Thank you for your time in reading this Scoping Report. We would welcome your comments in response to the questions raised through the document.

A response form has been sent to consultees and a copy can also be found on the Council's website at www.guildford.gov.uk.

Should you have any queries, please contact the Principal Planner on 01483 444 464.