
APPENDIX II
SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABILITY
APPRAISAL RESULTS

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL RESULTS

The Strategy

- 1 Policies within the Overall Strategy show a consistent move towards sustainable development. In particular, the policies on the Overall Strategy, Location of Development and Mixed Use indicate a very positive impact on several factors. Policies which aim to protect 'green areas' both between and within settlements scored particularly well on quality of life factors such as open space, health and accessibility (although they could have a slightly negative impact on meeting local housing needs). It is important to ensure that the rest of the Plan is consistent with the policies of this Chapter.

Protecting And Enhancing The Historic And Natural Environment

- 2 As expected, the Environment Policies show a strong overall move towards sustainability. The policies will play an important role in minimising the potential negative impacts of policies in other areas of the Plan which seek to accommodate development.
- 3 Policies of the Chapter which aim to protect important environmental assets show a move towards sustainable development, particularly in terms of natural resources and global sustainability.

Resource Management

- 4 The Resource Management Chapter deals with two aspects of natural resources: their protection (eg. Water Quality) and the implications of their use and management (eg. energy generation and mineral extraction). New policy areas which have an important role to play in sustainable development, such as energy and pollution, have been introduced into this Chapter. This is also balanced by a policy encouraging appropriate mixtures of uses in the Strategy Chapter (Strategy Policy 10).
- 5 As might be expected, the policies which directly seek to protect natural resources have overall positive benefits, particularly on biodiversity and health. The appraisal did highlight the fact that the pollution policy may have a negative impact on accessibility through the separation of land uses. This is recognised in the supporting text where the importance of waste minimisation and other mitigation techniques are highlighted as a means of reducing this potential conflict.
- 6 The other policies of the Chapter seek to facilitate the use and management of natural resources whilst mitigating their potential negative impacts. Because of this, their overall impact could go either way depending on the effectiveness of the mitigation measures. Policy 13 on Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse ensures that temporary negative effects, for example on the landscape, are offset by longer term positive ones once extraction has ceased eg. recreational uses. These policies do score an overall

positive impact on the local economy factor. Because of the location of igneous rock in the Charnwood Forest Area, its extraction is likely to have a more significant impact on the landscape. The policy does mitigate this through setting a strict test for any new quarries and strong measures to minimise any adverse effects.

Accessibility and Transport

- 7 The overall impact of the policies within the Accessibility and Transport Chapter depends very much on whether the policy encourages more sustainable forms of transport or facilitates the immediate 'need' for road transport through improvements to the road network. The policy on airports has several negative impacts.
- 8 Policies which seek to encourage more sustainable forms of transport, such as walking and cycling score well. However, the appraisal highlights the potential negative implications of these policies in terms of equity and equality because these modes of transport are not an option for everyone. These policies are, however, only one part of a wider integrated transport and land-use planning policy framework, which includes other modes of transport that are more accessible for everyone and reduce the need to travel.
- 9 Policies that seek to accommodate road traffic (eg. Policy 8) have several negative impacts, particularly on natural resources, biodiversity and open spaces. However, constructing a bypass may lead to significant environmental and other quality of life benefits for a community. These will have to be balanced against the negative impacts listed above. Because of this the policy was difficult to appraise. The overall impact will vary from scheme to scheme. The policy attempts to balance the environmental and road safety benefits of the scheme against any environmental disbenefits.
- 10 The appraisal raises the issue that the Park and Ride Policy may lead to an increase in 'part' car journeys and have a negative impact on the landscape. However a positive impact on town centres, through reducing the need for centrally located car parks and the amount of traffic, was also identified.

Housing

- 11 The requirement to accommodate 72,500 homes within the Plan Area cannot be achieved without an impact on natural resources. The appraisal has identified the development of this number of homes as having a negative impact on natural resources and a wider impact on global sustainability in terms of biodiversity, movement, energy and air quality. There are, however, positive impacts on the social factors, in particular accessibility, equity and equality, and health.
- 12 It is not only the number of homes which affect the environment but their, form, location and the long term framework under which they exist (such as proximity of facilities, public transport provision and street maintenance). Maximising the number of houses in 'areas of opportunity' such as underused land and buildings, particularly in urban areas, will help mitigate this impact (Strategy Policy 5). Indeed, well designed (Strategy Policy 11) and located developments can lead to environmental improvements rather than environmental degradation and therefore improve people's quality of life, especially if public open space is provided within the development (Environment Policy

- 2). An assessment of the capacity of urban areas to facilitate development has identified 'areas of opportunity' and will reduce the need to allocate land for homes on greenfield sites.
- 13 Policies 2 (Allocation of Greenfield Sites), 3 (The Phasing of New Allocations of Greenfield Housing Land), and 5 (Density) score an overall positive move towards sustainable development as they help to mitigate the negative effects of the quantity of housing that has to be built. The negative impact will be further mitigated through policies in other chapters.
- 14 Policies 4 (Affordable Housing) and 6 (Gypsy Caravan Sites) have a strong positive impact in terms of factors such as equity, health and housing need and negligible impacts on natural resources and global sustainability.

Employment

- 15 The importance of strengthening and diversifying the local economy is a key element of the policies in this Chapter and is reflected in high positive scores for the 'local economy' factor. The provision of a further 110 hectares of employment land will have a significant impact on natural resources and global sustainability. However, as with housing development, it is not only the development itself which has an impact on the environment and quality of life but its form, location and the long term framework under which it exists. Again, directing as much development towards 'areas of opportunity' such as underused land and buildings in appropriate urban locations will help mitigate this impact and can help to regenerate areas (Strategy Policies 2, 5 and 13 and Central Areas and Shopping Policy 1).
- 16 Other policies within the Chapter direct the location of employment development towards areas with a realistic choice of transport (Policies 1 and 3) and priority is given to the re-use of derelict, vacant or underused land (Strategy Policy 5). Policies 5 and 6 seek to protect existing employment land and therefore reduce the need to find new sites. These policies therefore make a positive contribution towards sustainable development.
- 17 There are, however, some employment developments (Storage and Distribution and High Quality Employment Sites) which by their very nature require large sites located away from central areas and are therefore likely to be greenfield. A Regional Storage and Distribution development in particular is likely to have several negative impacts. It would require a large site (probably greenfield) adjacent to the trunk road network, generate freight traffic and have relatively low employment densities. The removal of the need for further High Quality Employment Sites has a positive impact on the regeneration of town centres by encouraging office concentration in central areas.
- 18 Hazardous installations, by their very definition are likely to have a negative impact on natural resources, global sustainability and quality of life factors. These impacts can be mitigated through location and design. There is likely to be a conflict here between accessibility and appropriate location.

Central Areas And Shopping

- 19 This Chapter scores well on the appraisal with a strong overall move towards sustainable development. The emphasis of the Chapter on concentrating retail, leisure, office, residential and cultural facilities in central areas will have several positive benefits, including reducing the need to travel and increasing vitality, safety and security. The removal of the need for further High Quality Employment Sites within the Employment Chapter will assist in achieving these positive impacts in central areas. The Chapter scores particularly well on quality of life, local environment and global sustainability factors.
- 20 The appraisal identifies a need for these policies to be supported by appropriate car parking policies in the Accessibility and Transport Chapter (Policies 7, 8 and 9). The need for open space in central areas is also identified. Existing open spaces are protected by policies elsewhere in the Plan and enhanced where opportunities arise. Open space is not only important for amenity in central areas but can provide areas of permeable ground which will mitigate the impact of extra water run-off caused by the concentration of built development.

Leisure

- 21 The Leisure Policies show an overall move towards sustainability, particularly in terms of factors relating to quality of life and the local environment. In particular, the Chapter shows a strong overall positive impact in terms of health, equity and accessibility. This reflects the priority given to the location of leisure development within central areas.
- 22 The impact of leisure development on several of the natural resources and global sustainability factors could go either way. This will depend very much on location and design, and it is therefore important to ensure that wherever possible these impacts are positive, rather than negative. Other policies of the Plan, particularly in the Strategy, Resource Management and Environment Chapters, will help to achieve this.

