

Annex 1: Adopted Sherford New Community Area Action Plan Statement of Sustainability and Consultation

Sustainability Appraisal

1. Local authorities are required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) during the preparation of local development documents such as the Sherford New Community Area Action Plan (AAP). This is to ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of decisions at every stage of plan-making and is an integral part of the process. This AAP has been subject to initial and detailed SA to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the plan to ensure that it accords with sustainable development. The SA incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European and UK legislation (EU directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI No 1633), respectively).
2. The SA is an iterative, ongoing process and is integral to the preparation of the AAP. It has considered the effects of the emerging AAP on the environment and other aspects of sustainability. The findings of the SA on the AAP showed that the document was sound.
3. A Sustainability Report accompanies the AAP. This report documents the SA/SEA process and findings, and explains in greater detail the difference the SA process has made. The SA process, including consultation on the SA, has shown that the AAP will make a significant contribution to the progression of sustainable development objectives for the Plymouth sub-region. The SA has genuinely influenced the plan progression, resulting in significant changes being made to the DPD. These are outlined below, however the SA Report (Submission Document), and in particular, Appendix IV of the report should be referred to for further detail.

Options

4. Different options, including alternative locations, site boundaries and development forms, were considered at various stages of the plan-making and SA processes to inform the final AAP proposal. During the Independent Examination into the soundness of the Sherford AAP the Inspector invited the Council to consider undertaking further work. This included refreshing the Council's submitted Sustainability Appraisal (SA) on the Sherford AAP to include:
 - an assessment of the Sherford AAP site on a compare and contrast basis with the alternative site which has been promoted by the Plymouth and South West Co-op; and
 - further consideration of other issues appropriate to the overall scope of the work.

The details of this comparative site assessment are presented in the SA Addendum (February 2007) and it confirms that the proposals in the Sherford AAP better progress sustainable development objectives.

Sherford New Community AAP Objectives/Aims

5. The majority of SA recommendations regarding the Objectives/Aims were progressed within the Sherford New Community AAP Preferred Options and Submission Documents. For example, the AAP objectives for energy and air quality were enhanced by including quantitative aims for reducing energy demand from buildings through phased design, construction standards and generation of renewable energy.

Sherford New Community AAP Proposal

6. A number of SA recommendations relating to Sherford New Community policies were progressed within the 'Preferred Options' version of the Document (published in June 2005), and additional recommendations were progressed within the 'Submission' Document (published in June 2006). These include:
 - clarification of the nature of landscape proposals to include a green buffer and a requirement for the developer to submit a Landscape, Biodiversity & Cultural Heritage Strategy
 - further definition as to the appropriate local standards for open space and recreational facilities
 - considerable strengthening of the requirements for energy conservation and a commitment to reduce demand for water
 - principles for designing out crime
 - addressing constraints arising from existing noise levels along the A38 through a noise buffer zone

Adoption of the AAP

7. The Independent Examination of the AAP was undertaken in January 2007 and reconvened in April 2007. In his Report, the Inspector found the Sherford New Community AAP to be sound, and determined that the 'SA process has had a genuine influence on and been suitably integrated into the production of the document'.

Monitoring of the SA and the AAP

8. 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 of public involvement, monitoring and, where necessary, adjustment. The SA process included the suggestion of proposals to monitor the sustainability of the LDF implementation, and these will be incorporated into the South

Hams Annual Monitoring process. This will ensure the implementation of recommendations for sustainable development.

Statement of Consultation and Involvement on the Sherford AAP

9. The AAP has been prepared in accordance with the minimum requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and relevant national policies and guidance. The Sherford New Community AAP has met the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) requirements relating to public consultation. It has been consulted on at Issues and Options Stage (October-November 2004) and two formal six week consultation periods: the Preferred Options stage in June-August 2005 and the Submission stage, from June-August 2006. At each stage, copies of the document were sent to a broad spectrum of organisations including the Government Office for the South West, the South West Regional Assembly, adjoining local authorities, and town and parish councils.
10. Statutory organisations and all community and interest groups detailed in the SCI were consulted and views sought throughout the process. A large number of organisations were also invited to participate in a series of events, including focused workshops and open days, in addition to submitting response forms. The Sherford New Community AAP and response forms were publicly advertised in local newspapers, and were made available on the Council's website, at the Council offices and to view at libraries across the district.
11. The proposal has also been subject to a level of stakeholder engagement which goes far beyond that required by the SCI with a range of meetings, workshops and exhibitions. There has also been extensive and ongoing stakeholder involvement through the Enquiry by Design (EbD) process. This has been facilitated by The Prince's Foundation who are a highly respected organisation with a good track record of involvement in major development schemes throughout the country.
12. This EbD process has involved engaging with groups and organisations both within South Hams and Plymouth to help develop the detail of the proposal. It has included the involvement of not only local authorities and landowners but also many other groups and organisations. These included community group representatives and public service providers (e.g. health, emergency service providers, education, youth and sports) and organisations such as the Highways Agency and the Environment Agency.
13. Summaries of the representations received at the Preferred Options and Submission stages were made available on the Council's website. Copies of all representations received during the Submission stage were also placed on the Council's website and made available at the Council's offices. A statement of consultation has also been prepared

that provides an audit of each consultation period. It documents who has been consulted, how the consultation was undertaken, the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed in subsequent stages of the document.

Adoption

14. The Sherford New Community AAP has correctly followed the procedures and requirements through the stages of plan preparation, culminating in the independent Examination in January-April 2007. In July 2007 the Council received the Inspector's Report, the recommendations of which are binding on the Council. The Council resolved to adopt the Sherford New Community AAP, including all of the Inspector's recommendations on 2 August 2007. With the Sherford New Community AAP having been determined to be "sound" through the Examination and following the process outlined above, the Council considers that there are no reasonable alternatives to the adoption of the AAP in its final form. The Council has placed a public notice, dated: **15 August 2007** advising of the adoption of the Sherford New Community AAP in local newspapers.