



**South Hams
District Council**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL /
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT of
SOUTH HAMS SHERFORD NEW
COMMUNITY AREA ACTION PLAN
(PREFERRED OPTIONS)**

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

June 2005

Prepared by

enfusion



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SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

for and on behalf of Enfusion Ltd

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**SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY AREA ACTION PLAN PREFERRED
OPTIONS DOCUMENT
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT**

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1.0 SUMMARY AND OUTCOMES

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This Report documents the processes of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan (AAP) as required by planning legislation and Government guidance. SA/SEA assists in promoting more sustainable development through an ongoing dialogue and assessment during the preparation of development planning documents.

Devon County Council (DCC), the Devon Joint Structure Plan Authorities (JSPA) and South Hams District Council (SHDC) have already established the principle of accommodating a new community at Sherford through the Devon Structure Plan, its Examination in Public process and through various other studies since the 1990s, including the recent Enquiry by Design that brought together people and organisations with different views on Sherford. This SA/SEA builds upon the earlier work and considers means by which the new community can be developed in more sustainable ways. The Council commissioned Enfusion to progress the SA work in January 2005.

During early 2005 a scoping process was carried out to help ensure that the SA covered the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the development planning system in South Hams. Relevant plans and programmes were reviewed to develop a wider understanding of the issues and priorities for South Hams, together with a description of the current and predicted social, environmental and economic characteristics of the District. From these studies, the key sustainability problems and issues were identified as affordable housing, local employment, the Sherford new community, high design standards for development, protection of environmental quality, second homes, car usage, and accessibility.

A Sustainability Appraisal Framework was compiled and included Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified. It was proposed to use these Sustainability Objectives to test the draft development plan documents as they were being prepared. This approach and the proposals for testing the development planning process was written up into a SA Scoping Report that was sent to a wide range of organisations and also made available on the Council's website. Comments were invited and received from a number of these organisations; this helped improve the Appraisal Framework.

Each component of the Sherford Area Action Plan was appraised systematically using the Sustainability Objectives. Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made and these were primarily in respect of landscape, land quality, biodiversity and cultural heritage. The majority of the recommendations were progressed within the Preferred Options Document demonstrating that the SA process has genuinely influenced the plan progression. The results of the SA indicate that, on the whole, the AAP

provides a positive and proactive context from which to plan the Sherford New Community.

THE DIFFERENCE THE SA PROCESS HAS MADE

- 1.1 The SA of the Sherford New Community as detailed in this report has effectively been ongoing since the 1990s by Devon County Council and JSPA, (as part of the development of the Structure Plan 1995 – 2011, and subsequently very rigorously for the Structure Plan 2001 – 2016), and since 2001/2002 by South Hams District Council (as part of the Local Plan Review). As detailed in sections 3 and 5 of this report, the assessment of various options as part of the Structure Planning and Local Planning processes have been fundamental to the development of the proposals. The principle of accommodating the new community as well as the preferred location was consequently decided in advance of the SA of the AAP itself.
- 1.2 Subsequently, the Prince's Foundation Enquiry by Design process in 2004 (as detailed in sections 3 and 5 of this report) then contributed significantly to the refinement of the proposals and continuous to do so.
- 1.3 The SA of the Sherford New Community AAP itself focused not on the principle of accommodating a new community at Sherford or the location (since these aspects were already decided), but on the best means by which to accommodate this key component of the Plymouth Principal Urban Area. Section 6 of this report presents a summary of the findings of the SA, including recommendations to improve the performance of the AAP Preferred Options document with respect to sustainability. The AAP Preferred Options document was modified accordingly, as detailed in Appendix VI and summarised in section 6 of this report.

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE REPORT

- 1.4 If you have any comments on the SA and SEA of the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan Preferred Options document we would be grateful to receive them. Your views are important and the Council needs to receive them by 5pm on the 5th August 2005. Comments should be sent to the Forward Planning Team by post, fax or e-mail.
 - Post: to the Forward Planning Team, South Hams District Council, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes TQ9 5NE
 - Fax: marked Forward Planning, SA/SEA Report of the Sherford New Community AAP Preferred Options to 01803 861404
 - E-mail to: forward.planning@southhams.gov.uk

2.0 BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF THE SA AND THE SA REPORT

- 2.1 In accordance with the Planning Act (2004)¹, Local Development Documents (LDDs) must be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process assists Local Authorities to fulfil the requirement of “*contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development*” in spatial and land use plan making.
- 2.2 In preparing LDDs, Local Authorities are also required to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European and UK legislation.^{2&3} The UK Government has prepared draft SA Guidance⁴ on undertaking SA of LDFs. This advises that an integrated approach to SA and SEA should be pursued, so that the SA process incorporates the SEA requirements. This involves extending the breadth of (predominantly environmental) issues required to be considered under SEA to cover the full range of aspects (including social and economic aspects) for sustainability. The draft SA guidance has recently been updated by Interim Advice Note⁵.
- 2.3 SA assists in promoting sustainable development through integrating sustainability considerations into plan making. It is an iterative, ongoing process and integral to plan making. SEA considers the effects of the emerging LDDs on the environment. It must predict and evaluate the significant effects of Plan alternatives and propose measures to offset any adverse effects identified. SA/SEA also includes measures to monitor the sustainability impacts of the LDF during its implementation.
- 2.4 This is the SA Report which documents the SA and SEA process. It is being published for consultation with the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan Preferred Options document in accordance with SEA Regulations and SA Guidance. Further information regarding what an SA Report is required to include is presented in section 2.8.

SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY AREA ACTION PLAN CONTENTS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.5 The contents and the objectives of the draft version of the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan (AAP) Preferred Options document are set out below. The content of the AAP which has comprised the focus of the appraisal is outlined in or alongside the relevant appraisal matrices in Appendix V. However, this report should be read in conjunction with the AAP itself, which provides additional detail regarding the AAP content.

¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

² EU directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes

³ Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI No 1633)

⁴ SA of RSSs and LDFs Consultation Paper (September 2004)

⁵ SA of RSSs and LDFs Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions (April 2005)

2.6 Contents

- Introduction
- History
- Cross Boundary Issues
- Location
- Vision
- Objectives
- Development Principles
- Sherford Proposals
- Design
- Delivery
- Monitoring
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Consultation & Community Involvement Arrangements

2.7 Objectives

Strategic objectives

- Comprehensive development according to an agreed masterplan.
- A high degree of self sufficiency for the development.
- A balanced mixed use development.
- To help meet the strategic requirements for housing in the Plymouth Principal Urban Area (PUA).

Design objectives

- High quality, locally distinctive, sustainable development.
- An attractive, well designed environment that promotes health and safety.
- A strong sense of place and belonging.
- Legible urban fabric with distinct places, spaces and localities, each having their own identity and character.

Community objectives

- A full range of facilities for community welfare and self sufficiency.
- Early provision of local services and facilities in phase with development and at locations accessible by sustainable transport.
- Sustainable development to encourage sustainable lifestyles.
- Sustainable healthy lifestyles supported by information and education
- Strong community identity and spirit encouraging individual participation in community life.
- Provide for recreational use and enjoyment in and around the development.
- An attractive and clean environment with safe public spaces, places and routes.

Housing objectives

- Providing affordable homes to meet the needs of local people from within Plymouth and the South Hams.
- Mixed type, mixed tenure housing development in mixed use areas.

- Provide for housing at the highest density suitable for each part of the site.
- Creation of different housing and character areas throughout the site providing for different and varying design/density themes.
- Flexible housing designs to accommodate lifetime housing requirements including disabled access and adaptable spaces.

Business objectives

- Creation of a sustainable local economy – including maximisation of use of local suppliers, labour and resources and maximising the opportunities for local economic multipliers (i.e. spending money locally)
- Business growth and development to aid self-sufficiency
- Provide life-long learning and training opportunities within the development.
- Creation of a variety of opportunities for business space commensurate with development alongside housing and the need for design excellence.

Transport objectives

- A sustainable transport network, within and beyond the new community, supporting sustainable patterns of movement and favouring the pedestrian, cyclist and public transport.
- High quality, high capacity public transport links to, from and through the new community, commencing from the outset of development.
- Distribution of centres, facilities and public transport stops to deliver walkability and convenient access.
- Access for all including those with disabilities.

Environment objectives

- Development to be environmentally sustainable through the minimisation of non-renewable resource usage; maximising the utilisation of renewable resources (including energy); reducing demand for energy and water; minimisation of waste and pollution.
- Design of the development to enhance and protect the local and global environment, in particular by minimising CO₂ production at every stage and in every process of development and operation.
- Development that respects its location and is compatible with the sustainable management of land, soil and water.
- Respect and respond to the landscape and topography of the site.
- Conserve and enhance the quality of the local countryside.
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity – species and habitats.
- Conserve and enhance local historic and archaeological features

COMPLIANCE WITH THE SEA DIRECTIVE/REGULATIONS

- 2.8 The SEA Regulations set out certain requirements for reporting the SEA process, and specifies that if an integrated appraisal is undertaken (ie SEA is subsumed within the SA process, as for the SA of this AAP), then the sections of the SA Report that meet the requirements set out for reporting the SEA

process must be clearly signposted. Consequently the requirements for reporting the SEA process are set out below, and the section of the report that progresses each requirement indicated.

(i) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans

Section 2 of this report sets out the contents and main objectives of the AAP. The relationship with other relevant plans is summarised in Section 4 and Appendix 1 of this report.

(ii) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan

Section 4 of this report summarises the relevant baseline conditions for sustainability (including the state of relevant environmental aspects) in the South Hams. Appendix 2 sets out this information in more detail. The likely evolution of current conditions ('trends') are also summarised in Section 4 and detailed in Appendix 2 where available.

(iii) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected

Clearly, the proposed location for Sherford New Community will be significantly affected. In addition to the baseline information collated for the District, information relating to the characteristics of the proposed location has been used to undertake the SA. This additional information is detailed in Section 4.

(iv) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance

Section 4 of this report summarises existing sustainability problems (including environmental problems) for the South Hams.

(v) The environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation

Appendix 1 of this report provides the summary of relevant Plans and Programmes listed relevant objectives for sustainability in the South Hams (including environmental objectives), and the implications of these objectives for the LDF.

(vi) The likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic,

short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

The SA Framework of objectives presented in Section 4 of this report shows which of the issues listed by the SEA Regulations are progressed by which SA objectives. This assures that all of the issues are considered during the assessment of the AAP, since the AAP proposals have been assessed against each SA objective. The likely effects of the Sherford New Community (including environmental effects) have been considered thoroughly at various stages during the emergence of the Sherford proposals – as detailed in section 3 and 5. The likely effects of the AAP proposal are detailed in sections 6 of this report.

(vii) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan

Where significant adverse effects, including environmental effects, have been predicted, at each stage in the consideration and emergence of the Sherford proposals, the potential to resolve them has been considered as detailed in section 3 and 5 of this report. The SA of the AAP proposals has also sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. These are provided in the form of recommendations in the appraisal matrices (Appendix V) and summarised in sections 6 of this Report.

(viii) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information

A description of alternatives considered, relevant to the Sherford New Community, at various stages and policy levels is provided in Section 5, along with details of how the assessment was undertaken.

(ix) A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring

Measures envisaged concerning the monitoring of the sustainability effects (including environmental effects) of implementing the AAP are provided in Section 7 of this Report.

(x) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings

The non-technical summary is set out at the beginning of this report in Section 1.

3.0 APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Previous work to identify issues of relevance for the SA of a proposal for a new community at Sherford has been undertaken by South Hams District Council since 2001/2002, and by Devon County Council since the 1990s, as follows:

Devon Structure Plan 1995 - 2011

- 3.2 The requirement for a New Community (to include 3500 dwellings and supporting infrastructure) mainly in South Hams District first arose in Devon County Council's Devon Structure Plan First Review 1995-2001. This was adopted in February 1999 after its Examination in Public (EIP) in autumn 1997. The EIP Panel Report (January 1998) briefly considered the need for a balanced and sustainable community and some of the environmental implications.

South Hams Local Plan Review 2002

- 3.3 A 'Sustainability Appraisal: Trial of Proposed Methodology' was undertaken for the South Hams Local Plan Review Deposit Draft, and published for consultation in January 2002. This also included brief reference to the requirement for the new community in South Hams and pointed to the opportunities for ensuring a sustainable development in the Local Plan process.
- 3.4 In line with the adopted Devon Structure Plan 1999, the Council's South Hams Local Plan Review Deposit Draft (January 2002) proposed a new community at Sherford of 3500 homes in the form of four linked villages (West Sherford, Wiverton, East Sherford, Chittleburn), with associated employment, retail, local centres, education facilities, transport links, a park & ride, and open spaces.
- 3.5 Two draft Supplementary Planning Guidance documents 'Guidance and Requirements for Sustainable Development on Large Sites' and 'Building Communities' considered sustainability objectives and the requirements for essential infrastructure arising from the draft proposals.
- 3.6 The 'Sherford Draft Concept Statement: Consultation Draft, January 2002', accompanying the draft Local Plan, described how the new community might be developed using a Countryside Character approach. It also assessed and described issues arising from the proposals including the landscape context, environmental capital, general development principles and requirements for community facilities, and identified a number of 'sustainability indicators' for the Draft Local Plan proposals. It is understood that the proposals for the new community in the Draft Local Plan generated significant objections from the public.

Devon Structure Plan 2001 - 2016

- 3.7 Subsequently, sustainability and environmental issues arising from the new community proposals were again reviewed during the preparation of the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016, and its EiP in summer 2003.
- 3.8 The need for and potential location for a new community in South Hams at Sherford was examined fully at the Devon Structure Plan Examination In Public (Summer 2003) and in far more detail than is usual in the context of a Structure Plan Examination. An assessment of alternative options for the development of urban extensions to the Plymouth Principal Urban Area within Devon⁶ was prepared by the Joint Structure Plan Authorities (JSPA), building on the work undertaken in preparing the Structure Plan background papers in July 2002. This comparison focussed on a number of key strategic criteria to compare strategic alternative locations for a new community including at Sherford:
- Impact on the landscape
 - Physical and other constraints
 - Effective links to urban transport networks
 - Access to Strategic road and rail networks
 - Accessing employment and other facilities
 - Realising the potential for sustainable transport development and modal choice
 - Delivering self containment and local facility provision
 - Effective implementation and longer term development potential
- 3.9 The study looked at six potential development sites on the edge of Plymouth:
- to the north: the areas of Tamerton and Woolwell;
 - to the north east of Plympton: the areas of Boringdon and Newnham;
 - to the east: the areas of Lee Mill (between Plymouth and Ivybridge) and at Plympton/Plymstock (Sherford).
- 3.10 The study's conclusion was that the Sherford area offered the most appropriate location for achieving sustainable strategic development at Plymouth in the period up to 2016.
- 3.11 The EIP Panel reviewed the proposal for the new community at Sherford through a sequential approach set out in PPG3, and considered sustainable transport issues and the effects of the new community on the environment. The EiP Panel Report (October 2003⁷) referred to the findings of the site appraisal prepared by the scheme promoters⁸ ('PD1') which examined the

⁶ Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016, Deposit Draft (July 2002): Addendum to Background Paper 1 (May 2003): Assessment of locations for urban extensions to the Plymouth PUA. Available at http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/devon_county_structure_plan/structure_plan_2001_to_2016.htm in *Background Papers (May 2003)*

⁷ Available at <http://www.devon.gov.uk/devonprchapter8sherford.pdf>

⁸ Devon Structure Plan Examination in Public 2003 Part B – Participants Documents – PD1: The Sherford Valley – A Sustainable New Community for the South Hams ('PD1'): a joint submission from SHDC, Plymouth CC, other statutory authorities and site landowners as a background paper to the Devon Structure Plan EiP in summer 2003

potential for development in the Sherford valley, reviewed environmental and other constraints, the principles and opportunities for a sustainable urban extension, and included a capacity analysis of the valley to accommodate development based on topographical characteristics. The PD1 report included baseline information on environmental conditions in the Sherford valley which was reviewed for this SA. The EiP Panel Report restated the need for a new community at Sherford with an increased scale of development to at least 4000 dwellings.

- 3.12 The Devon Structure Plan, adopted in October 2004, followed the EiP Panel Report in restating the new community proposal as Proposal ST8, requiring at least 4000 dwellings up to 2016, supported by employment land, a range of community and other facilities, and a public transport system.
- 3.13 A Sustainability Appraisal Framework was developed and used by South Hams District Council during 2004 to carry out a Draft Sustainability Appraisal of the issues and options for the Core Strategy, Core Policies and Town & Village site specific allocations (October 2004), which briefly referred to issues arising from the new community proposals.

Enquiry by Design

- 3.14 In light of the Structure Plan's confirmation of Sherford as the location for the new community around Plymouth, objections received on the 2002 Local Plan Review proposals, and the differing forms of development being promoted by the local authorities and scheme promoters, South Hams District Council engaged the Princes Foundation to undertake an Enquiry By Design (EbD) process to facilitate a coherent vision for the new community at Sherford. The EbD investigated the new community site and its potential for development, and considered a range of sustainability and environmental issues. The EbD process involved a series of workshops and technical briefings in July, September and October 2004, attended by officers of the local authorities, statutory authorities, by developers and landowners, and by local community groups, and led to the preparation of a Summary Report (October 2004). Section 6 of the Summary Report identified Community, Environmental and Economic issues which required further study regarding their sustainability.
- 3.15 The Summary Report also included the following considerations of relevance to the AAP:
- identified principles for the design of the new community, many of which are taken forward in the Draft Preferred Options AAP;
 - rejection of the option for development along the A379 in the southernmost part of the new community proposal promoted in the South Hams Draft Local Plan 2002 (the 'Chittleburn Option');
 - options for public transport routes and options for the primary links to the surrounding road network, including several options for linkage to the A379 to the south;
 - potential transport interchange sites, cycle routes, and proposals for a community park to define the eastern and southern boundaries of development;

- key land uses for the new community, including potential school and employment requirements;
- a masterplan for the new community as the result of the EbD process;
- potential phasing strategy for the development.

3.16 The Council subsequently endorsed the outcome of the EbD, and took forward the principles established there to the Draft AAP.

Plymouth City Council's Draft Local Development Framework

3.17 As the Sherford new community proposal in the Devon Structure Plan straddles the South Hams boundary with the City of Plymouth, sustainability and environmental appraisal work undertaken by Plymouth City Council is also of key relevance to this SA. Plymouth City Council's 'Local Development Framework: Area Action Plans: 16 Cross Border Issues (Sherford and Minerals), March 2005' is part of the first stage in preparing the City Council's LDF. The document identifies issues and opportunities of relevance, a 'vision' (with accompanying diagram showing the broad location of development) for a sustainable linked community to define the eastern extent of Plymouth. It considers options to deliver the vision, including:

- Options for direction of future growth;
- Transport infrastructure options;
- Linkages with Elburton and Plympton;
- Linkages with Langage employment area;
- Options for future minerals extraction;
- Greenscape links and country park opportunity.

3.18 The Cross-Border Issues paper was itself subject to a Preliminary Sustainability Appraisal (March 2005), which appraised the various policies, actions and draft policies contained in the paper against 16 sustainability criteria.

3.19 To contribute towards a collaborative approach, the work undertaken above by the local authorities has since been used to inform the preparation of South Hams District Council's Draft Preferred Options AAP for the Sherford New Community. Plymouth City Council will be publishing the North Plymstock Area Action Plan – Preferred Options, in July 2005, and this document will, amongst other things, deal with those elements of Sherford that lie within the City boundary. Both this document and South Hams District Council's Sherford AAP have been prepared in close consultation and will share a common cross border strategy diagram.

APPRAISING THE SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY DRAFT PREFERRED OPTIONS AREA ACTION PLAN

Scoping the Key Sustainability Issues

3.20 Enfusion Ltd was commissioned in January 2005 by South Hams District Council to progress the SA work. A Scoping process was undertaken during early 2005 to help ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that

are relevant to the development planning system in the South Hams. This included the development of an SA Framework of objectives (presented in section 4) to comprise the basis for appraisal. A Scoping Report was prepared to summarise the findings of the Scoping process. This was published in April 2005 for consultation with stakeholders. The Report is also available on the Council's website.

Appraising the Sherford Preferred Options AAP

- 3.21 Relevant planning policy documents and previous reports on sustainability and environmental issues at Sherford (as described in paragraphs 3.1-3.18) were obtained and reviewed for relevant information concerning the planning context, alternative options considered, information on baseline conditions, and likely impacts on sustainability objectives and the environment. Additional baseline environmental information and clarification on certain issues was also obtained from the Council and briefly reviewed, including a report of ecological surveys (December 2004) being undertaken as part of the EIA for a future outline planning application. This baseline information is summarised in section 4.
- 3.22 The sustainability effects of alternative options for Sherford were considered as part of the Structure Planning process and the Enquiry by Design process, as described in Section 5 of this report.
- 3.23 The appraisal of the content of the Preferred Options Area Action Plan was then undertaken by Enfusion. Systematic appraisal of the Area Action Plan objectives and proposal was progressed using matrices to record the likely sustainability effects of the objective or component of the proposal against each objective in the SA Framework.
- 3.24 The SA of the Draft Preferred Options AAP was carried out in May/June 2005 by Enfusion. An 'initial draft' AAP (not including the Council's main Proposal for the New Community or the Key Diagram but containing the supporting explanatory text of the proposal) was provided by SHDC on 27th May 2005. This was initially reviewed and its objectives were subject to SA. A more complete working draft AAP was provided by SHDC on 9th June 2005, which contained the draft Proposal and Key Diagram. This version of the AAP was subject to detailed appraisal of the Objectives, main Proposal and Key Diagram. Minor modifications to the text and the Proposal were made subsequent to this version of the AAP, following further consultations with Plymouth City Council (to ensure comprehensive joint cross border working and compatibility of approach), as well as to take account of SA recommendations.
- 3.25 The various component parts of the draft Preferred Options Proposal (including draft Key Diagram) for the New Community included in the 9th June Draft AAP were distilled into appropriate forms of words and appraised for the SA/SEA. Each of the component parts of the draft Proposal was appraised against each of the established SA Objectives, deriving a matrix for each part. These matrices are presented in Appendix V, with a summary of findings in Section 6.

- 3.26 This Report is prepared for publication with the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan Preferred Options document on 24th June 2005, in accordance with the requirements for SA and SEA.

SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Previous Consultation

- 3.27 As described in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.13, the principle of accommodating a new community at Sherford has been subject to extensive public consultation as part of the preparation of the Devon Structure Plan, and in particular the exceptionally rigorous and thorough Examination in Public during Summer 2003. This process considered more than just the principle of accommodating a new community, but went on to consider the effects (including environmental, social and economic effects) of strategic choices for the location of the new community. All of these options were discussed in public, with input from stakeholders and interested members of the public.
- 3.28 The Enquiry by Design (EbD) process, as described in paragraphs 3.13 – 3.16 is an innovative and effective way of bringing together stakeholders with differing views on a proposal and seeking a way forward. It is an approach that has proved successful elsewhere in the Country on controversial development schemes and is recognised and supported by Government. The Sherford EbD process comprised a series of workshops and technical briefings in July, September and October 2004. The key aim was to develop the preferred approach in collaboration with stakeholders and representatives of community groups and other interest groups – including campaign groups. The workshops were attended by officers of the local authorities, statutory authorities, by developers and landowners, and by local community groups. A further workshop has been held involving the above groups in April 2005 and further EbD workshops are planned, including one during the 6 week consultation period on the Preferred Options AAP.
- 3.29 Other opportunities to comment on the emerging proposals for Sherford have included South Hams Council's consultation on the Sherford New Community Issues and Preferred Options (published in October 2004), and Plymouth City Council's consultation on the 'Local Development Framework: Area Action Plans: 16 Cross Border Issues' (published in March 2005).

Scoping Consultation

- 3.30 As part of the SA of the AAP, the SEA Regulations and SA Guidance require that consultation on the scope of the SA should be undertaken with the four statutory SEA consultees (Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, Environment Agency). It was decided to consult with stakeholders more widely than statutorily required, in order to broaden the predominantly environmental focus of the statutory consultees to reflect the full remit for sustainability. The following stakeholders were consulted:

- Caradon District Council
- Countryside Agency
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Defra
- Devon County Council
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- Enterprise South Devon
- Environment Agency
- Government Office for the South West
- Job Centre Plus
- Learning & Skills Council Devon & Cornwall
- Plymouth County Council
- Scott Wilson Ltd
- South Hams Council for Voluntary Service
- South & West Devon Primary Care Trust
- South West Regional Assembly
- South West Regional Development Agency
- South West Water
- Teignbridge District Council
- Torbay Council
- Tor Homes
- West Devon District Council

3.31 The aim of the Scoping consultation was to ensure that all the relevant issues were identified and discussed at an early stage of the process so that they could then be addressed during the SA and plan making. The Scoping Report included a series of questions asking consultees to comment on particular aspects of the information, including the proposed SA Framework of sustainability objectives, and potential Sustainability Indicators and Targets.

3.32 The Scoping Report was sent to the relevant stakeholders, and was available for consultation for a period of five weeks (21 April to 26 May 2005).

3.33 The following stakeholders responded to the Scoping Consultation:

- English Nature
- English Heritage
- South West Regional Development Agency
- Scott Wilson Ltd

3.34 A Summary of the responses received to the Scoping Consultation, and the response and/or action progressed to address the comments is provided in Appendix 3. Stakeholders made suggestions relating to indicators for monitoring the sustainability effects of implementing the LDF, which have been taken into account in Section 7 of this report. A small number of changes were also made to the SA Framework of objectives and decision aiding questions, as set out below. (The development and purpose of this Framework is described in Section 4 along with the Framework itself).

3.35 Objective 10 (Biodiversity)

- Amend decision aiding question 4 as follows:

Protect and enhance those species and habitats identified in the Devon BAP
and the National BAP

- Additional decision aiding question as follows:

**Protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Coastline, including
estuaries**

3.36 Objective 11 (Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage)

- Amended objective as follows:

Protect and enhance **historic** and cultural resources

Preferred Options Consultation

- 3.37 This SA Report is being published for public consultation along with the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan, in accordance with SEA Regulations and SA Guidance. It will be published on the Council's website (www.southhams.gov.uk) and sent to the statutory consultees and the wider group who were consulted on the SA Scoping Report.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 This section summarises the findings of the SA Scoping process. The Scoping process helps to ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the development planning system in the South Hams. Plans, programmes, relevant baseline information, sustainability issues and problems relevant to South Hams district are summarised in the first instance. Additional baseline information relevant to the proposed location for Sherford New Community is then outlined.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

Introduction

- 4.2 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA of the Community Strategy and LDF it is necessary (and a requirement of SEA) to review and develop an understanding of the wider range of policies, plans and strategies that are relevant to the Community Strategy and LDF. This includes International, EU, National, Regional and local level policies, plans and strategies. Whilst this review of plans and programmes is not formally required for the SA of the Community Strategy, the review can still be drawn upon to assist in the establishment of priorities so that they can be addressed in the preparation of the Community Strategy.

Methodology

- 4.3 A list of relevant plans and programmes (PPs) for the SA was compiled and for each PP, objectives and issues relevant to the SA, Community Strategy and LDF processes were identified. In order to avoid repetition and duplication, and to accommodate the tight timescale required by the Local Development Scheme (LDS), the review of PPs undertaken at the regional level (for the SA of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy) has been drawn upon. This is in accordance with advice from the SW Regional Assembly⁹. This regional PP review can be found on the SW Regional Assembly's Website (http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/swra/ourwork/RSS/RSS_index.shtml).
- 4.4 Thus the PP review for the South Hams SA was able to focus upon County and Local PPs. Information obtained for each PP included title, date, publishing organisation, and objectives or requirements relevant to South Hams. Consideration was given to any key constraints, opportunities, challenges or synergies to help identify potential implications for the Community Strategy and LDF and SA/SEA processes. The review of relevant PPs is set out in Appendix 1.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- 4.5 Key issues and opportunities identified for South Hams from the review of relevant plans and programmes (PP) include:

⁹ letter from Director, Policy & Planning, SWRA to all SW Local Authorities 31 January 2005

- provision of a range of affordable housing to meet local needs
- development of year-round prosperity and raising wage levels by encouraging local businesses, employment and lifelong learning opportunities.
- regeneration of towns, villages and hinterlands to support viable sustainable communities
- protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment, local distinctiveness, cultural and historical heritage
- Sherford new community in the Plymouth Sub-Region
- promotion of good design and quality developments with most developments concentrated in and around main towns and large villages
- adhering to the waste hierarchy and maximising recycling
- developing sustainable green tourism
- promoting sustainable travel and access to services and facilities
- reducing the fear of crime
- enhancing the diversity of the District's wildlife habitats and species
- taking full account of the purposes of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Park designations
- maintaining the high-quality undeveloped coastal landscape
- protecting the natural beauty and functioning of South Ham's estuaries including the River Dart estuary, Kingsbridge estuary (also designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest) and Yealm estuary (also a candidate Special Area of Conservation)

- 4.6 The findings of this review of relevant plans and programmes has informed Section 4 of this report (sustainability problems, objectives and key issues) which provides a summary of how the LDF can progress the identified issues, and will be drawn upon during the assessment of effects.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS AND THE PREDICTED FUTURE BASELINE

Introduction

- 4.7 Collection of baseline information is fundamental to the SA process to provide a background to, and evidence base, for identifying both sustainability problems in South Hams and alternative ways of dealing with them, developing the SA Framework, and providing the basis for predicting and monitoring effects of the plans. In order to assess how the Community Strategy and policies of the LDF can contribute to sustainable development it is essential to understand the economic, environmental and social circumstances in South Hams today and their likely evolution in the future. This is also required under the SEA legislation. The aim is to collect only relevant and sufficient data on the present and future state of the plan area (i.e. South Hams District) to allow the potential effects of the plan to be adequately predicted.

- 4.8 The draft SA Guidance proposes a practical approach to data collection, recognising that information may not yet be available now, and that information gaps for future improvements should be reported as well as the need to consider uncertainties in data. Collection of baseline information should be continuous as the SA process guides plan making and as new information becomes available.

Methodology

- 4.9 Information was compiled from a variety of sources, including relevant PPs and National, Regional, County and Local datasets and resources. Although data had been collected during the preliminary SA work in October 2004, to assist and update the baseline review, information requests were sent to the following:
- Environment Agency
 - Countryside Agency
 - English Nature
 - English Heritage
 - South West Regional Development Agency
 - South and West Devon Primary Care Trust
 - South Hams Council for Voluntary Service
 - Learning and Skills, Devon and Cornwall
 - Job Centre Plus
 - Enterprise South Devon
 - Local Service Group, Devon County Council
 - Tor Homes
 - South Hams District Council Departments
- 4.10 The baseline information has been compiled into a table under each of the topics listed in the SEA Regulations (under Schedule 2 Information for Environmental Reports) in order to demonstrate legislative compliance. The table (shown in Appendix II) contains the following information:
- The type of information, i.e. the subject
 - Data source - indication of source reliability
 - The current local situation - to assess against comparators or targets, where available.
 - Comparators or thresholds and targets - a point of reference to which local data may be compared, how far is the current situation from established thresholds and targets.
 - Local trends – to assist in the prediction of the likely future state of the plan area and whether a particular situation is improving or worsening.
 - Issues - identification of potential positive/negative issues for sustainability, including sensitivity/importance; reversibility/permanence; ability to offset/remedy; cumulative/synergistic effects.
 - Any relevant comments about the data itself.

Summary of Information Collected and Reviewed

- 4.11 Key information collated in relation to social, economic and environmental issues are presented below with some examples to illustrate the characteristics of South Hams.
- 4.12 Social trends include:
- *Population* including distribution, age structure, ethnicity, religion: for example, the South Hams population has increased by 5.5% between 1991 and 2001, particularly to due to immigration; the average age in the District is 4 years above that of England and Wales (2001)
 - *Human health*, including cancer, circulatory disease, road accidents: for example, the percentage of residents describing their health as good was above the national average; the number of deaths from cancer and circulatory disease in South Hams is lower than the national average.
 - *Education and training* e.g. number of students/schoolchildren, qualifications and unauthorised absences: for example, fewer of the resident population (aged 16 to 74) in South Hams have no qualifications compared to the national average, whilst more are qualified to degree level or higher.
 - *Housing*, including dwelling provision, average house price, affordable housing, homelessness, housing construction, second homes: for example, South Hams has the highest number of second homes in England apart from the Isles of Scilly, with 11% of homes in South Hams being second homes (compared with 6.7% in Devon County, in 2001); the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in priority need has increased by over 100% since 1998. Also, the proportion of households unable to purchase in the lower quartile in South Hams is 80.5% compared to the national average of 32.5% (2004). The net shortfall for affordable housing in South Hams has been identified as 330 dwellings per year (2002).
 - *Crime*, such as notable offences, types of crime and fear of crime: for example, notable offences and types of crime compared to national averages are low, as is the fear of burglary (despite PP objectives identifying the need to reduce the fear of crime).
- 4.13 Economic trends include:
- *Employment statistics*, benefits, average incomes and weekly earnings: for example, average earnings are lower than the national average; house prices were approximately 10 times the average local wage in 2003.
 - *Employment land provision, employment structure and sector employment and activities*: for example, South Hams is an area of European Objective 2 Status and is receiving Regional Assistance to create or safeguard jobs.
- 4.14 Environmental information was collected for a wide number of topics including those required by the SEA Directive and Regulations. These topics included *air quality, climate, water, biodiversity, landscape, land use, cultural/built heritage, geology, soils, waste, transport and their*

interrelationships (human health and population were also considered, see Section 3.5). For example, South Hams has increased its compliance with the Bathing Water Directive since 1999. South Hams contains a number of SACs, 29 SSSIs and over 500 County and Local Wildlife Sites, as well as containing over 300 sq km of AONB and 165 sq km of Dartmoor National Park. The District contains significant numbers of Listed Buildings (3463 in 2003), as well as 52 Conservation Areas, many Scheduled Monuments, historic parks and gardens, and 46 County Geological Sites. Within South Hams recycling rates are increasing with 62% of households on Household Recycling Schemes. Forecasts of growths in the number of cars per household and car trip generation in South Hams are greater than those for Devon with this comparison being reflected in the percent of households with two or more cars or vans (2001).

- 4.15 The SEA Directive requires identification of "*the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme*". Prediction of future trends can be highly uncertain but key trends identified from the available baseline data, and therefore potential sustainability issues, are as follows:
- A growth in cars per household and trip generation above those predicted for Devon
 - An increase in people travelling to work by car
 - An increase in population, with no apparent increase in birth rate
 - A rise in average house prices, an increase of 116% between 1998 and 2003
 - An increase in the number on the common housing register; total local authority and housing association lettings; over 100% increase (1998 to 2003) in number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in priority need
 - An increase in the number of households; increasing number of second/holiday homes
 - An increase in provision of new housing on brownfield sites (however discussions with the Council have established that the provision on brownfield sites is likely to drop as new greenfield sites are progressed through the LDF, especially at Sherford)
 - Attainment of GCSEs is improving
 - A rise in economically active persons
 - Average earnings have been reasonably stable
 - An increase in tourist spending (36% increase between 1993 and 2003)

- 4.16 The findings of this review of baseline information has informed Section 4 of this Report (sustainability problems, objectives and key issues) which provides a summary of how the LDF can progress the identified issues, and will be drawn upon during the assessment of effects.

Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data

- 4.17 Unavoidably there are gaps within the information provided due to the scale and availability of data. In some cases information was not feasibly available for the South Hams District or Devon County levels, for example, information

on the impact of climate change is only available at a Regional level.
Information on past or predicted future trends was often not readily available.

MAIN SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- 4.18 Identification of key sustainability problems, objectives and issues assist in identifying the relevant baseline information and developing the SA Framework and is required for compliant SEA.
- 4.19 Key sustainability problems, objectives and issues have been identified through:
- the previous SA work of the Council, including working groups with Members and Officers from different departments to prepare a draft SA Framework. This draft framework was tested on key chapters of the Council's Deposit Local Plan Review. The results of this trial were published alongside the Deposit Local Plan in January 2002. Much of the work remains relevant and has been brought forward and incorporated within this Scoping exercise.
 - review of other relevant PPs
 - analysis of currently available baseline information
 - preliminary consultations with key stakeholders
- 4.20 The Community Strategy will set a vision to achieve sustainable communities. The LDF is a key component in the delivery of the Community Strategy and is able to promote sustainable development through its influence on land use. The key strategic problems, objectives and issues for sustainability identified for South Hams are set out below, along with a summary of how the Community Strategy and LDF should address and/or progress them.
- **Affordable housing**
The LDF has a key role in enabling the delivery of affordable homes to address the significant shortfall identified by the Housing Needs Survey and other evidence and the Supplementary Planning Guidance on affordable housing. This will need to be progressed through appropriate allocations and policies to influence the provision, mix, type and tenure of housing. A partnership approach will be integral to the delivery of affordable homes and the Community Strategy can help to secure these partnerships.
 - **Local employment & prosperous economy**
The LDF should actively seek to provide appropriately located sites and premises for local businesses, taking into account their particular needs, as well as the objectives of year-round employment and reducing the need to travel by car. Partnership will again be key to delivering such objectives and the Community Strategy can help.
 - **Sherford new community**
The LDF is required (by the Devon Structure Plan) to accommodate Sherford New Community. There will be a key role for the LDF

(especially the Sherford Area Action Plan) in ensuring effective integration of the new community within its social, environmental and economic context. The LDF will also need to ensure delivery of the supporting community infrastructure in phase with the development. The Council will be able to draw upon existing work already undertaken including the draft SPG on Sustainable Development of Large Sites and the outputs of the Sherford Enquiry by Design process.

- **High design standards for development**
The LDF exerts an important influence upon the design of new development. The LDF will require high standards of design in new development which respects and enhances local character.
- **Protecting environmental quality**, including biodiversity, landscape, cultural and historical resources. The LDF has an integral role in ensuring the sensitive and appropriate siting of land uses in order to protect and enhance the quality of the local environment.
- **Second homes**
The issue of second homes cannot directly be tackled by the LDF but it can include policies which give priority to local people in the occupation of new affordable housing developments.
- **Car usage**
The LDF will propose development which minimises the need to travel by car, for example pursuing the provision of services within walking distance of residents.
- **Accessibility**
The LDF will consider the existing provision and accessibility of services, education, recreational facilities etc for particular local communities (including minority groups such as those with limited mobility), and enable the provision of more accessible services and facilities where required

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED LOCATION FOR SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY

- 4.21 The following descriptions, of the Sherford new community site as shown in the Draft Preferred Options AAP Key Diagram, and its baseline environmental conditions, are largely taken from the Draft Preferred Options AAP and the site appraisal prepared by South Hams, Devon County and Plymouth City Councils, the Environment Agency, Highways Agency and promoters of the site for the 2003 Devon Structure Plan Examination in Public (document 'PD1')¹⁰.

¹⁰ Devon Structure Plan Examination in Public 2003 Part B – Participants Documents – PD1: The Sherford Valley – A Sustainable New Community for the South Hams ('PD1'): a joint submission from SHDC, Plymouth CC, other statutory authorities and site landowners as a background paper to the Devon Structure Plan EiP in summer 2003

Site location

- 4.22 Sherford new community site is four miles from the centre of Plymouth and is in close proximity to the major strategic employment site at Language. The site is bounded by the A38 and the urban area of Plympton to the north, and the urban areas of Elburton and Plymstock to the south east.

Topography, Land Use, Agriculture and Landscape

- 4.23 The site mainly comprises the valley of the Sherford stream, a shallow basin largely enclosed by the surrounding landform with slightly higher ground to the north running up to the A38. Substantial woodland is found to the south and east of the site. Strong ridgelines to the north, south and east (85 – 105m AOD) form visual barriers between Plympton and Brixton to the east, and the land is more open to the west and south west. Within the valley, secondary ridgelines break the skyline at a local level and ‘headlands’ help subdivide the valley into visually separate sub-areas. South of West Sherford Farm, the valley is narrower, steeper and more visually enclosed. Around East Sherford Farm two shallow valleys rise to the north and east. The gently rolling land to the west falls away to the River Plym.
- 4.24 The main transport corridors are the A38 dual carriageway, and the A379 to the south, and a number of minor roads cross the site linking Plympton to Brixton and Elburton.
- 4.25 The site is mainly farmed, with a mixture of pasture and arable fields, and several farms and scattered dwellings including at West Sherford and East Sherford. Field sizes and shapes are irregular, reflecting the contours and the varied shape of the land. Hedgerows and hedge banks divide nearly all the fields, roads and properties. There are some well established hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees, although most hedges are well managed and devoid of trees, some individual stands of trees are found generally along the line of the valleys. The majority of trees are found in small woodland blocks, associated with steeper valley flanks and the disused Sherford quarry and old railway line to the south west. New tree planting is found at the A38 Deep Lane interchange. Orchards are found in association with older farmsteads such as East Sherford Farm. Around the settlements of Elburton and Brixton are situated medium-large scale nursery/ horticultural and some forestry activities.
- 4.26 The South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies approximately 1km to the south. The development site has been assessed thorough field survey and desk study (referred to in document PD1) as entirely within an area whose landscape character is described as ‘Intensive Agricultural Landscape: undulating topography; medium to large scale fields often in a regular pattern; intensively flailed / managed hedges; a limited number of hedgerow trees; scattered farms and farmsteads; high hedgebanks and sunken lanes; occasional small woodland blocks’. The quality of this landscape type has been assessed as ‘generally lower than the surrounding areas, less distinctive and poorly representative of the South Hams character

... predominantly due to field enlargement and loss of tree cover, resulting in open character’.

- 4.27 A desk study referred to in document PD1 found that there is no land classified as grade 1 (excellent) or grade 2 (very good) in DEFRA’s Agricultural Land Classification (ALC). A majority of the site is covered by grade 3b (moderate) and there are pockets of grade 3a (good) land around West Sherford Farm and the A38 Deep Lane interchange, and also to the south in the Chittleburn area.

Flora and Fauna

- 4.28 The Yealm Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies 2 km downstream of the Sherford stream to the south. The former Sherford Quarry site was identified as a ‘potential County Wildlife Site’ in the PD1 document, and is assumed to be afforded some protection in existing planning policies, although the status of that designation is not known.
- 4.29 A walkover phase 1 habitat survey (referred to in document PD1) identified that the majority of the site is of generally limited nature conservation value, consisting mainly of arable land and improved pasture. Sherford Quarry/Sherford Kilns Wood and several fields to the north west were also identified as ‘Sites with Specific Nature Conservation Interest’, and a ‘notable species record’ was identified at East Sherford Cross. Some hedges within the site are noted as being potentially species-rich.
- 4.30 Preliminary surveys for mammals, undertaken and reported in November/December 2004, indicate that the site contains suitable Dormice habitat, is likely to be occasionally used by Otters although is unlikely to be used significantly due to downstream obstructions, and contains at least two social groups of Badgers (with one main Badger sett within the site). The surveys identified many potential bat roost sites and foraging areas, and evidence of three species of bats at two roost sites within Sherford Quarry. It is understood that further ecological surveys were planned for 2005, including for bats, Badger and Dormice.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

- 4.31 A desk study (reported in document PD1) of documentary and cartographic sources reports that the site contains two listed buildings at West Sherford Farmhouse and Shippon (both grade II), and a number of sites of potential archaeological interest, including areas of possible post-medieval water meadows and evidence of prehistoric and Roman remains in the vicinity of Sherford Quarry. The likely importance of these sites is not known at this stage. One scheduled ancient monument is found to the east at Waste Berry Camp Iron Age Hillfort.

Geology and Hydrology

- 4.32 The site is underlain predominantly with slates with igneous tuffs to the south and limestone deposits near the western boundary. There are small areas of alluvial deposits in the larger valleys. The site generally drains from north east to south west through a number of small spring-fed streams. The main Sherford stream flows from East Sherford to West Sherford and Elburton, merging with two smaller streams and continuing south to join the River Yealm at Cofflate Creek. The Environment Agency's 1:100 yr floodplain maps show that the floodplain of the Sherford stream is approx. 50m wide, and that smaller streams have smaller floodplains. The surface water runoff generally permeates into the weathered slates and the aquifer below. Farmland runoff discharges to soakaways or directly into local ditches.

Minerals

- 4.33 Part of the site to the west of West Sherford Farm is designated as a Mineral Consultation Area in the County Minerals Plan. Sherford quarry is a disused former minerals site with an inactive extant planning permission. Limestone extraction is understood to be of local importance. Further to the west lies the existing Hazledene Quarry and surrounding land designated as a Minerals Resource Area.

Noise and Air Quality

- 4.34 A preliminary assessment of potential issues has been based on a desk study, including a map of noise contours along A38, and summarised with document PD1. The principal noise source influencing the Sherford valley is the A38 which runs along the northern boundary. Approximate noise contours in relation to the A38 were:
- At 55m from the A38, 72 dB(A) L_{Aeq} (within PPG24 Noise Exposure Category (NEC) 'C' where '*Planning permission should not normally be granted...*')
 - At 225m from A38, 63 dB(A) L_{Aeq} (within PPG24 NEC 'B' where '*Noise should be taken into account when determining planning applications...*')
 - At 765m from A38, 55 dB(A) L_{Aeq} (within PPG24 NEC 'A' where '*Noise need not be considered a determining factor in granting planning permission...*').
- 4.35 Initial assessments referred to in document PD1 state that the site is not compromised by poor local air quality.

Services

- 4.36 Document PD1 maps the existing electricity, water and gas lines through the site, including 132kV electricity pylons, a high pressure gas pipeline and a water main.

THE SA FRAMEWORK OF OBJECTIVES

- 4.37 The SA Framework presented in Table 1 includes a set of Objectives for sustainability (separate from the AAP objectives, although some overlap may occur), together with decision-aiding questions. The decision-aiding questions have been designed to assist in the appraisal as they clarify the details of the sustainability issues relevant to the sustainability objectives, as well as improving appraiser objectivity. They also ensure that the appraisal is relevant to spatial planning, and make the appraisal more specific to South Hams. It is important that the SA Framework reflects local circumstances that can be influenced by the new development planning system.
- 4.38 Sustainable Development recognises that social, economic and environmental factors are interconnected, and SA aims to take an integrated approach. Accordingly, the proposed SA Framework does not categorise Objectives into Social, Economic and Environmental. It is also necessary to demonstrate compliance with the SEA requirement to assess certain environmental topics. For each SA objective we have therefore specified the relevant SEA topics.
- 4.39 The SA Framework provides a way in which sustainability effects of a plan or programme can be described, analysed and compared. The SA methodology involves considering the content (including objectives, options and policies) of the AAP against each SA objective. Comments about whether the content of the AAP is likely to progress or conflict with each SA objective are recorded in matrices. Where significant conflicts are identified, possible measures to offset adverse effects are considered, with recommendations to amend the content accordingly.

TABLE 1: Proposed SA Framework Objectives and Decision-Aiding Questions

- 4.40 These SA Objectives and Decision-Aiding Questions have been devised through identification and consideration of sustainability and the relevant issues within South Hams, as well as Scoping Consultation as described in Section 3. This SA Framework of Objectives and Decision-Aiding Questions has provided the basis for the appraisal of the content of the AAP.

| | OBJECTIVE | DECISION-AIDING QUESTIONS |
|----------|---|--|
| 1 | Balanced Communities <i>SEA topic: Population</i> | |
| | Promote community viability and balance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote mixed use, mixed housing type and mixed tenure developments ▪ Encourage regeneration and enhancement of viable communities ▪ Enable independent lifestyles for the elderly and those with disabilities ▪ Provide sites for community services and facilities (education, health, recreation, social care etc) ▪ Provide sites for business and employment within |

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| | | <p>communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enable people to live near to where they work. ▪ Promote social inclusion and community ownership |
| 2 | <p>Access <i>SEA topic: Population and Human Health</i></p> | |
| | <p>Enhance access to jobs, education, services, cultural and leisure facilities for all</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance access, particularly in rural areas ▪ Promote accessible jobs, services and facilities such as shops, schools, banks, health centres, community centres, libraries, sports and leisure facilities, especially in under-served localities and Sherford New Community ▪ Improve quality and capacity of public transport, particularly in new developments ▪ Encourage integrated public transport ▪ Provide for basic services within walking distance of residents ▪ Reduce isolation of minorities and people with limited mobility |
| 3 | <p>Housing <i>SEA topic: Population and Human Health</i></p> | |
| | <p>Ensure that all have access to a range of good quality housing to meet their needs, particularly affordable housing for identified local needs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restrict second home ownership ▪ Provide dwellings to allow local residents, including young people, to remain within their communities |
| 4 | <p>Quality of the Built Environment <i>SEA topic: Population and Human Health</i></p> | |
| | <p>Enhance the form and design of the built environment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure new development is located in line with sustainable principles ▪ Promote high density in new development wherever appropriate ▪ Insist upon high design quality and respect for local character, distinctiveness and surrounding environment in new development ▪ Protect and enhance the quality of green and open spaces |
| 5 | <p>Health <i>SEA topic: Population and Human Health</i></p> | |
| | <p>Provide a healthy and safe environment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of space for informal recreation ▪ Design out crime and fear of crime in local communities ▪ Contribute to a safe, secure built environment ▪ Encourage safe provision for walking and cycling ▪ Prevent unacceptable levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution, through application of the precautionary principle |
| 6 | <p>Employment <i>SEA topic: Population and Material Assets</i></p> | |
| | <p>Promote a range of quality employment opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote reuse of redundant agricultural buildings for employment ▪ Encourage provision of jobs accessible to residents |

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote a year-round working countryside ▪ Support provision of employment to allow young people to remain within their communities ▪ Support indigenous growth of small and micro businesses |
| 7 | Economic Growth <i>SEA topic: Population and Material Assets</i> | |
| | Promote sustainable economic development that can capitalise on the local distinctiveness of the area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking advantage of Objective II and Regional assistance from SWRDA ▪ Encourage growth of indigenous companies ▪ Encourage diversification into key growth sectors, including the environmental sector ▪ Provide for the needs of businesses (range of premises, services, infrastructure, skilled workforce) ▪ Enhance the vitality of town, district and local centres and encourage their commercial renewal ▪ Provide for the purchase of goods and use of services locally |
| 8 | Landscape <i>SEA topic: Landscape</i> | |
| | Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preserve and where possible enhance diverse landscape character and value ▪ Maintain a high quality of undeveloped coastal landscapes ▪ Protect and enhance the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Dartmoor National Park ▪ Maintain and enhance hedgerow cover and traditional field boundaries |
| 9 | Land and Soil Quality <i>SEA topic: Soil and Water</i> | |
| | Maintain and improve the quality of land and soil in the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote high density development ▪ Actively promote the re-use of previously developed land ▪ Remediate contaminated land ▪ Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land |
| 10 | Biodiversity <i>SEA topic: Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora</i> | |
| | Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of semi-natural habitats and indigenous species | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote ecologically based land management ▪ Protect and enhance valuable wildlife habitats and species, both those statutorily designated and those of local value ▪ Avoid habitat fragmentation ▪ Protect and enhance those species and habitats identified in the Devon BAP and the National BAP ▪ Protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Coastline, including estuaries |

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 11 | Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage <i>SEA topic: Cultural Heritage</i> | |
| | Protect and enhance cultural resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and enhance valued architecture, both buildings (including listed buildings) and their settings ▪ Support locally-based cultural resources and activities ▪ Protect and improve historical and archaeological environment (landscapes, site, buildings and settings), including Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) ▪ Protect the important geology of South Hams district ▪ Protect and enhance Conservation Areas |
| 12 | Minerals <i>SEA topic: Material Assets</i> | |
| | Encourage efficient exploitation of mineral resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to the supply of minerals while protecting local communities and the environment ▪ Minimise demand for primary minerals and aggregates ▪ Recycle local stone, where possible, to reinforce local character |
| 13 | Energy <i>SEA topic: Material Assets and Climatic Factors</i> | |
| | Encourage energy efficiency, and promote the generation and use of energy from renewable sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid exacerbating climate change by reducing energy usage (including through design of new development, and sustainable location of development to encourage accessibility by means other than the car) ▪ Support the generation and use of renewable energy, while protecting local communities and the environment ▪ Promote energy efficiency by locating development in such a way as to minimise the number of trips made by private car ▪ Promote energy efficiency in the design of new development |
| 14 | Air Quality <i>SEA topic: Air, Climatic Factors and Human Health</i> | |
| | Protect and improve local and global air quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain or improve local air quality ▪ Reduce the number of trips made by private car ▪ Reduce CO₂ emissions ▪ Consider the longer term effects |
| 15 | Waste <i>SEA topic: Water, Soil, Human Health and Population</i> | |
| | Encourage minimisation, reuse and recycling of waste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage provision for local community recycling and waste management facilities, including on new developments ▪ Promote minimisation, reuse and recycling of construction materials and waste |

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 16 | Water <i>SEA topic: Water and Climatic Factors</i> | |
| | Protect and enhance the water environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take into account the predicted effects of climate change ▪ Protect and improve freshwater, estuarine and coastal water quality ▪ Consider the close relationship between water quality, quantity and flood risk management ▪ Increase efficient use and reuse of water resources ▪ Promote sustainable coastal and flood risk management that provides for climate change, where appropriate, in new developments ▪ Promote Sustainable Drainage Systems |

5.0 SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY OPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 This section outlines the options considered at various stages during the emergence of the Sherford proposals. The reasons for the rejection of certain options (relating to the principle of accommodating a new community, alternative locations for the new community, alternative sites boundaries and development forms) are outlined in this section, and detailed in other reports as described in Section 3. The consideration of different options at various stages, as described here, is considered to provide robust fulfilment of SA and SEA requirements for consideration of alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS FOR THE NEW COMMUNITY

- 5.2 Potential alternative locations for a new community around Plymouth were considered during the Structure Plan process in considerable and unusual detail for a strategic plan, including consideration of environmental and sustainability issues (see Section 3.1). The Sherford location has been tested at Structure Plan level by the Examination in Public in 2003 and clearly emerged as the favoured location for strategic growth in the sub region up to 2016. A full site audit was produced as part of the Structure Plan EIP in 2003 in a document entitled 'Participants Document – PD1, The Sherford Valley – A Sustainable New Community for the South Hams' [*available on South Hams District Council's website www.southhams.gov.uk*]
- 5.3 As part of the preparatory work for the Devon Structure Plan Examination in Public (Summer 2003) the Joint Structure Plan Authorities (JSPA) produced an assessment of alternative options for the development of urban extensions to the Plymouth PUA within Devon. This focussed on a number of key strategic criteria and represented a detailed comparison of specific development alternatives including Sherford. The analysis built on detailed work undertaken in preparing the Structure Plan Background Papers published in July 2002.
- 5.4 The study looked at a number of sites on the edge of Plymouth. To the north of the City the Tamerton and Woolwell areas were considered. To the north east of Plympton, Boringdon and Newnham were considered. To the east of the city, Lee Mill and the Plympton/Plymstock (Sherford) area were considered.
- 5.5 In summary the findings of this work were that the Tamerton, Boringdon and Newnham areas do not offer scope for achieving sustainable development and should not be identified as potential locations for strategic development. Given their characteristics (their peripheral nature, the scale of development possible and their detachment from the existing urban area) a smaller scale of development in these locations would not be appropriate or viable.
- 5.6 At Woolwell, the scope for major development is severely constrained by its poor accessibility by car and public transport. A limited amount of

development could be accommodated in this location but not on a strategic scale unless these access constraints can be effectively overcome.

- 5.7 At the Lee Mill and Sherford areas there is physical scope for major development which would be able to support its own facilities and offer significant local employment opportunity. While there could be some scope for rail access at Lee Mill, the Sherford area was seen to have major advantages in terms of its lack of impact on the National Park, its closer proximity to the existing PUA and generally better relationship to existing settlements, its ability to take advantage of two separate strategic road network links to Plymouth and its lack of physical constraints – enabling it to accommodate a more sustainable form of development.
- 5.8 The results of this work showed that Sherford was the most appropriate location for achieving sustainable strategic development at Plymouth, outside of the existing PUA in the period to 2016. These findings were endorsed by the EIP Panel in their Report October 2003. The JSPA Background Paper assessing alternative locations and the EIP Panel Report are available on the Devon County website (www.devon.gov.uk)
- 5.9 As the South Hams LDF is required to comply with the Structure Plan with respect to the development's broad location, a sustainability/SEA appraisal of alternative locations for the new community is outside the scope of the Draft AAP and this Report.

ALTERNATIVE SITE BOUNDARIES AND FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.10 Extensive further work has taken place on refining the extent of the site boundaries for Sherford since the EIP. Further survey work, research and testing has been undertaken and this has included testing through the EbD process facilitated by the Prince's Foundation. The main alternative proposal for the new community that has been considered by the Council is the proposal included in the South Hams Deposit Draft Local Plan Review 2002 for 3500 homes in the form of four linked villages with associated employment, retail, local centres, education facilities, transport links, a park & ride, and open spaces.
- 5.11 In particular, the further work has resulted in the removal of the southernmost part of the new community proposal shown in the 2002 South Hams Local Plan (the 'Chittleburn Option' adjoining the A379 just outside Plymouth). This was only removed after thorough investigation through the EbD process.
- 5.12 The promoters of the Chittleburn option proposed that topography would contain the development, the A379 frontage would benefit from passing trade, building on the existing garden centre and garage, and the public transport corridor would work with the topography with the interchange being within walking distance of Brixton and relieving Elburton of through traffic.

- 5.13 The EbD process determined that the Chittleburn Option did not form part of Sherford Valley and was detached from the walkable centres west of the Sherford Stream. It did not satisfactorily form its own centre within the overall structure that had emerged from the EbD process. The development would have closed the gap on Brixton and it comprised the need to create a defensible eastern edge to the development. The viability of the option was questionable as the development would have required building on steep land which raised cost/benefit issues. Therefore, it was decided to remove the Chittleburn Option and the Masterplan emerged which now forms the basis of the Sherford proposal.
- 5.14 It is therefore apparent that the decision to remove the Chittleburn area from the development, by the Council and through the EbD process, has included a consideration of certain sustainability and environmental issues, including those relevant to the following SA objectives:
- 2: Access
 - 4: Quality of the Built Environment
 - 7: Economic Growth
 - 8: Landscape
 - 13: Energy
- 5.15 Therefore, further appraisal of the rejected 'Chittleburn option' is outside the scope of this SA.
- 5.16 In comparison with the 2002 Local Plan Review proposals, the 2005 Draft AAP proposals for the new community are different in the following respects:
- An additional 500 dwellings are proposed.
 - The 'four linked village' concept proposed in 2002 has been replaced by a single site for development which the Draft AAP states seeks to maximise accessibility to facilities at a number of neighbourhood centres. The development area includes 'greenways' and retained/ proposed open spaces (including Sherford quarry to be retained for wildlife and possibly recreation).
 - An extensive area of the land to the south and east of the proposed development area is allocated as a community park (including organic farm).
 - An overall 'development area' and indicative locations for schools, health facility, sports centre and park & ride facilities are promoted (allowing more flexibility although less certainty than the specific sites for housing, recreation, business and transport facilities that were proposed in 2002).
 - The development area has moved westward and northward, with several fields that were included as development land in 2002, to the south and east of Wiverton and East Sherford, now within the proposed community park. Development is also now proposed to the north west around Westholme to the A38 boundary, and closer to Elburton including on land shown on maps as existing plant nurseries.
 - The development area now excludes any development south of the Sherford stream at Chittleburn adjacent to the A379.

- An area for further expansion is now identified to the north west of the development area, within Plymouth City Council's area (to be shown in Plymouth City Council's North Plymstock AAP Preferred Options document).

6.0 SUMMARY OF SA OF AAP OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSAL

SA OF AAP OBJECTIVES

6.1 Appraisal of the AAP objectives was undertaken as described in the methodology (Section 3). Appendix V includes tables providing a summary of which SA objectives are progressed by which Area Action Plan objectives (based on 2nd Draft AAP dated 9th June 2005). The outcome of SA found that on the whole, the AAP objectives were fairly proactive in progressing SA objectives. In particular, the following sustainability objectives are well reflected by the AAP Objectives - SA Objective 1: Balanced Communities; 2: Access; 3: Housing; 4: Quality of the Built Environment; 5: Health; 6: Employment; 7: Economic development; 13: Energy; 14: Air Quality; 15: Waste; 16: Water.

6.2 Some recommendations are provided where we consider elaboration and clarification might prove beneficial. These are detailed with commentary in Appendix V, with some examples of recommendations outlined below:

SA Objective 8: Landscape

6.3 While conserving protected landscapes, the AAP promotes development of a large area of countryside, and therefore appears to conflict with the AAP Environment objective to 'conserve and enhance the quality of the local countryside'. It is suggested that this AAP objective be amended to be more specific: '*Conserve and enhance special and distinctive landscapes and important landscape features including hedgerows, watercourses and trees*'. in order to reflect the avoidance of protected countryside and proposals for the retention of landscape features and retention/creation of new green open spaces including a community park.

SA Objective 9: Land and Soil Quality

6.4 AAP objectives do not relate to the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and it is noted that the development will affect areas of best and most versatile agricultural (grade 3a) land. It is inherent in the AAP that its objectives do not relate to the regeneration of previously developed land or remediation of contaminated land.

6.5 AAP Housing objective to 'Provide for housing at the highest density suitable for each part of the site' leaves some uncertainty as to what the highest suitable density may be for the site, and allows considerable variation for the development overall. It is suggested that this AAP objective be amended to '*Provide for housing at the highest density suitable for each part of the site within an overall [add range, average or minimum density] dw/ha.*'

SA Objective 10: Biodiversity

6.6 The AAP Environment objective to '*Conserve and enhance biodiversity – species and habitats*' does reflect the SA objective, but could be worded more specifically to relate to the constraints and opportunities afforded by the site. The development promoted by AAP avoids statutory wildlife sites, but there

remains uncertainty as to whether the development will affect protected species of wildlife (including protected bats and Badgers) and habitats identified in the Devon Biodiversity Action Plan. It is suggested that this AAP objective be amended to *‘Conserve biodiversity - species and habitats of biodiversity importance or those protected by legislation, including local populations of bats and Badgers, and enhance biodiversity wherever possible’*.

SA Objective 11: Cultural Heritage

- 6.7 The AAP Environment objective to *‘Conserve and enhance local historic and archaeological features’* does reflect the SA objective, but is currently rather general and could be worded more specifically to relate to the site features. In the absence of detailed archaeological survey information, there is remaining uncertainty whether the development promoted by the AAP would affect archaeological interests, and whether retention of any areas would be required. There are also listed buildings at West Sherford whose setting should be taken account of. It is suggested amending this objective to *‘Conserve and enhance local historic and archaeological features, including conservation of any important archaeological features and the settings of listed buildings’*.

SA Objective 12: Minerals

- 6.8 None of the AAP objectives relate to the SA objective for minerals. However, the conflict between the AAP’s proposed development and any resumption of the extant minerals planning permission at Sherford Quarry, and the site’s potential mineral activity, is explained in the AAP. This comprises compensatory minerals safeguards to be included for in Plymouth City Council’s neighbouring Plymstock AAP, to extend the life of the nearby Hazledene Quarry so as to produce an equivalent amount of minerals.

SA OF AAP PROPOSAL

- 6.9 Matrix based appraisal of the AAP proposal was undertaken as described in the methodology (Section 3). The full matrices are presented in Appendix V. A summary of each appraised component of the Proposal, along with SA recommendations is presented in the table 4 below:
- 6.10 The results of the SA indicate that on the whole, the AAP provides a positive and proactive context from which to plan for the Sherford New Community. The principle of accommodating a new community at Sherford has already been decided, thus the focus for the AAP is on how best to accommodate this key component of the Plymouth Principal Urban Area.

Table 2 Summary of SA Recommendations

| Component of AAP Proposal | Recommendations |
|--|--|
| <i>‘Development should include the following: ...’</i> | 1. The Proposal should more clearly define the requirement for housing densities |

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| <p>(a) <i>A high quality of design (consistent with the approved design codes) in every element of the new community to reflect and respect local distinctiveness and create a sense of place and local identity;</i></p> <p>(b) <i>Housing at medium to high density overall to provide at least 4,000 dwellings to 2016 with an indication of where further development can be accommodated beyond 2016;</i></p> <p>(c) <i>Of the total number of dwellings provided at Sherford, 50% should be affordable houses to meet local needs: 10 - 15% should be social rented and 35% - 40% should be intermediate affordable; ...'</i></p> | <p>within the site.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The Proposal should consider including requirements relating to designing out crime, or safety in the built environment. 3. The AAP and its Proposal should identify the potential noise constraint on residential and other noise-sensitive development in close proximity to the A38 dual carriageway (and potentially in other areas), reflect the need for a detailed assessment of the noise environment of the site in relation to suitable locations for housing development, and require mitigation measures to attenuate noise levels where necessary (such as noise barriers, building orientation and design measures). |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ...</p> <p>(d) <i>A new strategic public transport interchange to serve the A38 close to the Deep Lane junction and a smaller interchange to serve the A379 (location yet to be determined);</i></p> <p>(e) <i>Appropriate direct road links to the A38 at Deep Lane junction and the A379;</i></p> <p>(f) <i>Improvement to Deep Lane junction on the A38 including public transport priority; ...'</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measures to ensure a minimal impact from changes in travel patterns and volumes are discussed in the Proposal's supporting text and should also be referred to directly in the Proposal, including: sensitive traffic management for local roads, particularly those linking to Plympton St. Maurice, Elburton and Brixton. 2. Further measures to reduce traffic growth are discussed in the Proposal's supporting text and should also be referred to directly in the Proposal, including travel plans and personalised travel planning. 3. The proposed location of transport links to the A379 will need to be defined, in order that the sustainability and environmental effects can be assessed. 4. The travel impacts and environmental implications of the new community development, in relation to all modes of travel, will need to be fully assessed before any outline planning application is granted. |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ...</p> <p>(g) <i>A safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle (including appropriate connection to National Cycle Network 2) and vehicular network for all users, including people with disabilities, linking all the uses and destinations within and beyond the</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>See appraisal matrices for d-f and i-l.</i> |

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| <p><i>site.</i></p> <p><i>(h) A high standard of bus penetration and a High Quality High Capacity Public Transport (HQPT) service within the site and linking through Sherford to destinations in Plymouth and to Language.</i></p> | |
| <p><i>‘Development should include the following: ... (i) A mixture of small scale employment, retail and commercial uses throughout the development consistent with mixed use principles. Approximately 18 hectares of employment land will specifically be required for B1 (Business) uses and B2 (General Industrial) uses; (j) A new secondary school and three new primary schools – all with associated playing fields. Facilities to include pre-school and Educare (Joint education and social services provision for children). Facilities at these sites should be made available for community uses; (k) A new hospital, Healthy Living Centre (healthcare facilities e.g. dentist, doctors, physiotherapy etc.) and other health care facilities to accommodate the projected population; (l) Provision for a range of local community facilities including local shopping, community buildings (including library, youth centre, town hall/voluntary services offices, emergency services, public houses, church, etc);...’</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The phasing of community facilities in tandem with the site development will require careful consideration in the development proposals to ensure facilities are phased in a way that ensures their viability while helping to support community life from the start, particularly schools and healthcare. 2. The Proposal itself should include the requirement (discussed elsewhere in the AAP principles and objectives) for employment, retail and commercial uses, schools, healthcare and community facilities to be located within convenient walking distance for residents. 3. The opportunities to minimise the environmental effects and sustainability impacts of new development should be considered further in the siting, planning and design for the various mixed uses of development being promoted. |
| <p><i>‘Development should include the following: ... (m) Sewage and waste disposal provision to deal with all the waste created by the development. A community waste recycling facility should also be provided; ...’</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The AAP should attempt to define the likely nature of the requirement for sewage treatment, whether an on-site Sewage Treatment Works would be required, and the likely size, location and type of treatment anticipated, so as to help assess any impacts on the site |

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| | <p>watercourses and catchment.</p> <p>5. The planning and siting of new waste management and wastewater treatment facilities should be carefully planned to avoid detriment to sustainability and environmental objectives.</p> |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ... (o) <i>Protection of the Kenn to Wixenford 500mm high pressure gas transmission pipeline which crosses the northern part of the new community whereby buildings are not constructed within eight metres either side of this pipeline (16 metre width in total) either permanently or temporarily;</i> (p) <i>The undergrounding (and diversion if appropriate) of all existing major overhead electricity power lines that lie within the site area</i></p> | <p>6. The relevant health and safety issues concerning the routing of the diversion/undergrounding of high voltage electricity cables through the site should be carefully assessed and taken into account during the development.</p> |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ... (n) <i>An organic farm and allotments;</i> (q) <i>A Country Park on the eastern edge of Sherford offering the opportunity for a variety of formal and informal recreational activities with limited access to some areas to protect nature conservation interests;</i></p> | <p>7. The AAP should clarify the term that should be used to describe the Country Park or Community Park within the supporting text and Key Diagram.</p> <p>8. Further expansion of the Country Park/Community Park proposal area would be welcomed to further surround the development area to the south west, north west and north east of the development area, in order to complete the eastern green boundary to the development. It is understood that such additions are to be added before public consultation on the Draft AAP.</p> <p>9. The requirements for allotments should be assessed to provide some definition of their size, location and accessibility.</p> |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ... (r) <i>Green (wildlife) corridors through the development for wildlife protection and dispersal including a green corridor from Saltram House through Sherford to countryside to the east;</i> (s) <i>A network of 'greenways' through the community based on existing ecological features to promote pedestrian and cycle movement;</i></p> | <p>1. AAP could include further definition as to the appropriate local standards the development would be expected to achieve, including the nature, scale, content, location and accessibility of facilities, and the provision and accessibility to recreational open space and natural green spaces (e.g. based on National Playing Fields Association's 'six acre standard', English Nature's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt).</p> <p>2. The AAP should define the areas of</p> |

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| <p>(t) <i>A comprehensive landscape strategy and scheme which deals with both internal landscaping, including reinforcing and extending existing planting within the site area and all public open space and strategic landscaping within and around the community;</i></p> <p>(u) <i>Community Woodland including areas of open space, with managed public access;</i></p> <p>(v) <i>Open space, including communal open space around dwellings and public open space;</i></p> <p>(w) <i>Appropriate flood prevention measures will be required together with sustainable drainage systems for all surface water and foul drainage provision, including sufficient measures to ensure that there is no reduction of water quality or detrimental change to water composition as a result of the development, particularly in the Yealm Estuary; ...'</i></p> | <p>existing woodland and other wildlife habitat that the development would be expected to retain within the development area, in particular the extent of Community Woodland sites, and show these on the Key Diagram.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The Proposal should be amended so that the development is to include a strategy for the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and biodiversity, including the protection of important wildlife habitats and species subject to legal protection or biodiversity action plans. This should explicitly include the protection and management of the wildlife interests at Sherford Quarry. 4. The effects of development on the wildlife interest of Sherford Quarry/woodland should be assessed. 5. The significance of impacts of the development on the landscape, flora, fauna and biodiversity, on drainage, water quality and flood risks, and appropriate mitigation, should be fully assessed. |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ... (x) <i>An archaeological assessment/evaluation of the site prior to the commencement of any development and protection of any important historic or archaeological features; ...'</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The AAP should clarify the nature and degree of protection of archaeological features that is expected within the development area. 2. The effects of the development on the archaeological and architectural heritage, and opportunities and requirements for mitigation, should be assessed. |
| <p><i>'Development should include the following:</i> ... (y) <i>A range of measures to provide social, economic and environmental sustainability, such as: the creation of a Community Trust, high capacity telecommunications services, CO2 reduction and renewable energy generation.'</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The potential for energy and water conservation in building orientation/layout/ design, and for the generation of renewable energy within the development should be assessed. 2. Although referred to in supporting text, the Proposal should include specific reference to the need to achieve high sustainability targets/standards in the development for issues of concern, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of jobs/services/facilities in locations accessible to residents on foot and cycle; • energy conservation and renewable energy generation; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of materials from local, renewable and sustainably managed sources; • water conservation; • waste management. |
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PROGRESSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.11 Upon receipt of the SA Recommendations, South Hams District Council considered each recommendation, and where a change to the AAP wording was recommended, whether this could be incorporated in the Preferred Options document. The majority of recommended changes to the AAP have been progressed within the Preferred Options document, indicating a proactive approach to progressing sustainability, and a genuine willingness on the part of South Hams District Council to progress iterative SA as part of the Plan making process. Where recommendations have not been incorporated in the Preferred Options document, South Hams has provided reasons why the recommendation was not feasible.
- 6.12 Appendix VI sets out in full the Council’s response to each SA recommendation. A summary of the way in which the SA recommendations have influenced the AAP Preferred Options document is provided below:
- 6.13 It was advised that measures to ensure a minimal impact from changes in travel patterns and volumes should be referred to directly in the Proposal, including: sensitive traffic management for local roads, particularly those linking to Plympton St. Maurice, Elburton and Brixton. This comment resulted in an amendment to clause (e) of the proposal, to refer to local road links.
- 6.14 It was advised that the planning and siting of new waste management and wastewater treatment facilities should be carefully planned to avoid detriment to sustainability and environmental objectives. These comments were accepted and the proposal has been amended in clause (n) referring to the avoidance of unnecessary impacts.
- 6.15 It was considered that further expansion of the Country Park/Community Park proposal area should be pursued in order to complete the eastern green boundary to the development. These comments were fully incorporated into the Sherford AAP and the Community Park has been extended accordingly.
- 6.16 The outcome of SA found that the AAP Environment objective to ‘*Conserve and enhance biodiversity – species and habitats*’ does reflect the SA objective, but could be worded more specifically to relate to the constraints and opportunities afforded by the site. The development promoted by AAP avoids statutory wildlife sites, but there remains uncertainty as to whether the development will affect protected species of wildlife (including protected bats and Badgers) and habitats identified in the Devon Biodiversity Action Plan. It was suggested that this AAP objective be amended to ‘*Conserve biodiversity - species and habitats of biodiversity importance or those protected by legislation, including local populations of bats and Badgers,*

and enhance biodiversity wherever possible'. This recommendation was accepted, with the proposal reworded accordingly.

- 6.17 The outcome of SA found that the AAP Environment objective to '*Conserve and enhance local historic and archaeological features*' does reflect the SA objective, but is currently rather general and could be worded more specifically to relate to the site features. In the absence of detailed archaeological survey information, there is remaining uncertainty whether the development promoted by the AAP would affect archaeological interests, and whether retention of any areas would be required. There are also listed buildings at West Sherford whose setting should be taken account of. It is suggested amending this objective to '*Conserve and enhance local historic and archaeological features, including conservation of any important archaeological features and the settings of listed buildings*'. This recommendation was accepted, with the proposal reworded accordingly.
- 6.18 A number of points were also made regarding the need to consider issues in detail at the EIA stage. These have been noted by the Council and will assist during the emergence of detailed proposals for development at Sherford.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION

PROPOSALS FOR MONITORING THE SUSTAINABILITY EFFECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY AREA ACTION PLAN

- 7.1 Unlike the old Development Plan system, the new Local Development Framework (LDF) for South Hams is designed to be an on-going, iterative process, in which all sections are kept up to date through a rolling process and programme of public involvement, monitoring and, where necessary, adjustment. Because the monitoring of the significant effects of any plan of this type is seen as essential by the European SEA Directive, and also because the Council believes that all stakeholders should have an early opportunity to be part of the process. The purpose of this section is to briefly suggest proposals for a strategy governing how monitoring of the sustainability effects of the implementation of the Area Action Plan could be done. This is intended to inform and assist an open public debate.
- 7.2 The proposed monitoring strategy should;
- Clearly set out who is responsible for the monitoring, as well as its timing, frequency and format for presenting results
 - By collecting new information, update and strengthen original baseline data, rectifying any deficiencies, and thereby provide an improved basis for the formulation of future plans
 - Establish a mechanism for action, to enhance positive effects of the plan, mitigate any negative ones and to assess any areas that were originally identified as containing uncertainty. The aim should be to keep the LDF working at maximum effectiveness for the benefit of the community.
 - Empower all of the community by providing a clear and easily understandable picture of how actual implementation of the LDF is affecting the District. Is it moving the area towards the more sustainable future we intended or away? Are any significant effects identified actually happening? Are any unforeseen consequences being felt? Are any mitigation measures that were proposed operating effectively?
- 7.3 Indicators should measure all relevant aspects of life in the District – Social and Economic as well as environmental. These could be drawn from;
- Objectives and targets set so far in the LDF – these will mostly be quantitative and may be expressed as maps, graphs, diagrams or percentages. (e.g. Percentage of new housing built on brownfield land, target of 10% of energy on major new developments to be provided by Renewables etc.).
 - Indicators already identified and used in the Sustainability Appraisal process, again mostly likely to be quantitative.
 - measures drawn from the baseline data collected during the early stages of the

LDF or from the previous Local Plan (e.g. air quality, extent of wildlife habitats, need for affordable housing).

- Any other measures suggested by the community. These might be more qualitative (e.g. quality of life) and could be useful in enriching understanding and giving people a sense of ownership of the LDF.

7.4 The development of the monitoring proposals is an ongoing process which is being developed as part of an integrated district-wide monitoring strategy. The council intends to develop one set of indicators to meet the monitoring requirements for both the AAP and SA processes. The key sustainability issues have been identified from the appraisal of the AAP and subsequently indicators have been proposed as part of monitoring the sustainability of the AAP implementation. Targets are also proposed where appropriate and available.

7.5 Indicators should be relevant to the remit of the particular Local Development Document. The following draft indicators are proposed for **discussion and refinement** (particularly in the light of consultation with stakeholders and the public, as well as linking with the Area Action Plan monitoring strategy to be developed for the Submission document) as follows:

Table 3 Sherford New Community Area Action Plan Proposed Indicators and Targets

| Potential Significant Sustainability Issue Identified | Proposed Indicator | Proposed Target |
|---|--|---|
| Biodiversity | Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan objectives/targets (as recommended by EN response to Scoping consultation) | |
| Landscape | Area of /change in landscape features, including significant hedgerows, grasslands, meadows and woodland (as recommended by EN response to Scoping consultation) | |
| Affordable Housing | Supply of affordable housing | 50% of new homes in Sherford New Community should be affordable |
| Accessibility | % new housing within 10 minutes walking distance of (a) shops, (b) primary school, (c) healthcare and within 5 minutes walking | 75% |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | distance of (d) bus stop and (e) public open space (adapted from Better places to live by design: a companion guide to PPG3 'movement and place making' and English Nature Accessible Natural Greenspaces Standards) | |
| Settlement design / Energy efficiency | % of development and buildings meeting 'good' BREEAM and BRE EcoHomes standards | |
| Biodiversity | Extent of land with wildlife interests protected within the development boundary AND Extent of land within development boundary enhancing biodiversity interests | |
| Water | % of development with Sustainable Drainage Systems | |
| Renewable energy | Provision for on-site renewable energy generation to contribute to the development's energy requirements | Provision for on-site renewable energy generation to provide at least 20% of the development's energy requirements |
| Heritage | Number of features of historic and cultural interest protected AND Number of features of historic and cultural interest enhanced (including access to) | |
| Transport | Average distance between bus stops within the residential/commercial area of the development | Bus Stops at every 200-300 metres (adapted from Better places to live by design: a companion guide to PPG3 'movement and place making') |
| Minerals | % use of (a) local and (b) recycled aggregates/materials | |

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|---------|--|--|
| | | |
| Economy | Number of new businesses start-ups within Sherford New Community | |

- 7.6 There are several indicators suggested without targets at this stage. Targets should be informed by subsequent work regarding detailed proposals and assessment for Sherford New Community.