

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Revised Preferred Options “Draft Spatial Options” Sustainability Appraisal





**Sustainability Appraisal of the
North Staffordshire
Core Spatial Strategy
Revised Preferred Options**

March 2007

**North Staffordshire
Core Spatial Strategy
Revised Preferred Options**

Sustainability Appraisal

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government has introduced a new planning system. Councils now have to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF), incorporating Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The DPDs and SPDs included in the LDF need to be subject to ongoing sustainability appraisal (SA), under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. SA must also meet the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive).

Objectives and Structure of the SA Report

- 1.2 This report accompanies the Revised Preferred Options Core Strategy DPD. The report takes into account the aims and requirements of Sustainability Appraisal and the SEA Directive and takes on board the findings of the previous scoping and preferred option stage of Core Strategy preparation to date. This report should be read in conjunction with:
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (March 2005)
 - Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2006)
 - Sustainability Appraisal Options Appendix (April 2006)
 - Sustainability Appraisal Policy Appendix (April 2006)
- 1.3 This report is also supplemented by two appendices:
- Appendix 1 – Strategic Options Appraisal
- 1.4 This SA Report is structured as follows:
- 1.5 Section 2 - Non technical Summary
- 1.6 Section 3 - Context and Purpose of the SA/SEA, why a Sustainability Report is needed.
- 1.7 Section 4 - Appraisal Methodology, describes the SA process, the sustainability context for North Staffordshire, discusses the review of relevant plans, policy guidance and strategies and the baseline information.
- 1.8 Section 5 - Sustainability Framework, describes the approach used and specific SA tasks undertaken.
- 1.9 Section 6 - Appraisal of Options, sets out the process taken, illustrates the emergence of the preferred options and indicative Core Strategy policies
- 1.10 Section 7 - Appraisal of Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Document, takes into account the consultation on the preferred options (June - August 2006) and describes the sustainability appraisal of strategic options.
- 1.11 Section 8 - Monitoring makes recommendations for approach for monitoring
- 1.12 Section 9 - Summary and Conclusion

2. Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

- 2.1 Under the new Planning System, Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme are producing a Core Strategy for North Staffordshire. The Core Strategy will be the main component of both Council's future planning strategies, establishing a long term vision and objectives for the North Staffordshire sub region for the period up to 2026. An integral part of this process is ongoing Sustainability Appraisal. The approach adopted by the Councils for the assessment of the Core Strategy draws on Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) guidance. This integrated approach is referred to simply as SA for the purposes of this report.

Background

- 2.2 SA is required by law for most aspects of planning policy preparation under the new Planning System. The purpose of SA is to ensure that the full spectrum of sustainability considerations including economic, social and environmental, are taken into account in decision making. The aim is to ensure that development is as beneficial as possible and causes minimum harm. This SA considers the implications of the Core Strategy options, against the Council's Sustainability Objectives. Its purpose is to enable sustainability considerations to be properly integrated into the Core Strategy selected by the Councils.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.3 European Union law requires that an Strategic Environmental Assessment SEA is undertaken. SEA focuses on how decisions might affect the environment. The SEA is undertaken as part of SA..

The SA Report

- 2.4 This SA Report describes the approach taken for carrying out the SA, the consultation process, background information on the relevant social, economic and environmental objectives and a review of other plans, programmes and objectives significant to the strategy. It contains the SA appraisal of the Core Strategy Options.

Other plans, programmes and objectives

- 2.5 Other plans, programmes and sustainability objectives have been reviewed to ensure that the Core Strategy is consistent with these. The plans, programmes and sustainability objectives considered include those at an international, national and regional and local scale. Any potential synergies that can be taken advantage of and any inconsistencies and constraints have been addressed. A note has been made of any targets or specific requirements included in significant plans, programmes and objectives. In general no major inconsistencies between policies are identified.

Baseline Characteristics

- 2.6 Information and data about the current and likely future state of North Staffordshire was assessed in the SA to help identify the relevant sustainability issues. Baseline topics and sub topics cover the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability. Where possible, future trends and targets are identified, along with any difficulties and limitations in the data.

Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 2.7 SA objectives and criteria are central to the SA process and provide a way in which sustainability effects can be assessed and compared. The Council's sustainability objectives used for the SA of the Core Strategy Preferred Options were developed and agreed following consultation in Spring 2005. A total of 21 sustainability objectives are used in the appraisal and they fall into the three aspects of sustainability: social; environmental and economic.
- 2.8 Since the preparation of the 2005 Scoping Report the Government updated its definition of sustainable development and published a new UK Sustainable Development Framework 'Securing the Future'. The submission version of the Core Strategy will be checked against this new national Framework to give a further assurance.

Developing and Refining Options

- 2.9 A key requirement of SA is to consider reasonable alternatives as part of the assessment process. The Core Strategy options are those set out in the North Staffordshire Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report. These are
- Option A: Rural Dispersal
 - Option B: Uniform Conurbation Development
 - Option C: Targeted Regeneration

Results of the SA

- 2.10 The SA report published in May 2007 describes in detail the findings. Option C – Targeted Regeneration as an overall approach which was identified as the one that best supports sustainable patterns of development. Options A and B were not considered to be sustainable.

Appraising the Preferred Option

- 2.11 Changes made to the DPD as a result of the SA report consultation have been reviewed and additional appraisal work of further strategic options has been undertaken.

Appraising Indicative Core Strategy Policies

- 2.12 The Core Strategy Policies are indicative at this stage a refinement of the overall approach of the targeted regeneration option adding necessary detail in terms of likely delivery. As such, further SA is not necessary at this stage. This has concluded that the policies are consistent with the overall strategy although some recommendations are made in terms of potential mitigation.

Implementation and Monitoring

- 2.13 The SA must establish how significant sustainability effects will be monitored. The report identifies potential indicators and targets as a starting point for developing a sustainability-monitoring programme for the Core Strategy.

3. Context and Purpose of the SA

- 3.1 This document reports on the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process for the Local Development Framework's (LDF) Core Strategy. It sets out the methodology used to undertake the appraisal following ODPM guidance as well as documenting the recommendations and conclusions emerging from the process.

What is Sustainability Appraisal?

- 3.2 "Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic and iterative process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy, which identifies and reports on the extent to which the implementation of the plan or strategy would achieve the environmental, economic and social objectives by which sustainable development can be defined, in order that the performance of the strategy and policies is improved". (ODPM Sustainability appraisal of regional planning guidance: good practice guide).
- 3.3 UK legislation requires all LDF documents (the documents which will replace the Stoke and Newcastle Local Plans) apart from the Statement of Community Involvement to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. European legislation requires that development plan documents must also be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. This Sustainability Appraisal is conducted in accordance with Government guidance and is intended also to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive.
- 3.4 This SA report highlights the sustainability implications of the Core Strategy options and suggests mitigations. The Appraisal tests each strategy option by the sustainability objectives covering the spectrum of economic, social and environmental considerations. A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report describing the appraisal process was issued in May 2005 for consultation. Following consideration of the consultation responses it was then published as the framework for the preferred options appraisal process in March 2006.
- 3.5 The reader of this document and those undertaking a sustainability appraisal need to be aware that there are a number of factors which either affect the global environment from within North Staffordshire or which affect the local environment but which are outside the control or influence of the both Councils in their role as a planning authority. These factors, which are outside of the scope of this Appraisal, include:
- Matters which fall outside the control of both Councils such as development by statutory undertakers;
 - Matters which cannot be influenced by the planning system such as the environmental impacts of agriculture, forestry, fishing;
 - Impacts of industrial and other processes within existing businesses;

- Impacts arising out of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy including population and household growth, overall housing numbers and overall employment land targets;
- Impacts arising out of minerals and waste disposal development in Newcastle for which Staffordshire County Council is responsible;
- Impacts arising out of road proposals and schemes put forward by the County Highway Authority or by the Highways Agency.

3.6 Users should also be aware that Sustainability Appraisal although evidence based, is in large parts a subjective process. The systematic detailed appraisal of every possible impact of every possible option for every possible objective is impractical. Further, an over complex appraisal process risks not being understood. Both Councils have therefore sought to be practical in undertaking the SA.

3.7 Finally, no development can be said to be absolutely sustainable or absolutely unsustainable. It is all a matter of judgement and choices must be made.

Specific SEA Requirements

3.8 The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' (SEA) of certain plans and programmes. The Directive defines 'Environmental assessment' as procedure comprising:

- Preparing an Environmental Report on the likely significant effects of the draft plan or programme;
- Carrying out consultation on the draft plan or programme and accompanying Environmental Report;
- Taking into account the Environmental Report and the results of consultation in decision making; and
- Providing information when the plan or programme adopted and showing how the results of the environmental assessment have been taken into account.

3.9 In line with the ODPM Guidance 2005, this SA Report shows that the SEA Directives requirements have been met. The key requirements are identified in the table below as to where their location is in this document.

SEA Requirements	Location in the SA report
Preparing an environmental report, in which the likely effects on the environment of implementing the plan, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan, are identified, described and evaluated. The information to be given is (Article 5 and Annex I)	Section 6 – appraisal of options; appendix 1
Consulting Authorities with environmental responsibilities, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report (Article 5.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities with environmental responsibilities and 	Scoping report issued in May 2005. Copy available on the Councils web site www.stoke.gov.uk/ldf

the public, to give them an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan and accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan ~ (Article 6.1, 6.2).	
Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Article 8).	Submission Core Strategy document (pending March 2008)
<p>Providing information on the decision: When the plan is adopted, the public and any countries consulted under Article 7 must be informed and the following made available to those so informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan as adopted • A statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan and how the environmental report of the Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of the consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 have been taken into account in accordance with Article 8, and the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and • The measures decided concerning monitoring (Article 9) 	As above
Monitoring the significant environmental effects of the plan's implementation (Article 10).	See section 7 monitoring and Submission Core Strategy document (pending March 2008)

4. Appraisal Methodology

- 4.1 The Sustainability Appraisal of the LDF Core Strategy has been undertaken as an integral part of good plan making and is considered as a continuous process to inform the development of planning policy. Both Councils have led the SA with key input from other stakeholder groups through public consultation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 4.2 When preparing DPDs and Supplementary Planning Documents, planning authorities must also conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the SEA Directive⁽ⁱ⁾ The objective of the Directive ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ is

'to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development'.

ⁱ The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. ODPM October 2003

ⁱⁱ European Parliament and Council of the European Union (2001). Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

- 4.3 ODPM guidance on SA explains the difference between environmental assessments required under the SEA Directive and SA of development plans. There are many similarities but also some differences, and the guidance explains how assessment to comply with the SEA Directive can be integrated with present process of SA. The SEA is focused on environmental impacts whereas the SA includes a wider range of consideration including economic and social impacts of plans, the SA guidance describes how it is possible to satisfy both requirements through a single appraisal process undertaking a joint SA/SEA.
- 4.5 When the term 'SA' is referred to within this report it refers to the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment

Stages and Tasks in the Appraisal Process

- 4.6 The SA guidance establishes the SA process and explains the stages and tasks involved in carrying out the SA as an integral part of the plan making process.

Stage A - Setting the Context and Deciding on the Scope

- 4.7 The first stage of the SA involves a review of other plans, programmes and objectives relevant to the LDF at a international, national, regional and local level. There is a wide range of international and EU legislation, Directives and Action Plans relating to commitments to sustainable development and environmental standards. Additionally national and regional documents provide further mandatory requirements and guidance for local authorities. The review of relevant plans, programmes and objectives identifies and highlights the key influences and significant effects on both the plan and the LDF. It is also recognised either implicitly or explicitly the need for sustainable and holistic approach to development. A detailed breakdown of the objectives and their likely implications for the LDF were provided in the SA Scoping Report.
- 4.8 The requirement of the SEA Directive is to provide information on 'the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and likely evolution therefore implementation of the plan or programme'.
- 4.9 Baseline information was collected at this stage which provides the basis for monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability issues and alternative ways of dealing with them. The data sources have been revisited during the stages of the appraisal to check for new and updated information against which to predict and assess the effects of the Local Development Documents of the Local Development Framework.
- 4.10 Following completion of the above, all work was reviewed and the information was used to develop the key sustainability issues and a framework for sustainability objectives. A SA Scoping Report was prepared and consulted on in early 2005 and published in June 2005.
- 4.11 The Scoping Report was sent to the four statutory environmental consultation bodies designated in SEA Regulations (the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency) and other bodies that both Councils considered appropriate, with a balance between those concerned with social, environmental and economic issues for a five week consultation. Changes were then made to the objectives of the SA framework to incorporate consultation feedback.

4.12 The Scoping report proposed that the Councils objectives follow the four elements of sustainable development set out by the UK Government in 'A Better Quality of Life' (1999):

- Social Progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

4.13 Since the preparation of the 2005 Scoping Report the Government updated its definition of sustainable development and published a new UK Sustainable Development Framework 'Securing the Future' in March 2005. This builds on the previous four aims of sustainable development and sets out five shared UK principles that will be used to achieve sustainable development:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

4.14 It states in 'Securing the Future' that the new purpose of sustainable development does not depart from the earlier definition, but builds and integrates the four aims from 'A Better Quality of Life'. It was considered relevant to continue with the 2005 Scoping Report sustainability objectives under the current framework, acknowledging that this will ensure consistency in the SA process for the Core Strategy. Government requires that a local authority ensure its methodologies for SA are rigorous and fit for purpose.

4.15 Any refinement of the preferred option in the submission Core Strategy will be checked against the new Government Framework to ensure that the policies are in accordance with current and up to date sustainability principles.

Stage B: Developing and Refining Options

4.16 Stage B in the SA process involved appraising the identified Core Strategy DPD objectives against the SA framework. The findings were reported in an SA Report. This report was prepared in June 2006 and sets out the predicted implications for sustainable development of the policy options detailed in the preferred options report. To inform the SA process a sustainability panel was put together at this stage consisting of Council Officers from Stoke City Council and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council representing a variety of backgrounds, to be drawn upon when necessary to undertake a sustainability appraisal on the LDF documents.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Report

4.17 Preferred Options for the Core Strategy DPD were prepared jointly by both Councils, taking into account the consultation responses from Stage B and the SA scoping report. The DPD Preferred Options stage detailed the Councils preferred option and there has been further evaluation of main alternatives in a revised preferred options report (May 2007). The options were appraised in detail using the framework of objectives and scoring system set out in section 4 of this report. The SA Framework provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared. For a policy option to be sustainable, it must respect all Sustainability

Framework objectives, though it is recognised that some options while underpinned by all principles will place more emphasis on individual principles more than others.

Stage D: Consultation on preferred options and SA Report

- 4.18 The SA Report was issued alongside the statutory six week pre submission public participation stage of the DPD in May 2006. Further analysis of options has been undertaken in a revised preferred options report (March 2007).
- 4.19 A revised SA Report, will accompany the Core Strategy Submission Document (March 2008) and take into account the detailed changes made to the DPD following public consultation and in response includes updated scoping and appraisal.

Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the DPD

- 4.20 This SA Report will set out recommendations for monitoring the sustainability effects of the Core Strategy DPD.

5 Sustainability Framework

- 5.1 This section of the SA report, reports on the sustainability framework used by the Council throughout the SA process. It reviews the relevant plans and programmes, policy guidance and strategies. Also looks at North Staffordshire in terms of sustainability issues through the collection of baseline information was part of the process of establishing the SA framework. Finally this section sets out the SA/SEA framework that provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared.

Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes and Policy Objectives

- 5.2 The first stage of the SA/SEA (stage A) involved a review of other plans, programmes and objectives relevant to the LDF at a international, national, regional and local level. A detailed breakdown of the objectives and their likely implications for the LDF is summarised in the scoping report (May 2007). The SEA Directive requires consideration of “the relationship for the plan or programme with other relevant plans and programmes” to determine “the environmental protection objectives, established at international, (European) community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”.
- 5.3 There is a wide range of international and EU legislation, Directives and Action Plans relating to commitments to sustainable development and environmental standards. Additionally national and regional documents provide further mandatory requirements and guidance for local authorities. The review of relevant plans, programmes and objectives identifies and highlights the key influences and significant effects on both the plan and the LDF. It is also recognized either implicitly or explicitly the need for sustainable and holistic approach to development.

Community Strategy

- 5.4 The Stoke and Newcastle Community Strategies have a key influence on LDF documents. Both Council’s overall strategic visions are set out in the revised preferred options document.

- 5.5 Following the SA Framework ensures that, as far as possible, policies prepared as part of the LDF will be consistent with the respective visions and help deliver them. The Community Strategies were the starting point for identifying key sustainability issues for consideration in the SA.

Baseline Information and Indicators

- 5.6 To formulate a robust assessment of the policies proposed in the Core Strategy it is necessary to understand the current state of North Staffordshire. The requirement of the SEA Directive is to provide information on 'the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and their likely evolution through the implementation of the plan or programme.
- 5.7 Baseline information provides the basis for monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability issues and alternative ways of dealing with them. The data sources are revisited during subsequent stages of the appraisal to check for new and updated information against which to predict and assess the effects of the Local Development Documents of the Local Development Framework. Given that the Core Strategy makes no land allocations, it is considered that the baseline information required for SA and SEA at this stage can be general and generic in nature. Data has been presented in terms of social, economic and environmental objectives headings. However it is recognised that the information overlaps and may have implications under each heading. The Core Strategy Scoping Report provides social, economic and environmental background information on North Staffordshire, which includes the baseline, a basis for predicting and monitoring effects of the Development Plan.
- 5.8 The intention of the background information report is to provide a brief strategic and partially based outline rather than any site-specific detail. The SEA Directive also advises that only 'information that may reasonably be required' is to be included because 'certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment'. Therefore when necessary more site-specific data will be collated and assessed as appropriate in the LDF.

Key sustainability issues in North Staffordshire

- 5.9 To summarise there are certain key sustainability issues that are central to north Staffordschires Local Development Framework. The key sustainability issues have been established from the following sources;
- Community Strategy
 - Evidence base/ background information;
 - Issues identified in the existing Development Plans for North Staffordshire;
 - Issues identified through Regional Strategy.
- 5.10 The SA framework provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared. The framework consists of objectives that may be expressed in the form of indicators, the achievements of which are measurable using the identified indicators (See SA report appendices) as described in the previous section. The Councils sustainable objectives cover a wide spectrum of issues and the activities of a wide range of different bodies. The Scoping report objectives follow the four elements of sustainable development set out by the UK Government in 'A Better Quality of Life' (1999):

- Social Progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

5.11 The Councils sustainability objectives are included below. The ODPM's SA Guidance recommends that the objectives be developed with key stakeholders. Accordingly the public and key stakeholder consultation took place in May 2005 and the SA framework structure and objectives were revised as a necessary to incorporate response from the consultation.

1. *To help to meet the housing needs of the whole community*
2. *To increase life expectancy and improve the health of the population overall*
3. *To encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment*
4. *To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the residential population*
5. *To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the city, town and district centres within the conurbation and village centres in the rural area*
6. *To provide a more equitable society where the provision of the widest possible range of community, cultural, educational, health, recreational and leisure facilities are available to all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods*
7. *Reduce crime and the fear of crime*
8. *To reduce the need to travel while increasing accessibility for all*
9. *To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking*
10. *To increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new development and redevelopment.*
11. *To improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air and reduce emissions of chemical pollutants into the air*
12. *Retain and enhance the species and habitats targeted for improvement in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan*
13. *Ensure that there is no loss in the extent and quality of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Regionally Important Geological sites (RIGs)*
14. *Increase the amount of accessible natural green space*
15. *Reduce the amount of land in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) classified in an 'unfavourable' condition*
16. *To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)*
17. *To increase the efficient use of water resources*
18. *To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive*
19. *To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources and air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites*
20. *To help to maintain distinctiveness and foster interest in and concern for the heritage of the area*
21. *To help to provide a safe, efficient highway network and improve the viability of public transport*

6 Appraisal of Options

6.1 This section of the report sets out the integral process taken to test the DPD against the SA framework and also illustrates the emergence of the preferred policy options from the consideration of alternatives. The Directive states that:
'an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated' (Article 5.1.)

The DPD Objectives

- 6.2 DPD objectives have been set to inform the SA process and to establish what the plan is aiming to achieve in spatial planning terms and therefore setting the context for development of options for the DPD. Objectives of the DPD are to be in accordance with the sustainability principles. The objectives for the Core Strategy are:

SA1: To meet the overall development requirements for the sub-region in the period to 2026 as defined by the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and taking account the emerging revisions to the Regional Spatial Strategy.

SA2: Enhance and reinforce North Staffordshire's role as a key regional gateway; with Stoke-on-Trent City Centre enhancing its existing role as the primary commercial focus; Newcastle-under-Lyme continuing to thrive as a strategic Town Centre; both within a balanced and strong North Staffordshire economy.

SA3: To concentrate new development within the North Staffordshire conurbation and promote sustainable patterns of development that reduce the need to travel and promote accessibility by means of transport other than the private car.

SA4: To prioritise appropriate development in rural areas on brownfield sites within designated villages to reduce the need to travel and to protect the rural environment.

SA5: To create a more sustainable urban environment through the appropriate location, design, materials, public realm, linkages and control of new development leading to a more prudent use of natural resources and creation of a more healthy urban city living environment.

SA6: To reduce outward migration from the North Staffordshire sub-region and retain and attract new population to the conurbation supported by the infrastructure necessary to sustain it.

SA7: Renewal of the urban and rural areas to enable people to live close to their work and leisure and community facilities, and to benefit from the best of urban and rural living including high density, mixed use development near the city centre, Newcastle town centre and other centres and in areas that are accessible by public transport.

SA8

To balance the supply and demand for housing by removing surplus accommodation and providing a better choice of homes in appropriate locations and ensure that a sufficient number of new homes are affordable.

SA9: To ensure that new residential development makes adequate provision for community facilities including health care, education and leisure and that existing facilities are retained and enhanced where they provide for the needs of existing communities.

SA10: To increase investment in the economy and broaden the employment base of North Staffordshire, including the development of new types of work and diversification of existing businesses.

SA11: To encourage the growth of the further and higher education sector and training facilities to meet the needs of indigenous and incoming employers and North Staffordshire residents.

SA12: To prioritise large scale office, retail and town centre developments within Stoke-on-Trent City Centre and Newcastle-under-Lyme Town Centre whilst maintaining an appropriate role and provision of balanced growth for each of the other centres.

SA13: Create vital, vibrant and distinctive town centres with complementary roles to play.

SA14: To ensure a balanced portfolio of good quality and available employment land is provided and maintained to meet the needs of existing businesses and potential inward investors.

SA15: To increase the opportunities for sustainable modes of travel by securing improvements to public transport infrastructure and the provision of facilities to promote walking and cycling.

SA16: To safeguard the North-Staffordshire Green Belt and open countryside and protect it from inappropriate development.

SA17: Create a greener North Staffordshire by maintaining and improving its network of canals, green spaces and parks to provide the landscape setting for high quality development of homes, employment and leisure opportunities and to foster a more sustainable way of life.

SA18: To protect and enhance the built and natural environment of North Staffordshire including townscape, landscape, bio-diversity, established settlement patterns, historic buildings and heritage sites (including parks, gardens and battlefields), and valued character areas.

SA19: To increase the attraction of the sub-region as a tourist destination, utilising North Staffordshire's unique industrial heritage of ceramics and mining and the high quality natural environment in the surrounding rural area.

SA20: To promote the use of renewable energy sources, green construction methods and energy conservation and move towards zero carbon growth.

SA21: To reduce the risk of flooding, pollution, and adverse environmental impacts in all new developments.

SA22: Improve accessibility and linkages throughout North Staffordshire for local residents and visitors.

SA23: To provide a sustainable framework for the winning and working of minerals in Stoke-on-Trent.

SA24: To provide a framework for the consideration of planning applications for the development of waste management facilities or other forms of development with significant waste implications in Stoke-on-Trent.

Appraisal of alternative options and choice of preferred option

- 6.3 The Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options document describes three possible strategic approaches to spatial planning in North Staffordshire. The performance of the three options has been tested against the sustainability objectives considering the social, economic and environmental factors and an SA report has been produced. The following are the three options that were considered:

Option A

Rural Dispersal – the progressive urbanisation of the North Staffordshire countryside in the form of expanded villages, new settlements and peripheral expansion of the conurbation into the surrounding Green Belt.

Option B

Uniform Conurbation Development – the finite development jam would be spread uniformly across the conurbation in response to expediency.

Option C

Targeted Regeneration – focusing regeneration within specified areas of need with investment being directed towards rejuvenation of our centres, priority intervention areas and bringing forward strategic development opportunities.

- 6.4 The purpose of the SA is to assist the Council in its selection of a preferred option by highlighting the sustainability implications of the different core strategy options, by identifying the most sustainable option (through SA) and the best environmental option (through SEA). For a policy option to be sustainable, it must respect all Sustainability Framework objectives, though it is recognised that some options, while underpinned by all principles will place more emphasis on individual principles more than others. If any trade offs between objectives are necessary they should be made in an open and transparent way.
- 6.5 The development and appraisal of options was an iterative process, with the options being revised to take account of the appraisal findings and consultation responses. This enabled the selection, refinement and publication of preferred options for consultation to meet the Local Development Regulation 26 stage.
- 6.6 Appraisal of three realistic potential options has been undertaken. The appraisal framework as explained in the previous section provides the opportunity to consider the significance and the extent that the option may contribute towards or away from sustainable development. It is clear from the appraisal that **Option A - Dispersal, Option B - Uniform Conurbation Development have no sustainability potential to accommodate the needs of North Staffordshire.**

Reasons why no further appraisal of individual Options A and B should be pursued

- 6.9 A brief summary of the reasons for screening out options A and B can be viewed below.

Option A - Rural Dispersal

Option A did not generally conform to the sustainability objectives. Having received a negative score in the SA and being deficient in conforming to the spatial objectives it is considered that if this option is to be taken forward very serious environmental mitigations would need to be introduced. This essentially would result in a change in the whole strategy.

Option B - Uniform Conurbation Development

On appraisal, option B only obtained positive scores in economic terms, with serious negative scoring for social and environmental objectives. The option was considered not to have any potential in sustainability terms.

Detailed Appraisal of the Remaining Option

- 6.10 It was considered that option C- Targeted Regeneration was the approach that had the opportunity most likely to deliver both the community's aspiration and the development requirements set out by Regional Spatial Strategy. If any alternative options are suggested by stakeholders during the consultation they too would have to be appraised against the SA Framework.

6.11 In its response to the Preferred Option document the Government Office for the West Midlands was concerned that it had not been made sufficiently clear that representations could still be made in favour of alternative options. Therefore a Revised Preferred Options document has therefore been published for additional consultation to address this concern by providing both additional information on the implications of the other considered options and an additional opportunity for stakeholders to comment. Responses to both this consultation and the original Core Strategy Preferred Option Consultation and response to the SA report will inform the Council's considerations when preparing the final Submission edition of the Core Strategy (March 2008). The SA report sets out the comparison of how the options performed against each of the SA objectives, the potential effects of the broad based options and where appropriate qualitative predictions or a judgement has been made.

Uncertainties and Risks

6.12 The SA report also documents any uncertainties or limitations in the appraisal. Due to the high level, strategic nature of much of the Core Strategy, the appraisal has identified relative uncertainty when predicting many of the effects. Uncertainties will always be present in any assessment, including a qualitative assessment such as SA.. The cause and effect relationships and assumptions that underlie the SA are not definite and all predictions bring a certain risk of necessary to have panel members from all social, economic and environmental backgrounds to ensure all aspects of the effects were covered in the appraisal discussions.

Risk 1 - that the SA Framework does not address all issues.

6.13 Within the SA Framework a number of objectives have been used to cover Sustainability. These are thought to be comprehensive enough to cover most eventualities. The combination of sustainability objectives is an important matter. Numerically, there are more environmental and social objectives than economic ones. However the assessment process is not intended to be viewed as a quantitative assessment in which adding up the numbers creates the answer. Rather, the objectives pose a series of challenges to the proposal to draw out its effects.

Risk 2 – Impact of Flood Risk

6.14 The risk of flooding and the uncertainties of climate change is another key issue. Parts of Newcastle and Stoke lie within the flood plain. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work will be taken into account in preparing the final submission Core Strategy to ensure risks to flooding of development will be addressed.

Proposed Mitigation measures and recommendations

6.15 The ODPM SA guidance indicates that the SA report must include measures to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effects of implementing the DPD. It is inevitable that any future development of North Staffordshire is going to impact upon the area's existing conditions. As acknowledged in the SA report (May 2006) some of these impacts will be positive and some negative. Opportunities to enhance the positive should be taken wherever possible and mitigation's for the negatives should be identified and acted upon accordingly.

7 Appraisal of Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Document

- 7.1 Following consultation of the preferred options report in May 2006, a revised document has been produced providing strategic guidance for new development in the North Staffordshire. Indicative Core Strategy Policies address the big issues facing North Staffordshire. The revised document provides a more comprehensive spatial framework based on a Targeted Regeneration principle, which supports improvements by concentrating new homes, jobs, shops and community facilities in sustainable locations and in existing Urban areas to meet regeneration needs and balanced with rural development to meeting local needs and to sustain rural service centres.
- 7.2 The ODPM SA guidance indicates that if the submission DPD is simply a refinement of one of the preferred options e.g. Targeted Regeneration providing greater clarity about how it will be delivered, including for example, detailed policy wording, then further SA would not be needed. However with the impending partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy and emerging Area Regeneration Frameworks, it would be prudent to test the Submission Core Strategy policies once again.
- 7.3 Indicative policies are likely to result in significant positive effects on North Staffordshire, particularly to the location and accessibility of development. These positive effects have been highlighted throughout the SA process.
- 7.4 No significant conflicts have been identified with the Targeted Regeneration Strategy option so far. The indicative policies of the DPD will be strengthened by more detailed policies which emerge in the Development Control Policies Document and additional Supplementary Planning Documents developed by both local authorities.
- 7.5 The land allocations DPDs will influence the effect of the Core Strategy policies. There will need to be thorough consideration of site selection, maximising brownfield sites in urban areas, enhancing the North Staffordshire area whilst not increasing the damaging effects of traffic congestion and degrading the local and historic character.. Mitigation measures must be considered when sites are allocated for new development.
- 7.6 It is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that the Council's LDF is in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands. RSS sets the levels of new housing development for each Local Planning Authority area. This has informed the basis for policy CP10 where a range of options has been considered depending on RSS outcomes.
- 7.7 Other core policies in the revised preferred options core strategy reflect National and Regional planning guidance. While others seek to meet the aspirations of the local community, as identified in the both Stoke and Newcastle Community Strategies. The DPD policies have been designed to reflect one of the preferred options and provide greater clarity about the delivery of the preferred strategy, including indicative policy wording. Although both Councils recognise the need for flexibility if a different preferred option emerges from this consultation. In other words everything is still to be played for.

8 Monitoring Proposals

- 8.1 Once the Core Strategy Development Plan is implemented, its effects on the environment, society and the economy are to be monitored to allow action to be taken to reduce and /or prevent any significant effects. The monitoring programme will be for inclusion in the SA Statement, which will accompany the adopted plan. Where possible the monitoring will make use of existing monitoring arrangements, for example those reported in the LDF Annual Monitoring Reports.

9 Summary and Conclusions

- 9.1 A sustainability framework was developed based upon local, regional, national and international policies, objectives and targets together identifying baseline data for the North Staffordshire. Following consultation and assessment, a number of non-major alterations were made to the sub-objectives and the baseline data.
- 9.2 The Core Strategy Preferred Options set out a variety of policy options for the Core Strategy. These were assessed against the sustainability objectives to assist the Councils in determining which option to take forward as a preferred option.
- 9.3 Subsequent to the SA in which the sustainability implications of each core strategy option were highlighted and necessary improvements considered, some options were deemed to have no potential for achieving sustainable development. Therefore those options were eliminated from further consideration.
- 9.4 The remaining options were again appraised against the sustainability objectives, and focused on identifying the significant environmental, social and economic effects that may result from implementation of the strategies. The appraisal found that the vast majority of the predicted effects are positive against the objectives.
- 9.5 Inevitably there will be environmental impacts associated with providing the required housing, employment land and associated infrastructure to meet the needs of the North Staffordshire over the period to 2026. Given the rural dispersed nature of Newcastle's rural hinterland it has to be accepted that creating an affordable, efficient public transport network will be difficult and take time to achieve whatever strategy was chosen. Alternative mechanisms for reducing vehicular trips must be promoted, for instance improved access to Broadband and IT, community transport schemes and the promotion of more flexible working patterns. To encourage a modal switch in urban areas, employers and developers need to be encouraged to submit Green Travel plans and explore opportunities to minimise car parking spaces.
- 9.6 The Council also needs to consider taking a proactive stance to flood risk and rising sea level. Both Councils, in line with PPS25, are working closely with the Environment Agency to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which will inform all planning issues. This work should be used to determine the specific locations of new development, and inform planning for increased flood protection through climate change.
- 9.7 In order to determine the effects of the plan in the long term and ensure that effects can be monitored to reduce and/or offset significant adverse effects, monitoring proposals will be included in the SA Statement, which will accompany the adopted plan.

APPENDIX 1 - STRATEGIC OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This appendix sets out the results of the appraisal of different strategic options considered in preparation of the Revised Preferred Options. The appraisal was undertaken using the following key:

+2	Very Positive
+1	Positive
0	Neutral
-1	Negative
-2	Very Negative
?	Unclear

The table sets out a summary of the likely effect of progressing each strategic option on each of the sustainability objectives, together with a score assigned from the above.

+2	Very positive	+1	Positive	0	Neutral	-1	Negative	-2	Very Negative	?	Unclear
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Option A - Rural Dispersal – the progressive urbanisation of the North Staffordshire countryside in the form of expanded villages, new settlements and peripheral expansion of the conurbation into surrounding Green Belt.		
Sustainability Objective	Comments	Potential Mitigation Measures
<i>1. To help to meet the housing needs of the whole community</i>	-2 Housing market renewal aims and objectives will be compromised by continued out migration to rural areas.	
<i>2. To increase life expectancy and improve the health of the population overall</i>	+1 A rural life style is an attractive proposition. Urban lifestyles should not be compromised as a result. Pressure on rural greenspace as a result of dispersed development.	
<i>3. To provide the best possible environment to encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment</i>	+1 Availability of out of town sites should appeal to investors. Some negative effects on urban economic activity arising for easier attractive unused rural sites	
<i>4. To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the resident population</i>	0 Town centres and supermarkets are all centrally or urban located. Whilst rural service centres may well thrive as a result of this approach people will still need to commute.	
<i>5. To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the city, town and district centres within the conurbation and village centres in the rural area</i>	-2 Dispersed development is less likely to secure regeneration for the urban centres. The impact on some sectors such as the leisure and tourism economy will have a negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centres.	
<i>6. To provide a more equitable society where the provision of the widest possible range of community, cultural, educational, health, recreational and leisure facilities are available to all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods</i>	-2 Dispersal of development benefits will reinforce urban decline and exacerbate outward migration and have a detrimental impact on regeneration of the conurbation.	
<i>7. Reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>	-1 More policing will be needed in more places if there is an out migration from the urban area.	
<i>8. To reduce the need to travel while increasing accessibility for all</i>	-2 New development on dispersed sites will attract more people and may potentially increase journey times and the amount of people making car journeys. Sites may not be served by public transport which will result in an increase in car traffic	
<i>9. To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking</i>	-2 Development would take place where public transport is poor and where travel distances are a deterrent to walking and cycling	

10. To increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new development and redevelopment.	-1 Will not deliver energy efficient patterns of development.	Potential to introduce energy efficiency and renewables solutions on larger schemes. DC policy should provide the conditions to control polluting development
11. To improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air.	-2 More dispersed development will encourage more car use, higher emissions from traffic and congestion	
12. Retain and enhance the species and habitats targeted for improvement in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan	-1 Harm to the character of urban and rural environment and a risk of detrimental impact to sensitive habitats	
13. Ensure that there is no loss in the extent and quality of SBIs, LNRs, RIGs	-1 Almost all development would be greenfield and not compatible with the Regional Spatial Strategy. There is a risk of erosion of the character of the North Staffordshire countryside.	
14. Increase the amount of accessible natural green space	-1 Loss of Green Belt land but might deliver new/enhanced leisure and recreation facilities	
15. Reduce the amount of land in SSSIs classified in an 'unfavourable' condition	0 Development contributions could be used to facilitate environmental enhancements	
16. To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources and air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites	-2 Low density dispersed development represents an inefficient use of land. Development is less likely to take place on brownfield sites. Considerable amount of greenfield land will irreversibly be lost to development	
17. To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	-1 Loss of permeable surfaces increases the risk of flooding	
18. To increase the efficient use of water resources	-1 More water use and run off	Ensure that water sewerage infrastructure exists
19. To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.	-1 More water use and run off	Ensure that water sewerage infrastructure exists
20. To help to maintain distinctiveness and foster interest in and concern for the heritage of the area	-2 Harm to the character of both the urban area and the countryside. Lost opportunities to develop and improve built heritage. Harmful effect on town centres.	
21. To help to provide a safe, efficient highway network and improve the viability of public transport	-2 New development on dispersed sites will attract more people and will increase journey times and the amount of people making car journeys. Sites may not be served by public transport particularly in the rural area again this will result in an increase in car dependency	
Summary: The sustainability appraisal has concluded that this option does not conform to sustainability objectives. If it were to be taken forward, the degree of mitigation necessary would be such as to fundamentally change the Strategy. Therefore mitigations are considered not necessary for this option.		

+2	Very positive	+1	Positive	0	Neutral	-1	Negative	-2	Very Negative	?	Unclear
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Sustainability Objective	Comments	Potential Mitigation Measures
Option B - Uniform Conurbation Development – the finite development jam would be spread uniformly across the conurbation in response to expediency		
<i>1. To help to meet the housing needs of the whole community</i>	-1 Whilst this option broadly accords with RSS in terms of contribution to housing nos it does not address the area specific regeneration needs within the housing market that exist in North Staffordshire.	Need to stipulate areas for development to ensure sites are accessible mitigate through DC policies. New developments will need to ensure diverse choice is available to provide for different socio-economic groups
<i>2. To increase life expectancy and improve the health of the population overall</i>	+1 Opportunity for healthy lifestyle with many people in close proximity to gyms, sport centres, hospitals and clinics. It depends on implementation	Opportunities to enhance health service provision as a result of development should be secured through S106 agreement
<i>3. To provide the best possible environment to encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment</i>	+2 The availability of out of town employment sites should appeal for new investment. Some possible negative effects on centres of easier attractive sites on the periphery. Flexibility to accommodate proposals as and when they arise with no local strategic constraints to development	
<i>4. To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the resident population</i>	-1 Existing infrastructure resources would be stretched to the maximum. Development opportunities would be spread so thinly as to draw investment away from commercial centres	Maximise contributions to necessary infrastructure through strategic tariff across conurbation
<i>5. To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the city, town and district centres within the conurbation and village centres in the rural area</i>	-1 Decline of centres due to ready availability of easily developable sites. Neglecting brownfield sites. Retail/services draw people out of the town centres.	Managed release of sites
<i>6. To provide a more equitable society where the provision of the widest possible range of community, cultural, educational, health, recreational and leisure facilities are available to all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods</i>	-2 A car dependant urban form would have a negative impact on equity, accessibility, inclusivity, access to services and most importantly the disadvantaged communities of North Staffordshire	Ensure development considers the needs of the existing and new population and works with transport providers to improve access and movement to/from site. Efforts to encourage take up of public transport options should be encouraged.
<i>7. Reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>	+1 Gives opportunities to secure urban design improvements aimed at safer communities	
<i>8. To reduce the need to travel while increasing accessibility for all</i>	-1 Car dependency would prevail and have a negative impact on the quality of life for non-car drivers. Travel times increase.	Encourage developers to explore ways of reducing effect of car dependency through schemes to support public transport provision.
<i>9. To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking</i>	-1 It would in time render the pursuit of integrated transport across the conurbation virtually impossible.	

10. To increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new development and redevelopment.	-1 Encouraging car dependency and dispersed services across the conurbation would have a negative impact on climate change and does not deliver energy efficient pattern of development	
11. To improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air.	-1 Sheer weight of development generates poor air quality and further car dependency risks more congestion although some compensation if development is spread within the urban only	
12. Retain and enhance the species and habitats targeted for improvement in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan	-1 There is a risk of pressure on urban greenspaces and sites with nature conservation importance becoming damaged.	
13. Ensure that there is no loss in the extent and quality of SBIs, LNRs, RIGs	-1 As above	
14. Increase the amount of accessible natural green space	-1 As above	
15. Reduce the amount of land in SSSIs classified in an 'unfavourable' condition	0 Depends on implementation	
16. To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources and air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites	-2 Low density development spreading out along main corridors. Development is less likely to take place on undesirable brownfield land.	
17. To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	-1 Existing infrastructure not likely to be strong enough. Level of development will create more impermeable surfaces and is likely to increase the risk of flooding.	The implementation of flood schemes and sustainable drainage can offset environmental impacts
18. To increase the efficient use of water resources	-1 More water use and surface run off	
19. To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.	-1 More water use and surface run off	
20. To help to maintain distinctiveness and foster interest in and concern for the heritage of the area	-2 A uniform pattern of development would result that does not have a meaningful relationship with historic character.	
21. To help to provide a safe, efficient highway network and improve the viability of public transport	-1 The resulting pattern of development would be an inefficient use of land and buildings and would encourage car dependency and thereby reduce the potential for improvements to be made to public transport	
Summary: Although this options scores well in economic terms the benefits of spreading development across the whole of the conurbation were not sufficiently strong to outweigh very significant social and environmental impacts which would be difficult to overcome.		

+2	Very positive	+1	Positive	0	Neutral	-1	Negative	-2	Very Negative	?	Unclear
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Sustainability Objective	Comments	Potential Mitigation Measures
Option C – Targeted Regeneration – focussed regeneration within specified areas with investment being directed towards rejuvenation of the existing centres, priority intervention areas and bringing forward strategic development opportunities.		
<i>1. To help to meet the housing needs of the whole community</i>	+2 Focus on areas identified in the RSS for Housing Market Renewal. Possibility of over reliance on HMR to address housing needs as a whole.	Rural housing policy should address local needs and exceptions but also be supportive of future sustainability of rural service centres. A variety of house types for all different needs will be required.
<i>2. To increase life expectancy and improve the health of the population overall</i>	+2 Regeneration should provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles. High standards of development should result in healthy living environments	Ensure open, sport and recreation policies are designed to enable active recreation
<i>3. To provide the best possible environment to encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment</i>	+1 Business development will be managed to match regeneration partners investment streams toward priority areas. Limits choice of location by developers seeking to create employment wealth in North Staffordshire.	Ensure flexibility so as not to preclude meeting local needs where compatible with overall strategy.
<i>4. To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the resident population</i>	+2 Should help to improve local shopping services	Concentration on improving access to local services close to where people live.
<i>5. To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the city, town and district centres within the conurbation and village centres in the rural area</i>	+2 Will improve the vitality and viability of all town centres and ensure the City Centre and Newcastle Town centre remain the hub of the conurbation.	Ensure balance is achieved through sequential approach.
<i>6. To provide a more equitable society where the provision of the widest possible range of community, cultural, educational, health, recreational and leisure facilities are available to all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods</i>	+2 Benefits areas in greatest need	
<i>7. Reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>	+1 Improves inner urban core areas susceptible to crime that should in turn increase sense of personal safety, security and surveillance.	
<i>8. To reduce the need to travel while increasing accessibility for all</i>	+1 Regeneration of central areas gives the chance for shorter journeys and could reduce the need to travel locally	Efforts to reduce car dependency, journey planning and procurement policies required.
<i>9. To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking</i>	+1 Opportunities for better public transport and modal shifts	

10. To increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new development and redevelopment.	+1 Opportunity for recycling of land and buildings and sustainable construction	Ensure reference to climate change in policy framework. Energy policy should set out standards to be achieved.
11. To improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air.	+1 Focussed development patterns will support improvements to air quality	
12. Retain and enhance the species and habitats targeted for improvement in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan	+2 Concentrating development in selected areas protects the rural landscape and possibly protected sites	
13. Ensure that there is no loss in the extent and quality of SBIs, LNRs, RIGs	+2 As above	
14. Increase the amount of accessible natural green space	+2 As above	
15. Reduce the amount of land in SSSIs classified in an 'unfavourable' condition	+2 As above	
16. To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources and air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites	+2 Development would predominantly involve previously developed land.	
17. To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	0 Will create more impermeable surfaces which could potentially increase the risk of flooding	Ensure Strategic Flood Risk appraisal is undertaken
18. To increase the efficient use of water resources	0 More development will mean more water use but opportunity for responsible use	
19. To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.	0 Depends on implementation	
20. To help to maintain distinctiveness and foster interest in and concern for the heritage of the area	+2 Concentrating development in selected areas helps to protect built and natural heritage. However focus on one area might limit opportunities elsewhere. It will encourage local distinctiveness and create a sense of place. Protects the countryside.	
21. To help to provide a safe, efficient highway network and improve the viability of public transport	+1 Regeneration will improve travel and access. Some restrictions to access in priority areas.	Ensure necessary planning contributions are forthcoming to meet infrastructure requirements
Summary: This is the most sustainable option of the three. It scored strongly on transport, town centres, and conservation of heritage and did not raise any major sustainability concerns.		

Summary table of sustainability objective scoring

Sustainability Objective	Option A - Rural Dispersal	Option B - Uniform Conurbation Development	Option C - Targeted Regeneration
1. <i>To help to meet the housing needs of the whole community</i>	-2	-1	+2
2. <i>To increase life expectancy and improve the health of the population overall</i>	+1	+1	+2
3. <i>To provide the best possible environment to encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment</i>	+1	+2	+1
4. <i>To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the resident population</i>	0	-1	+2
5. <i>To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the city, town and district centres within the conurbation and village centres in the rural area</i>	-2	-1	+2
6. <i>To provide a more equitable society where the provision of the widest possible range of community, cultural, educational, health, recreational and leisure facilities are available to all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods</i>	-2	-2	+2
7. <i>Reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>	-1	+1	+1
8. <i>To reduce the need to travel while increasing accessibility for all</i>	-2	-1	+1
9. <i>To encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking</i>	-2	-1	+1
10. <i>To increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new development and redevelopment.</i>	-1	-1	+1
11. <i>To improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air.</i>	-2	-2	+1
12. <i>Retain and enhance the species and habitats targeted for improvement in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan</i>	-1	-1	+2
13. <i>Ensure that there is no loss in the extent and quality of SBIs, LNRs, RIGs</i>	-1	-1	+2
14. <i>Increase the amount of accessible natural green space</i>	-1	-1	+2
15. <i>Reduce the amount of land in SSSIs classified in an 'unfavourable' condition</i>	0	0	+2
16. <i>To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources and air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites</i>	-2	-2	+2
17. <i>To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)</i>	-1	-1	0
18. <i>To increase the efficient use of water resources</i>	-1	-1	0
19. <i>To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</i>	-1	-1	0
20. <i>To help to maintain distinctiveness and foster interest in and concern for the heritage of the area</i>	-2	-2	+2
21. <i>To help to provide a safe, efficient highway network and improve the viability of public transport</i>	-2	-1	+1
Total Score	-24	-17	29

For further information on this document or on the preparation of the City of Stoke on Trent Local Development Framework, please contact a member of the Planning Policy Team

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