

# LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME AND STOKE-ON-TRENT CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY

### Sustainability Appraisal





# PLAN 1

## CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY PLAN AREA

**BOROUGH OF  
NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME**

**CITY OF  
STOKE-ON-TRENT**



NOT TO SCALE

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# **Newcastle-Under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy Sustainability Appraisal**

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## 1. Introduction

Under section 39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, local planning authorities must undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for each Local Development Document (LDD) to be included in their Local Development Framework (LDF). A Sustainability Appraisal assesses the degree to which a plan reflects and promotes the principles of sustainable development and identifies measures through which the sustainability performance of a plan can be monitored and enhanced.

The Sustainability Appraisal process is in conformity with the requirements for a formal environmental assessment as outlined in the European Union 'Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'.

This report outlines the steps taken in applying the Sustainability Appraisal process to Newcastle – under – Lyme and Stoke – on – Trent Core Spatial Strategy. This report also takes account of the previous stages of Sustainability Appraisal undertaken in the earlier stages of the plan – making process. This report should be read in conjunction with the following –

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (March 2005)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2006)
- Sustainability Appraisal Options Appendix (April 2006)
- Sustainability Appraisal Policy Appendix (April 2006)
- Sustainability Appraisal Revised Preferred Options 'Draft Spatial Options' (March 2007)

All of the above documents are accessible at –

<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/LDF>

Paper copies can be provided on request.

## **2. What is Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment?**

The report – Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, published by the ODPM in 2005 defines SA as – ‘...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’.

Sustainability Appraisal involves taking a long – term view of the possible impacts of the policies within the proposed LDD, upon the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the plan area. It also provides a framework for ensuring that policies reflect global, national, regional and local sustainability objectives.

With the exception of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), Annual Monitoring Reports and the Local Development Scheme, all LDDs must be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

When preparing DPDs and Supplementary Planning Documents, planning authorities must also conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the SEA Directive. The objective of the Directive 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’

Guidance published by the then ODPM in 2005 outlines the difference between environmental assessments required under the SEA Directive and the Sustainability Appraisal 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 the Sustainability Appraisal process. The SEA process is focused upon environmental impacts, whereas the SA also addresses the economic and social sustainability of plans and policies.

Carrying out an environmental assessment involves –

- 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.

The Sustainability Appraisal Process detailed in this report conforms to the formal requirements for SEA as outlined above. When the term 'SA' is referred to within this report it refers to the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The table below details where in the various stages of SA, the key requirements of the SEA Directive have been met and documented -

SEA Requirements	Location in the SA Reports
<p>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 1)</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal Options Appendix (April 2006)</p> <p>Sustainability Appraisal Policy Appendix (April 2006)</p> <p>Sustainability Appraisal Revised Preferred Options 'Draft Spatial Options' (March 2007) Section 6 – appraisal of options: appendix 1.</p> <p>Sustainability Appraisal Report May 2008 (This report and accompanying appendices)</p>
<p>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)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorities with environmental responsibilities and 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)</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (May 2005)</p>
<p>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision making (article 8)</p>	<p>Core Spatial Strategy Preferred Options Report (April 2006)</p> <p>Core Spatial Strategy Revised Options 'Draft Spatial Options' (March 2007)</p> <p>Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy (May 2008)</p>
<p>Providing information on the decision –  When the plan is adopted, the public and any</p>	<p>Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy (May 2008)</p>

<p>countries consulted under Article 7 must be informed and the following made available to those informed –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan as adopted</li> <li>• 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 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</li> <li>• The measures decided concerning monitoring (Article 9)</li> </ul>	<p>Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy Sustainability Statement (date to be confirmed)</p>
<p>Monitoring the significant environmental effects of the plan's implementation (Article 10)</p>	<p>Section 9 of this report.</p> <p>Section 8 of the Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy</p> <p>Both authorities' future LDF Annual Monitoring Reports</p>

All of the above documents can be accessed at –

<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/LDF>

Paper copies can be provided on request.



### **3. Background to the Newcastle – under - Lyme and Stoke – on - Trent Core Spatial Strategy.**

The Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (the Core Spatial Strategy) has been prepared jointly by the two local planning authorities of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and the City of Stoke-on-Trent Council. The Core Spatial Strategy provides out a long term vision for Newcastle and Stoke – on – Trent and sets out the strategic principles and policies that will effectively guide development and investment towards achieving this vision.

Throughout the earlier stages of plan production, the Core Spatial Strategy was referred to as the North Staffordshire Core Spatial Strategy. However, since the Staffordshire Moorlands is also part of North Staffordshire it was felt that changing the document's title to the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy would serve to avoid any confusion.

The form and content of the Core Spatial Strategy has evolved significantly throughout the plan making process, largely as a result of stakeholder input through the various stages of public consultation and outcomes from the various stages of Sustainability Appraisal.

The keys stages of the Core Spatial Strategy plan production and public consultation process are outlined below –

- Issues and Options – November 2005
- Preferred Options – June 2006
- Revised Preferred Options – June 2007
- Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy- May 2008

The Issues and Options stage was a highly informal exercise presenting the opportunity for stakeholders and the general public to offer their views on the key issues affecting the plan area and as such was not subject to SA. The following stages were however, all subject to sustainability appraisal. The outcomes of these appraisals formed a key part of the evidence base for decisions made at later stages of the plan – making process.

#### **3.1 Summary of the Core Spatial Strategy**

Consultation on the Revised Preferred Options was carried out during the summer of 2007. Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) commented that the report contained too many policies, a number of which simply repeated national policy and were not 'locally distinctive'. As a result of GOWM's comments, the Submission Report is significantly different to the preceding report. The overall number of policies has been significantly reduced. Much of the content of the original policies deemed unnecessary by GOWM have been absorbed into either the overall strategy in the form of 'Spatial Principles' or into the six 'Area Spatial Strategies'. As such the structure and appearance of the submission report appears to be radically different to the Revised Preferred Options Report. However the changes are essentially related to the structure, style and most importantly the tone of the report.

With regards to the tone of the report, the earlier approach of presenting an extensive suite of essentially development control policies designed to deliver the overall strategy has been replaced by sections that present the aims and delivery mechanisms of the strategy with far greater clarity and detail.

Because the submission report is significantly different to the earlier versions it was deemed necessary to subject the report to a full SA rather than simply revising the previous SA report.

The various sections of the Submission draft are summarised below

### Section 1 – Introduction

This sets out the purpose and format of the strategy and the reason for joint working.

### Section 2 - Context and Conformity

This describes the background to the Core Spatial Strategy and its relationship to key national, regional and local plans and its integration with neighbouring areas and wider regeneration strategies and programmes.

### Section 3 - Spatial Portrait

The spatial portrait describes the social, economic and environmental characteristics of both local planning authority areas, and identifies the critical issues and challenges we face.

### Section 4 - Strategic Vision and Aims

This articulates a single vision for Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent by setting out a broad picture of where we want to be by 2026. The key vision word is 'choice.' Essentially we want to create a place where people chose to live, work and invest and which is a destination for visitors.

Eighteen Strategic Aims are listed relating to themes of people; prosperity and place, against which success will be measured.

The key message is, if the plan area is to be sustainable, it needs to change.

### Section 5 - Strategic and Spatial Principles

This sets out the spatial principles which form the basis of the approach proposed in the Core Spatial Strategy and the framework for the nature, scale and broad location of development over the plan period.

A simplified hierarchy of centres is proposed which includes, the strategic centres (Newcastle Town Centre and the City Centre); the significant urban centres (including Kidsgrove, the six towns and Meir in Stoke-on-Trent) and over fifty local centres across the plan area.

A strategy of targeted regeneration is then advocated. This will serve to focus development and investment towards the highest priority areas – Newcastle Town Centre, the City Centre and those areas identified as priority areas for intervention and regeneration, whilst simultaneously restraining development within non priority locations. Keele University and Keele Science Park, Staffordshire University and

University Hospital, will continue to be the focus for high value business growth in the medical and healthcare technologies and creative industries sector.

Development will be prioritised on sustainable brownfield land.

In accordance with the emerging regional spatial strategy, provision is made to accommodate a net 10% increase in housing stock within both Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent with priority being given both to increasing affordable housing supply (total number of 4,200 affordable houses) and capturing more of the North Staffordshire market for higher cost housing.

The Core Spatial Strategy supports the diversification and modernisation of the local economy; confirms Chatterley Valley as the designated Regional Investment Site and identifies an employment land supply target of 220 hectares for Stoke-on-Trent and 112 hectares for Newcastle. These targets accommodate a 5 year rolling employment land supply of 28 hectares in Newcastle and 55 hectares in Stoke-on-Trent. These targets are in conformity with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision.

Provision will be made for the development of an ambitious target of 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of new office floor space in Newcastle Town Centre close to the inner ring road, and 85,000m<sup>2</sup> of new office floor space in the City centre as part of the formation of a City Centre Business District, largely contained within the traditional city centre bounded by the Potteries Way. It will, however, include limited development on the edge of the City centre along the complementary Etruria Road Corridor.

Provision will be made for the modest growth of comparison floorspace in Newcastle Town Centre, 35,000 sq. m, over the next twenty years. Retail development targets for the City are significantly larger – 120,000 sq. m to 2026. These targets are in conformity with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision.

The Core Spatial Strategy embraces the best of the principles of sustainable transport development. Work is ongoing to model the impact of traffic arising from built development to identify detailed and timely infrastructural investment to ensure that the proposed regeneration strategy and programmes work.

The above spatial principles are given further expression in six **Area Spatial Strategies**. These describe in greater detail how we imagine the future of key sub areas of Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent and how we wish to manage change in these areas.

Each area spatial strategy sets out a vision, which paints both a physical and an inspirational picture of each sub area in 2026 and a set of strategic principles to guide investment and development to realise these visions.

There are six distinctive sub areas are - Newcastle Town Centre, Newcastle and Kidsgrove Urban Neighbourhoods, the Rural Area, the City Centre of Stoke-on-Trent; the Stoke-on-Trent Inner Urban Core extending from Burslem through to Stoke, and the Stoke-on-Trent Outer Urban Area.

There are ten **Core Strategic Policies** summarised below, which developers will need to take into account. In addition, these core policies will provide the hook upon which site specific allocations, detailed planning policies and supplementary planning guidance can be worked up and delivered through other Local Development Documents.

**Policy CSP1 – Design Quality** - Both Councils remain determined to raise the bar in terms of the design quality of development in Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle. The distinctive strategic policy approach set out in this document will be expanded in subsequent Development Plan Documents and in the North Staffordshire Generic Design Guidance SPD.

**Policy CSP2 – Historic Environment** - This policy seeks to protect and enhance the plan area's attractive and irreplaceable historic environment. The policy outlines the proactive approach taken by both authorities' to addressing this issue, particularly the production of a suite of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans. This core policy will, in Newcastle, be further expanded through the proposed Conservation and Heritage Guidance SPD.

**Policy CSP3 – Sustainability and Climate Change** - This policy details how the design of new development can contribute towards addressing future climatic issues. The policy sets standards for the on-site renewable energy microgeneration capacity of new residential and non-residential development. The policy also sets minimum standards for the sustainability performance of new residential development. These requirements are in conformity with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision.

**Policy CSP4 – Natural Assets** - In common with the historic environment we wish to ensure that the Core Spatial Strategy will result in a net enhancement of the natural assets of Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent. The strategic principles and approach detailed in this policy will be further expanded in subsequent site specific and generic Development Plan Document policies.

**Policy CSP5 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation** – The provision of appropriate quantities and quality of publicly accessible open spaces and sports/recreational facilities is central to improving the quality of life of existing and future residents of the plan area. This policy details the proactive approach taken by both authorities' for achieving these aims. The policy will aid the delivery of the Urban North Staffordshire Green Space Strategy and both authorities respective Playing Pitch/Sports/Leisure Strategies. The strategic principles and approach detailed in this policy will be further expanded in subsequent site specific and generic Development Plan Document policies.

**Policy CSP6 – Affordable Housing** - This sets out both Councils' strategic approach to the negotiation of affordable housing provision as part of Section 106 planning agreements. The policy will be central to the delivery of affordable housing targets set out in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision. The policy will be further expanded by both authorities respective Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Documents.

**Policy CSP7 – Gypsy and Travellers** – This policy draws upon the results of the recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment prepared by a consortium of North Staffordshire authorities and sets out the strategic approach towards meeting the housing needs of this specific section of the local community. The policy will be expanded through more detailed, site specific policies in subsequent Development Plan Documents.

**Policy CSP8 – Minerals** – Whilst responsibility for minerals planning within the Borough rests with Staffordshire County Council, Stoke on Trent City Council are a minerals planning authority. This policy is intended to ensure that the sterilization of potentially valuable mineral reserves within the City is avoided.



**Policy CSP9 – Comprehensive Area Based Approach** - This policy advocates a comprehensive rather than piecemeal approach drawing on all of the resources and means available to regeneration partners.

**Policy CSP10 – Planning Agreements** –. This policy sets out our broad approach to securing developer contributions for the provision of essential infrastructure – affordable housing, transport, education, community facilities etc.

## **4. Previous stages of Sustainability Appraisal**

### **4.1 Stage A – The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report**

The first stage of SA was the production of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The purpose of this document, as outlined in Sustainable Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (ODPM 2005) was to establish a set of sustainable development objectives and an evidence base against which the impact of the Core Strategy could be assessed.

The Scoping Report detailed 5 key stages in the SA and DPD pre-production process:

- I. The identification of linkages with other relevant plans, policies and guidance.
- II. The identification of key baseline data.
- III. The identification of the main social, environmental and economic issues relevant to the DPD.
- IV. The identification of the key sustainability objectives and the formulation of a Sustainability Appraisal Framework.
- V. Consultation with the statutory bodies identified in the SEA Directive, plus any other additional groups and stakeholders deemed to be relevant.

These key stages are outlined below -

#### **I. The identification of linkages with other relevant plans, policies and guidance**

- The SA guidance states that the local planning authority must take account of the relationships and linkages between the DPD and other plans, programmes and sustainability objectives. Similarly the SEA Directive requires the DPD to take into account environmental protection objectives established at local, regional, national, EU and international levels.

The analysis of these linkages aimed to facilitate the identification of both exploitable beneficial synergies between plans and programmes and potential inconsistencies and conflicts between plans and programmes. Both of which may have significant impacts upon the options considered during the plan – making process.

**II. The identification of key baseline data** - A key stage in establishing a framework for the effective identification, analysis and monitoring of the possible impacts of the Core Strategy, upon the social, environmental and economic conditions within the plan area was the identification and collation of suitable baseline data.

The SA guidance states that the information collected must focus on the social, environmental and economic characteristics of the area that are directly linked with the issues to be addressed within the DPD.

This baseline data informs the identification of indicators which can be used to answer the following questions in the table below -

- How good or bad is the current situation? Do trends show that it is getting better or worse?
- How far is the current situation from any established thresholds or targets?
- Are particularly sensitive or important elements of the economy, physical environment or community affected, e.g. skills shortages, endangered species or rare habitats, and vulnerable social groups?
- Are the problems reversible or irreversible, permanent or temporary?
- How difficult would it be to offset or remedy any damage?
- Have there been significant cumulative or synergistic effects over time? Are there expected to be such effects in the future?

Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (ODPM 2005 par 3.2.9 p45)

Both authorities have collected a significant body of data covering a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues. In addition a similarly wide range of data is available from partner organisations and from other local, regional and national bodies

**III. The identification of the main social, environmental and economic issues relevant to the DPD** – This baseline data was then used to identify the key sustainability issues affecting the plan area at that time. The key sustainability issues identified in the Scoping Report were –

- There is an excess of general needs affordable housing within urban North Staffordshire. This has led to housing market failure in some areas of the conurbation.
- 20 out of 33 urban wards are in the 20% most deprived wards in England. 9 wards are in the least deprived 50% of wards in England.
- Crime rates in North Staffordshire have risen a little over the last few years, but fear of crime has increased far more.
- There has been a decline in employment concentrated in traditional manufacturing industries.
- Investment in North Staffordshire has generally required a low-skilled and low paid workforce, which has resulted in little disposable income for re-investment in the area.
- North Staffordshire contains a hierarchy of centres from the City Centre in Hanley to the smaller villages of rural Newcastle. Each is unique and should be developed to maximise its individual potential.

- The Borough and City Councils need to contribute to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions (the major contributor to climatic conditions) if the frequency of unexpected climatic events is to be minimised. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing and new commercial and residential developments.
- The M6 motorway and other major trunk roads, impact on Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle Borough, both in terms of noise and air pollution.
- North Staffordshire provides an extensive habitat with great biodiversity including many protected species. The Councils will seek to protect, and where possible enhance, the biodiversity of the area.
- North Staffordshire can be identified through the sprawling industrial towns of the Potteries, boasting brick and sandstone older buildings with tile and slate roofs. It also has a unified rural landscape, dominated by dairy farming dairying, with strong field patterns, merging with more mixed and arable farming. This landscape should be protected.
- Land water and soil are scarce resources and should be protected.

(NB – The ‘Spatial Portrait’ in **Section 3** of the Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy, provides a detailed and up to date overview of the key social, economic and environmental characteristics of the plan area).



**IV. The identification of the key sustainability objectives and the formulation of a Sustainability Appraisal Framework** - The sustainability objectives (SO) were identified through careful analysis of the baseline data and the guidance outlined in other relevant plans, programmes and policies. The identification of these objectives followed the guidelines set out in the SEA Directive and SA guidance. Sustainability objectives are distinct from the objectives of the plan. They provide a way of identifying and predicting the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the plan. The sustainability objectives identified were as follows –

	<b>SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES (SO)</b>
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 provide the best possible environment to encourage and increase economic enterprise and employment
4.	To enable access to the widest range possible of shopping and commercial services for the resident 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
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 SBIs, LNRs and RIGs
14.	Increase the amount of accessible natural green space
15.	Reduce the amount of land SSSIs classified in an 'unfavourable' condition
16.	To reduce contamination, regenerate degraded environments, maintain soil resources, air quality and minimise development on greenfield sites
17.	To reduce the amount of development within the floodplain and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems
18.	To increase the efficient use of water resources
19.	To improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive
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

(NB the SA objectives listed above are also a result of further refinement following advice from the statutory consultation bodies – see **Stage V**)

**V. Consultation with the statutory bodies identified in the SEA Directive, plus any other additional groups and stakeholders deemed to be relevant** - The Scoping Report was sent to the (at that time) four statutory environmental consultation bodies designated in SEA Regulations –

- The Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- The Environment Agency

In addition, advice was also sought from a number of additional, non statutory consultees. These were –

- Advantage West Midlands (the Regional Development Agency)
- Newcastle Local Strategic Partnership Environmental Theme Group
- Stoke-on-Trent Local Strategic Partnership
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
- All neighbouring local authorities
- Primary Care Trusts
- Highways Agency
- Parish Councils
- West Midlands Regional Assembly

Consultation took place over a five week period. Changes were made to the SA framework, in the form of additional or refined, sustainability indicators and objectives.

#### **4.2 Stage B: Developing and Refining Options**

Stage B in the SA process involved appraising the identified Core Spatial Strategy DPD objectives against the SA framework. The findings were reported in an SA Report. This report was prepared in June 2006 and set 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-on-Trent 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.

#### **4.3 Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Report**

Preferred Options for the Core Spatial Strategy DPD (May 2006) were prepared jointly by both Councils, taking into account the consultation responses from **Stage B** and the SA Scoping Report.

Details of the Sustainability Appraisal conducted at this stage are outlined in the following reports -

- Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2006)
- Sustainability Appraisal Options Appendix (April 2006)
- Sustainability Appraisal Policy Appendix (April 2006)

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 report (March 2007) was published for additional consultation to address this concern by providing both additional information on the implications of the other options considered and an additional opportunity for stakeholders to comment. This report was subjected to a further round of Sustainability Appraisal; details of this further work are outlined in the following report-

- Sustainability Appraisal Revised Preferred Options 'Draft Spatial Options' (March 2007)

Following consultation on the Revised Preferred Options Report in 2007, Government Office commented that the document contained too many regulatory policies, some of which simply repeated national policy and were, therefore, unnecessary. In response to these comments, the structure of the Core Strategy to be submitted has radically changed. The overall number of policies has been significantly reduced. The key principles of those policies no longer included in the submission report have been absorbed into the Spatial Principles and Area Spatial Strategies included in the revised and restructured report.

Guidance published by the Planning Advisory Service – 'Local development frameworks – guidance on sustainability appraisal' (PAS 2007) suggests that if the difference between the preferred options and the submission DPD is significant, a third full iteration of SA may be necessary. Whilst it could be argued that the differences between the Revised Preferred Options and the Submission Report are largely structural, stylistic, and the level of detail within the document (there has been no change in the fundamental strategic approach and aims), it was, nevertheless, deemed more appropriate to carry out a third full assessment rather than attempt to modify the previous report.

## 5. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework and SA Methodology

The guidance published by the then ODPM in 2005 states that **Stage A** of the SA process involves – setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope. This process is clearly documented in the SA Scoping Report (2005) and is summarised in **section 4** of this report.

The key outcome of the scoping stage and the subsequent consultation with the statutory consultees (see **Appendix 2** for a summary of these comments and how they have been taken into account) is the establishment of a Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

The SA framework is essentially the tool that provides a way in which the sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared. The SA framework is comprised of a set of sustainability objectives and the respective targets and indicators used to measure the effectiveness of the plan in achieving these objectives.

Once the SA framework has been established it can be used to predict and evaluate the effects of the different elements of a plan, both individually and collectively upon the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the plan area.

The guidance suggests that the prediction of effects involves –

- Identifying the predicted changes to the sustainability baseline of the plan area as a result of the implementation of the plan.
- Describing these changes with regard to their magnitude, their geographical scale, the period of time over which these changes will occur, whether these changes are temporary or permanent in nature, whether they have a positive or negative impact, the likelihood of these changes taking place and whether there are any predicted cumulative, secondary or synergistic effects.

These predictions can be expressed quantitatively or qualitatively where quantification is not practicable. All predictions do however, whether quantitative or qualitative, need to be supported by credible evidence.

Once the likely effects of the plan have been identified and described it is necessary to then conduct an evaluation of their significance. This essentially involves determining the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.

In the instance where significant adverse effects have been identified, it is necessary to identify suitable measures to prevent, reduce or offset these effects. These 'mitigation measures' can include both the proactive avoidance of adverse effects and actions for addressing adverse effects once they have been observed.

Finally, the guidance reinforces the importance and centrality of monitoring to the LDF plan – making system. Effective monitoring enables the LPA to test the actual significant effects of a plan against the predicted effects identified through the SA process. This data can inform future mitigation action, revisions to a plan, the production of future plans etc.



The tables below show the prediction and evaluation framework developed throughout the SA process.

SA Objectives and Indicators	Key baseline information and target (where available)	Impact ✓✓ ✓ 0 x xx ?	Likely timing of impact (short, med, long term)	Geographical scale: Urban/ Rural	Likelihood of impact: H/M/L	Temporary or Permanent Impact	Commentary (include any cumulative, secondary or synergistic impacts and recommendations for improvement/ mitigation of adverse effects)
<b>Summary:</b>  A brief summary of – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How effectively the strategy/principle/policy supports the principles of sustainable development and how effectively the strategy/principle/policy contributes towards achieving the identified sustainability objectives.</li> <li>Any clear conflicts between the aims of the policy/principle/strategy and the identified sustainability objectives.</li> </ul>							
<b>Mitigation proposals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a clear outline of the measures necessary to mitigate any identified negative impacts upon the sustainability of the plan area.</li> <li>Detail the steps taken for the monitoring of the sustainable performance of the policy/principle/strategy</li> </ul>							
✓✓	Major positive effect						
✓	Positive effect						
0	No effect						
x	Negative effect						
xx	Major negative effect						
?	Effect unknown/ uncertain						

## **6. Sustainability Appraisal of the Newcastle – under – Lyme and Stoke – on – Trent Core Spatial Strategy**

### **6.1 Sustainability characteristics of the plan area.**

NB - the indicators included below are not an exclusive list, rather they simply serve to provide a brief snapshot of the key sustainability issues affecting the plan area.

#### **Social characteristics**

##### **Population**

The plan area is comprised of two neighbouring authorities - the City of Stoke-on-Trent and the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. This sub - region is located on the boundary between the West Midlands and the North West. As such, the plan area occupies a strategically advantageous position between the major urban centres of Manchester and Birmingham and alongside national transport corridors linking the South – East and the Midlands, to the North West.

The plan area covers approximately 30,000 hectares and is home to just over 360,000 people. Of these, approximately 240,000 people are residents of the 'six towns' – Hanley, Stoke, Tunstall, Burslem, Fenton and Longton; that form the polycentric City of Stoke on Trent; 74,000 live in the market town of Newcastle; 22,000 in the smaller town of Kidsgrove; and approximately 26,000 live in rural settlements.

As the table below shows, the area has seen significant changes to its population in recent decades - the City's population declining by approximately 13,000 since 1982 – predominantly through out migration from the inner urban core. Over the same period the Borough has gained approximately 3,000 additional residents.

<b>Population (thousands) (ONS, Experian 2007)</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>
Stoke-on-Trent	251.3	249.3	249.1	242.0	238.1
Newcastle	120.3	120.2	121.6	122.2	123.4
North Staffordshire	371.6	369.5	370.7	364.2	361.6

##### **Housing**

The 2001 Census records that owner occupation within the borough, at approximately 72.5% of all households, is marginally higher than for the West Midlands region (69.5%) and for England (68.7%). The majority of the remaining stock is provided through local RSLs (the largest being Aspire), and a relatively small percentage of private rented housing. In the City, owner occupation is significantly lower at 65.2%, with the majority of the socially rented stock still owned and managed by the City Council.

Whilst average house prices within both the City and the borough have increased significantly over the last decade, they remain significantly lower than national and regional averages.

<b>Jan – March 2008</b>	<b>Detached</b>	<b>Semi - Detached</b>	<b>Terraced</b>	<b>Flat/Apartment</b>	<b>Average Price</b>
Newcastle	237610	127936	110640	93438	149404
Stoke	176433	100014	56024	72548	92231
Staffordshire	246429	131766	99230	98233	154234
West Midlands	272017	141473	106603	109178	154149
England	278937	173493	145301	174334	185038

A significant part of the City, particularly within the Inner Urban Core, and some urban neighbourhoods in Newcastle have suffered from severe housing market failure, low demand, an imbalance of housing types and tenures, and in some neighbourhoods – high levels of vacant stock.

However, despite these weaknesses in the local housing market, affordability is a key issue within the sub region. Until recently, affordability was not an issue in much of the City and certain neighbourhoods within the borough. However, the price of terraced housing in the region has increased by approximately 200% over the last decade whereas wages have only risen by approximately 20% over the same time period. Furthermore the 'Right to Buy' scheme has had a significant impact upon the quantity, and arguably the quality and mix of the sub regions social housing offer.

Affordability is most pronounced within the rural areas of the sub region. Average house prices within the villages in the South and West of the borough such as Madeley and Loggerheads are up to 8 times the average household incomes of local residents.

No additional affordable housing was completed in either authority in the year 2006/7. In Newcastle 10.9% of all completions were for affordable housing in the period between 1996 and 2007. Whilst in Stoke on Trent 9% was affordable.

In 2006 the percentage of all housing in Newcastle was classed as unfit was 2.7%, whilst the figure was 9.7% in Stoke-on-Trent (Audit Commission Area Profiles).

## **Education**

The table below shows educational achievements as a percentage of the working age population. As can be seen, educational achievements in both authorities lag behind national and regional levels.

	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>
NVQ4 and above	22.9%	16.2%	24.6%	28.6%
NVQ3 and above	38.5%	33.2%	42.0%	46.4%
NVQ2 and above	55.7%	54.0%	61.1%	64.5%
NVQ1 and above	70.1%	70.3%	75.4%	78.1%
Other qualifications	5.5%	6.5%	7.7%	8.8%
No qualifications	24.4%	23.1%	17.0%	13.1%

## Community Safety

Crime indicators BVPI 2006/07	Newcastle	Stoke-on-Trent
Domestic burglaries per 1000 households	8.17	17.04
Violent crime per 1000 population	25.58	37.70
Robberies per 1000 population	0.45	1.49
Vehicle crime per 1000 population	9.57	16.65

In addition, data from the Newcastle Crime Audit 2007 suggests that 31.3% of older people suffer from a genuine fear of being a victim of crime. Similarly, the 1<sup>st</sup> Citizen's Panel in Stoke-on-Trent suggests that 20% of people are very worried by crime, 47% are fairly worried, 30% are not worried and 3% are not worried at all.

## Health

The tables below provide a brief picture of the general health of the plan areas population. As can be seen, general health appears to be poorer within Stoke-on-Trent than at national and regional levels.

ONS 2001 Percentage of pop in good health	Newcastle	Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	England
Good	66%	63%	67%	69%
Fairly good	23%	24%	23%	22%
Not good	11%	13%	10%	9%

ONS2004/06 Life expectancy at birth	Newcastle	Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	England
Males	76.9	74.5	76.6	77.32
Females	81.5	79.6	81.1	81.55

## Economic characteristics

The economy of the plan area was traditionally dominated by coal mining and heavy manufacturing industries. In the City, the economy has been historically reliant upon the ceramics industry. The decline of these industries throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has had a significant impact upon the environmental, economic and social landscape of the area.

Over the last few decades there has been a dramatic transition from manufacturing industries towards services, particularly distribution, consumer and public services, but far less towards financial and business services, particularly in Stoke-on-Trent.

The total number of jobs within North Staffordshire has declined dramatically since the early eighties. As the table below shows, the gradual growth of employment in Newcastle has been cancelled out by significant losses in Stoke-on-Trent.

<b>Employment change (thousands) (ONS, Experian 2007)</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	123.3	124.2	107.5	104.3	96.0
<b>Newcastle</b>	34.4	40.2	37.0	39.6	39.8
<b>North Staffordshire</b>	157.7	164.4	144.5	143.9	135.8

This decline in employment opportunities in Stoke-on-Trent is also reflected in the numbers of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants within the City in comparison to Newcastle, the West Midlands and Great Britain.

<b>JSA claimants – as % of working age pop (ONS June 2008)</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>
<b>All people</b>	1.9%	3.2%	3.0%	2.2%
<b>Males</b>	2.6%	4.7%	4.3%	3.1%
<b>Females</b>	1.1%	1.6%	1.7%	1.2%

The restructuring of the plan area's economy, and the under representation of employees within financial sectors is reflected in average weekly earnings which are significantly lower than regional and national averages –

<b>ONS – hours and earnings (2007)</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>
Earnings by residence	£457.10	£382.10	£430.40	£459.00
Earnings by workplace	£400.70	£394.30	£430.00	£458.60

The historical dependence upon a narrow range of traditional industries has also arguably contributed to the fact that neither Newcastle nor Stoke-on-Trent can be described as particularly entrepreneurial. As the table below demonstrates, the net % increase in VAT registered businesses in both authorities for 2006 was lower than national and regional averages.

<b>VAT registered businesses (BERR 2006)</b>	<b>Newcastle (numbers)</b>	<b>Newcastle (%)</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent (numbers)</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent (%)</b>	<b>West Midlands (%)</b>	<b>Great Britain (%)</b>
Registrations	265	9.0%	500	9.9%	9.0%	9.4%
De-registrations	230	7.8%	500	9.9%	7.2%	7.4%
Net gain/loss	+35	+1.2%	-	-	+1.8%	+2.0%
Total stock	2930		5040			

## Environmental characteristics

### **Brownfield land/Contaminated Land**

Both authorities (and in particular Stoke-on-Trent) have significant, albeit finite, quantities of previously developed land. This is clearly reflected in the % of new development located on brownfield sites, as shown below.

<b>% of development on brownfield sites (Annual Monitoring Report 2006/7)</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>
Housing development	66.5%	99.6%
Employment development	72.8%	100%

<b>NULBC/SCC monitoring 2006/07</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>
Total area (ha) of derelict land	102.67ha	252ha

### **Air quality**

The North Staffordshire Local Transport Plan identifies seven areas where air quality is seen as a problem, particularly regarding nitrogen dioxide and particulates. The table below shows the 'worst case sites' in these areas. These sites will be the focus for detailed and ongoing monitoring, as an indicator to determine whether objectives in the plan area being met.

<b>Area</b>	<b>2005 provisional data (ugm3)</b>	<b>2010 target (ugm3)</b>
Meir	39.0	33
Joiner's Square	40.0	34
Victoria Place	44.2	37
Burslem	42.8	36
Cobridge	48.8	40
Hanley	46.6	39
Bucknall	43.0	36

### **Water quality**

<b>Environment Agency 2005/07</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>
% of river length assessed as good biological quality	29.01%	5.79%
% of river length assessed as good chemical quality	40.43%	17.97%
Developments incorporating SUDS	No data at present	
Number of planning applications approved contrary to EA advice on flood risk/water quality grounds	0	2

## Open spaces, habitats & biodiversity

	Newcastle	Stoke-on-Trent
Total area (ha) of SSSIs	48.30ha	33.73ha
% of SSSIs in favourable condition	59.9%	83.50%
Area of land designated as a Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population	1.37ha	0.89ha
Area of Council owned parks and green spaces formally managed for biodiversity	680ha	322ha
The number of playgrounds and play areas per 1,000 children aged under 12, provided by the Council	2.86	2.16

## Transport

The North Staffordshire Local Transport Plan identifies the key transport issues/problems affecting the plan area. These are –

- The regeneration of North Staffordshire will increase the demands on our transport system and improvements are needed to support sustainable regeneration.
- There are many people in North Staffordshire who find access to essential services (education, healthcare, employment and retail facilities) and local facilities difficult.
- Congestion can have a negative impact on the local economy, people's quality of life and the prospects for the sustainable regeneration of North Staffordshire.
- Traffic congestion on bus routes can cause delays and unreliability which can reduce the viability of bus services.
- People are killed or injured on the roads of North Staffordshire.
- Environmental quality is poor in some locations of North Staffordshire.

## Historic environment

The plan area has a unique and distinctive built environment with around 570 listed buildings, 41 conservation areas, 17 ancient monuments and 7 historic parks. In addition to this the plan area benefits from a still extensive canal network which once served as a central element of the transport infrastructure for North Staffordshire's 19<sup>th</sup> century manufacturing industries and now serves the area's growing leisure and tourism industries.

The historical landscapes, townscapes and buildings of the plan area are irreplaceable not only for their intrinsic architectural and aesthetic value and, but also for their contribution towards making the plan area an economically attractive and competitive focus for inward investment.



## 6.2 Compatibility Matrix

The tables below illustrate the analysis of the compatibilities and conflicts between the Core Strategy 'Strategic Aims' and the Sustainability Objectives.

Key: ✓ positive compatibility, ✕ possible conflict, - neutral, ? unknown

Core Strategy 'Strategic Aims'	Sustainability Objectives																				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Strategic Aim 1	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Strategic Aim 2	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Strategic Aim 4	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 5	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 6	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 7	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 8	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-
Strategic Aim 9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 10	?	✓	?	-	?	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 11	?	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 12	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 13	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-
Strategic Aim 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 16	?	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Strategic Aim 18	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<b>Core Strategy Strategic Aims - summary of key compatibilities/conflict</b>	
<b>Core Strategy 'Strategic Aims'</b>	<b>Compatibilities/Conflicts</b>
<b>SA1</b> - To halt net outward migration from Stoke-on-Trent and retain and attract population to the conurbation	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear comparability with social/economic SA objectives - reversing out migration will revitalise local housing market and local economies. Focusing development within the priority areas may also contribute towards reducing journeys by car. May cause further congestion on the conurbation's road network – planned enhancements to the plan area's transport infrastructure and public transport system should counter this.</p>
<b>SA2</b> – To facilitate delivery of the best of healthy urban living in the development of the conurbation and to ensure that new development makes adequate provision for all necessary community facilities including health care, education, sports and recreation and leisure and that existing facilities are retained and enhanced where they provide for the justified community needs	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with socio – economic SA objectives, particularly SO3 – improved access to key local services/facilities.</p>
<b>SA3</b> - To reduce the need to travel, improve accessibility and increase the opportunities for development of sustainable and innovative modes of travel to support the regeneration of the plan area by securing improvements to public transport infrastructure; and the progressive provision of park and ride and facilities to promote walking and cycling	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with SA objectives aimed at reducing the need to travel, improving access to public transport, improving opportunities for walking and cycling, and improving air quality.</p>

<p><b>SA4</b> - To balance the supply and demand for quality housing; removing surplus and unfit/obsolescent accommodation; providing a better choice of homes in sustainable locations and to ensure that a sufficient number of new homes are affordable</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with SA objectives aimed at improving the housing stock/market. Is all likely to impact upon attractiveness of plan area to potential new residents and to inward investment. A better quality housing offer may also impact upon sustainability issues such as health, incidences of crime and fear of crime.</p>
<p><b>SA5</b> - To foster and diversify the employment base of all parts of the plan area, both urban and rural, including development of new types of work and working lifestyles, and supporting the office development sector, new technologies and business capitalising on the inherent advantages of North Staffordshire</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with economic sustainability objectives, in particular SO3. Raising the quality and quantity of job opportunities may also have an impact upon addressing issues of social deprivation linked to economic deprivation e.g. crime, health etc. Focusing new economic development within the conurbation may also contribute towards reducing the need to travel.</p>
<p><b>SA6</b> - 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</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with SO3 and SO6 – increasing economic enterprise and employment, and access to essential facilities/services, respectively.</p>
<p><b>SA7</b> – To enhance the City Centre of Stoke-on-Trent's role as sub regional commercial centre; to help Newcastle town centre to continue to thrive as a strategic centre, both within a network of accessible and complementary, vital, vibrant and distinctive North Staffordshire town centres</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with SO3 – economic development, SO4 and SO5 – access to shopping and vitality and viability of centres and SO6 access to essential community services/facilities. Focusing retail/office development within the city/town centres may also serve to reduce the need to travel.</p>

<p><b>SA8</b> - To increase the attraction of the area as a tourist destination based on its industrial heritage, existing and future magnets of tourism and leisure interest and the high quality environment in the surrounding rural area</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with sustainability objectives for increasing enterprise, and enhancing the vitality and viability of centres. A healthy tourism industry may also provide the means and justification for protecting and enhancing the plan area's historical, built and natural environments – SO20.</p>
<p><b>SA9</b> - To safeguard valued economic resources including minerals in the City of Stoke-on-Trent</p>	<p>No significant conflicts</p>
<p><b>SA10</b> - To facilitate development within identified priority regeneration areas of the North Staffordshire conurbation</p>	<p>A key aim of the Core Strategy is to focus development towards 'priority' areas, i.e. those areas most in need of regeneration/investment. Clearly whilst this is likely to have significant beneficial effects upon the sustainability of the plan area, it must be recognised that this represents a significant challenge.</p> <p>By definition many of these areas suffer from – high levels of social/economic deprivation, poor quality environments, weak housing markets etc. As such, these areas are not likely to be, at present, the most attractive locations of choice for new residents/ development/ investment. Therefore there is a risk that 'footloose' development/investment may be lost to other easier/more attractive locations.</p> <p>This clearly amplifies the need for effective partnership working between the local authorities, NSRP, Renew, NSRZ, AWM, local RSLs etc, to achieve genuine transformational change in these areas.</p>

<p><b>SA11</b> - To focus development within the communities of Loggerheads, Madeley and Audley Parish to support their function as rural service centres which meet the requirements of local people</p>	<p>The ‘rural service centres’ are essentially those judged to be the most sustainable locations for rural development, i.e. they offer the most comprehensive mix of key services. Focusing development within these centres will ensure that the viability of these services is maintained and enhanced, and that the need to travel is reduced.</p> <p>There is a slight concern however, that restricting development in the smaller, more remote villages and settlement’s may lead to communities with ageing, stagnant populations. In addition, access to affordable housing, if required may be problematic.</p> <p>The rolling 5 year programme of Parish Needs Surveys will provide a key evidence base for monitoring rural housing needs – the identification of genuine local need within these settlements could possibly result in a need to revisit this aspect of the strategy.</p>
<p><b>SA12</b> - To renew the fabric of urban and rural areas to promote the best of safe and sustainable urban and rural living</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>The focus of this Strategic Aim is essentially to transform the overall quality of the urban and rural built environments – buildings, public realm, transport infrastructure etc. As such there is a clear conformity with sustainability objectives such as – reducing crime, improving health, halting out migration, attracting inward investment, improving transport networks/infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>SA13</b> - To protect and improve the plan area’s network of canals and watercourses, green spaces/infrastructure and parks to provide the landscape setting for high quality development of homes, employment and leisure opportunities; opportunities for physical activity and to foster a more sustainable way of life</p>	<p>No significant conflicts.</p> <p>Clear compatibility with sustainability objectives – improving health and improving quantity, quality and accessibility of natural green spaces,</p>

<p><b>SA14</b> - To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of the plan area by ensuring new developments are appropriate in terms of scale, location and their context.</p>	<p>No significant conflict.</p> <p>Clear conformity with sustainability objective SO14 – which seeks to preserve and enhance the plan area’s historical built environment.</p>
<p><b>SA15</b> - To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats throughout the plan area.</p>	<p>No significant conflict.</p> <p>Clear conformity with sustainability objectives SO 12, 13, 14 and 15 – all of which are concerned with protecting and enhancing the plan area’s statutory and non statutory natural assets – wildlife, habitats, natural landscapes, local, national and international sites etc.</p>
<p><b>SA16</b> - To eliminate poor quality development and establish a culture of excellence in built design by developing design skills and understanding, by requiring good, safe design as a universal baseline and distinctive design excellence in all development proposals, and by promoting procurement methods which facilitate the delivery of good design.</p>	<p>Some neighbourhoods within the plan area suffer from a particularly weak housing market; as such achieving the highest standards of design quality will represent a significant challenge, in particular where developers argue that raising design standards, in combination with additional requirements for contributions towards affordable housing, public realm, transport etc, may render the development commercially unviable.</p> <p>Despite this, raising the design quality of new residential development will be deeply necessary in order to achieve the aim of reversing trends of out migration from the conurbation.</p> <p>Good design is about much more than simply aesthetics, as such raising the design quality of new development is likely to have a positive impact upon crime, health, quality of life, the attractiveness of the area to potential new residents and businesses etc.</p>

<p><b>SA17</b> - To minimise the adverse impacts of climate change in the move towards zero carbon growth through energy efficiency, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and green construction methods in accordance with best practice</p>	<p>Clear compatibility with sustainability objectives aimed at increasing the use of renewable energy and the energy efficiency of new development. Also with objectives to improve air and water quality</p>
<p><b>SA18</b> - To promote mixed use and residential development where it can support city, town and local centres</p>	<p>Clear compatibility with sustainability objectives aimed at reversing out migration, enhancing the vitality and viability of the city/town centres, attracting inward investment and reducing the need to travel.</p>



## **6.2 Summary of the sustainability performance of the Core Strategy Spatial Principals/Area Spatial Strategies/Core Strategic Policies**

The Spatial Principals/Area Spatial Strategies/Core Strategic Policies in the Core Strategy have been individually subjected to SA using the prediction and evaluation framework detailed earlier in this report. The full documentation of this process is included in the full **SA Report** accompanying this document.

Outlined below are the key points/issues arising from the SA analysis –

### **Spatial Principle: Hierarchy of Centres**

The unique geology, geography and topography of the plan area have had a significant impact upon the historical social and economic development of the North Staffordshire conurbation over the last few centuries. The result of this has been that the conurbation has developed as an unusual polycentric collection of distinct but connected settlements rather than as a conventional mono-centric city. Recent trends towards the decentralisation of city/town centre activities to 'out of centre' locations has further exacerbated the sense of fragmentation and the weakening of the vitality of the various centres. Having a strong and clear hierarchy with clearly identified roles for each centre will provide the essential framework for ensuring that new development within each centre is of an appropriate nature and scale. This will contribute towards protecting and enhancing the vitality of each individual centre and will minimize any negative impacts/unhealthy competition between centres. Strengthening the role and vitality of each centre will lessen the need for further 'out of centre' development and will make a significant contribution towards the conurbations economic sustainability. The creation of genuinely healthy, vibrant and attractive centres with good access by public transport will also contribute towards reducing the reliance upon the car as the primary mode of transport.

### **Spatial Principle: Targeted Regeneration**

The key underlying principle of Targeted Regeneration is to focus investment, development and regeneration action towards the highest priority areas in terms of need and associated housing market renewal and economic strategies. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the most significant direct impact will be upon the housing, economic and social sustainability of the plan area. This will include improvements to the quality and choice of housing and local services, and increases in the quantity and quality of local employment opportunities. Targeting the most deprived areas will have a significant positive impact to enable access to a wide range of services and facilities. This will also result in long-term opportunities for healthy lifestyles improvements in terms of housing, employment, health and education etc. High standards of development should result in healthy living environments. The strategy will also have additional, less direct positive impacts upon the environmental sustainability of the plan area – the primary focus for development will be the urban areas and will therefore ensure: - the maximum use of developable brownfield sites; impacts upon the area's protected and non – protected natural assets will be minimized; impacts upon biodiversity and habitats will be minimized etc. Conclusions from the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report suggest that the proposals within the plan will not have any significant effect upon the plan area's designated European Sites because of the predominantly urban focus of the strategy.

### **Spatial Principle: Priority to brownfield sites**

Focusing development towards brownfield sites will clearly ensure that the maximum use of the plan area's brownfield capacity is optimised. This should have a significant impact upon the environmental sustainability of the plan area. There is a slight concern that the development of certain types of brownfield land can occasionally present significant challenges to developers and may act as a disincentive for inward investment, where more attractive and 'easier' greenfield sites are available for development outside of the plan area. There is also a concern that any additional costs of developing difficult sites for residential purposes may be passed onto consumers, thereby further exacerbating the issue of affordability. Both authorities are conducting Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments – these will provide a detailed picture of the quantity and quality of the plan area's brownfield capacity.

### **Spatial Principle: Strategic housing targets phasing and affordability**

This section sets out the scale, geographic distribution and temporal phasing of new housing development within the plan area, over the plan period 2006 – 2026. These targets and principles reflect the targets set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision which has also been subjected to detailed Sustainability Appraisal. The level, phasing and distribution of new housing development reflect the need to meet both locally generated demand, and demand as a result of net gains from migration. Additionally the level, phasing and distribution reflect the strategic aims of reversing out migration from the conurbation and in particular the Inner Urban Core. Also, importantly, the setting of clear targets for housing development (including the provision of affordable housing) will provide an effective framework for monitoring the performance of the policies/strategies within the Core Strategy. Conclusions from the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report suggest that the proposals within the plan will not have any significant effect upon the plan area's designated European Sites because of the predominantly urban focus of the strategy.

### **Spatial Principle: Economic Development**

The aim of the strategy is to transform the plan area's economy by attracting high quality investment to the area and improving both the quality and quantity of employment opportunities. This should have a significant impact upon the social and economic sustainability of the plan area. Furthermore focusing this development/investment towards sites within or accessible to the North Staffordshire Regeneration Zone will ensure that use of brownfield land and access to employment sites by walking cycling, public transport etc is maximized, therefore contributing towards the environmental sustainability of the plan area and the health and well being of the resident population.

### **Spatial Principle: Movement and Access**

Successful delivery of this strategy will ensure that access to employment opportunities, shopping facilities, essential service, community facilities and public open spaces, by walking, cycling and public transport are maximized. As such, this strategy will result in a significant reduction in the necessity for, and therefore the level, of journeys made by private cars. This should ensure that the area makes a

significant local contribution towards global climatic issues, local air quality issues and improved health indicators. Furthermore, effective implementation of this strategy is likely to serve to reduce congestion (at present a significant issue within the conurbation, exacerbated as it is by the conurbation's fractured, polycentric settlement patterns. Less congestion and a user friendly and efficient public transport system are likely to have a significant impact upon the quality of life of existing and future residents and will also impact positively upon the attractiveness of the plan area to inward investment/new businesses etc. This in turn may serve to raise incomes and aspirations for the plan area's residents.

### **City Centre of Stoke-on-Trent Area Spatial Strategy**

Undertaking the SA for an Area Spatial Strategy is a broader assessment than for specific policies, which are much more straightforward to quantify. Most indicators are assessed as benefiting from positive or very positive effects as a result of this Area Spatial Strategy. By creating a thriving and diverse City Centre will increase the opportunities to improve the impact on a wide range of sustainability measures. Green Belt is unaffected, as there is no Green Belt in the City Centre, and any adverse effects on the natural or built environment are expected to be negligible. Significant new developments could have adverse effects on water demand/consumption and traffic congestion but measures will be in place to reduce any negative impact.

### **Stoke-on-Trent Inner Urban Core Area Spatial Strategy**

Undertaking the SA for an Area Spatial Strategy is a broader assessment than for specific policies, which are much more straightforward to quantify. Most indicators are assessed as benefiting from positive or very positive effects as a result of this Area Spatial Strategy. The creation of attractive, vibrant and sustainable communities will have positive impact on sustainability measures. There is a very positive impact meeting the housing needs of the community especially through affordable housing and concentrating growth in priority areas. Green Belt is unaffected, as there is no Green Belt in the Inner Urban Core, and any adverse effects on the natural or built environment are expected to be negligible. Significant new development could have adverse effects on water demand/consumption and traffic congestion but measures will be in place to reduce any negative impact. Further SA consideration will be undertaken as DPDs are developed for specific areas within the Inner Urban Core.

### **Stoke-on-Trent Outer Urban Area Spatial Strategy**

Undertaking the SA for an Area Spatial Strategy is a broader assessment than for specific policies, which are much more straightforward to quantify. Most indicators are assessed as benefiting from positive or very positive effects as a result of this Area Spatial Strategy. Adverse effects on the natural or built environment are expected to be negligible. The strategy aims to increase the vitality of Longton, Fenton, Tunstall and Meir centres, improving accessibility and availability of modern facilities. Care will be taken to ensure that this growth is achieved in a manner that complements the sustainable regeneration of the Inner Urban Core. There are particular positive benefits through redeveloping previously developed land thereby reducing contamination, regenerating degraded environments, maintaining resources and minimising development on Greenfield sites. Significant new development could

have adverse effects on water demand/consumption and traffic congestion but measures will be in place to reduce any negative impact. Further SA consideration will be undertaken as sites are brought forward for development within the Outer Urban Area.

### **Newcastle Town Centre Area Spatial Strategy**

The strategy seeks to create a vital and attractive Town Centre capable of accommodating a vibrant mix of retail, leisure, office and residential development. A successful Newcastle Town Centre is vital for the social and economic sustainability of the plan area. Ensuring that all development appropriate for a town centre is focused primarily towards the Town Centre will also contribute towards enhancing accessibility to key services and employment opportunities by walking and cycling and reducing the volume of necessary journeys by car, therefore making a local contribution towards addressing both global climatic issues and local air quality. Successful delivery of this strategy will also ensure that the optimum use of the Borough's finite brownfield land supply will be made, therefore contributing towards preserving the Borough's greenfield sites.

### **Newcastle and Kidsgrove Urban Neighbourhoods Area Spatial Strategy**

Creating genuinely vibrant communities is central to the social sustainability of the area; the strategy will contribute towards achieving this by ensuring that the quality of all new residential development is of the highest standard and is served by easily accessible local services and facilities. The strategy is closely aligned with the aims and objectives of Renew North Staffordshire, focusing a significant proportion of new development towards the neighbourhoods which have historically suffered from weak housing markets and relatively high levels of social and economic deprivation. Focusing a large proportion of the new development in these areas will also ensure the optimum use of the area's finite brownfield land resources, although it is recognized in the SA analysis that it may be necessary to look to potential greenfield sites to meet the employment land requirements throughout the plan period. The strategy also aims to improve the quality and quantity of employment opportunities within the Borough, raising incomes and aspirations and therefore the social and economic sustainability of the area.

### **Rural Areas Spatial Strategy**

The strategy has a number of key aims that will impact positively upon the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the plan area: - Firstly to reverse the historical trend of out migration from the MUA to the rural areas; to support the continued vitality of the key rural service centres and the essential services that they provide; and to minimize any impacts from new development upon the plan area's protected and non-protected natural assets. To achieve this, the strategy makes provision for only a relatively minimal amount of new residential development in comparison to recent historical rates. This development will be focused towards the identified 'rural service centres' to support local needs/requirements. There is a slight concern that these relatively low levels of development could result in a static, ageing population within some settlements and could further increase the problem of affordability in the rural settlements. The housing situation in the rural areas and in particular the issue of affordable housing is monitored closely through the Annual Monitoring Report, the Housing Development Monitoring Report and the 5 year

rolling program of Parish Housing Needs Surveys. This will enable the identification of any specific local needs/shortfalls in supply. The strategy makes reference to the possible use Rural Exception Sites as a tool for addressing rural affordable housing needs.

### **CSP1 – Design Quality**

Raising the design standards of all new development will be a key step towards improving the sustainability of the plan area. In particular positive benefits will be achieved through high quality housing design, improving the vitality and viability of plan area's centres, reducing crime levels through good design and increasing the uses of renewable energy and sustainable drainage systems. In addition raising the design quality of new development is likely to enhance the attractiveness of the plan area for new inward investment and potential new residents. The SA analysis does suggest a slight concern that requiring the highest levels of design quality may impact upon the commercial viability of new development whilst the market remains relatively weak and may impact upon the delivery of the proposed housing targets. This issue will be closely monitored. In recognition of the importance of this policy both Councils are now taking forward the development of a Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) covering both local authority areas. This process is benefiting from the specialist input from Urban Vision North Staffordshire and CABE.

### **CSP2 – Historic Environment**

Protecting and enhancing the area's historical built environment is central to the attractiveness of the area for both existing and future residents and for inward investment. As such this policy should have a positive impact upon the plan area's social and economic sustainability.

### **CSP3 – Sustainability and Climate Change**

Successful implementation of this policy should have a clear impact upon environmental sustainability at both local and global scales. Successful implementation of this policy will make a positive contribution towards achieving renewable energy/energy consumption/carbon emissions reduction targets set at local, sub regional, regional and national scales. There is a slight concern that requiring very high standards of environmental performance for new residential development may impact upon the ability of new development to deliver other key requirements such as affordable housing. This issue will be monitored very closely. The standards expected reflect those set at regional level and do not, at present impose higher requirements. The encouragement of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) may contribute towards reducing the potential for flooding and undesirable impacts upon the plan areas protected and non protected natural sites and habitats through water contamination or increased water consumption. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report highlights the importance of such measures to ensure that new development has no significant adverse impacts upon the plan area's designated European Sites.

## **CSP4 – Natural Assets**

This policy aims to protect and enhance the plan area's statutory and non-statutory natural assets. As such it is likely to have a significant positive impact upon the environmental sustainability of the plan area. Furthermore it should serve to create an environment attractive to visitors, existing and future residents and inward economic investment, and therefore it is likely to have a positive impact upon the area's social and economic sustainability.

## **CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation**

The central aim of this policy is to: - ensure that new development makes provision for appropriate quantities of high quality public open space; achieve a significant improvement in the quality of existing open spaces; and to ensure there is an appropriate provision of sports/leisure facilities. As such this policy should ensure a significant improvement to the health, well being and general quality of life of the resident population and will enhance the general attractiveness of the area for potential new residents and businesses.

## **CSP6 – Affordable Housing**

Having a clear, consistent and deliverable policy on affordable housing should ensure that the housing needs of the plan area are met. The policy will make a positive contribution towards meeting sub regional and regional targets for the provision of affordable housing. There is a slight concern that not requiring any contribution towards affordable housing within the City Centre boundary may have an impact upon the accessibility of affordable housing for city centre workers and will not contribute towards creating a genuinely mixed and sustainable community within the City Centre. The percentages and thresholds included in this policy have been tested locally and therefore it is not anticipated that this policy will place an undue burden upon the commercial viability of new residential development within the plan area. The delivery of affordable housing will be closely monitored in both authorities Annual Monitoring Reports and in the Newcastle Housing Development Monitoring Report. These reports will provide key evidence, alongside the Strategic Housing |Market Assessment and Parish Housing Needs Surveys, on the effectiveness of the policy and will highlight any potential need to revise the policy to improve delivery. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been adopted by Stoke-on-Trent City Council to provide further detail and practical guidance in relation to Affordable Housing. An affordable housing SPD for Newcastle under Lyme is currently being produced.

## **CSP7 – Gypsy and Travellers**

Policy will ensure that the residential needs of this specific section of the community are adequately addressed. The criteria in CSP7 will be considered when identifying suitable sites for Gypsy and Travellers sites in future Site Allocations DPDs. In addition both authorities contribute towards the North Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Working Group that is ensuring the recommendations and Action Plan from the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment are being implemented.

### **CSP8 – Minerals**

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard scarce Etruria Marl reserves and will ensure that if reserves are threatened by necessary surface development, steps will be taken to avoid sterilisation usually by advance working. Therefore essentially this policy is largely preventative and is unlikely to impact upon the sustainability of the plan area other than through safeguarding finite natural resources.

### **CSP9 – Comprehensive Area Regeneration**

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that policies are put into practice. In order to achieve our targeted comprehensive area regeneration approach it is necessary for a wide range of partners to work together to achieve coordinated mid and long term goals. This policy establishes the need for partnership working and to utilize resources in an effective way to ensure integrated renewal strategies for the most deprived communities and coordinated housing market renewal, economic, employment and environmental efforts. This policy has positive benefits for sustainability measures particularly to meet housing and local service needs of the community and align and encourage employment opportunities.

### **CSP10 – Planning Agreements**

The policy aims to ensure that all new development makes adequate provision for essential infrastructure, community facilities, open spaces etc needed as a direct (or cumulative) result of the development. As such it is likely to have a significant positive impact upon the sustainability of the plan area. There is a slight concern that the cumulative effect of requiring contributions towards transport infrastructure, education, open space, affordable housing etc could result in some developments becoming economically unviable. At this early stage the SA has not highlighted any significant areas of concern. Clearly if through the monitoring system, any issues of concern are highlighted then mitigation measures will have to be developed. |As stated above there may be occasions when the cumulative effect of multiple s106 requirements may render a development unviable. This may require a degree of flexibility when negotiating with developers.



## **7. Monitoring and Mitigation**

The SEA Directive makes a requirement that the significant effects of the implementation of a plan must be monitored to identify any unanticipated adverse effects and to enable the identification of appropriate remedial action to address these effects.

Furthermore, effective monitoring will enable the planning authority to test the actual effects of the implementation of a DPD against those predicted in the SA.

Government guidance states that effective monitoring should be used to answer the following questions –

- Were the assessment's predictions of sustainability effects accurate?
- Is the plan contributing to the achievement of desired SA objectives and targets?
- Are the mitigation measures performing as well as expected?
- Are there any adverse effects? Are these within acceptable limits, or is remedial action desirable?

Monitoring of the indicators identified as the current baseline data will be incorporated into both authorities' Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR).

## 8. Next Steps

The Councils are required to publish the Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report and receive formal representations on the reports.

For administrative convenience, formal representations should be made on the standard form and sent by email to [ldf@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@stoke.gov.uk) or in writing to –

Planning Policy Team  
Directorate of Regeneration  
PO Box 630  
Civic Centre  
Glebe Street  
Stoke on Trent  
ST4 1RF

Representations must be received by the date set out in **Section 9** of the Core Spatial Strategy document. Please note that all responses will be made publicly available.

The Core Spatial Strategy will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for public examination. Following the examination the Inspector will produce a report which will be binding on both Councils before the Core Spatial Strategy is taken forward to adoption.

Following adoption of the Core Spatial Strategy the Councils will publish a Sustainability Statement. This statement will clearly set out –

- How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the Core Spatial Strategy.
- How the Sustainability Report has been taken into account
- How consultation findings have been taken into account
- The reasons for choosing the Core Spatial Strategy as adopted in light of the other reasonable options addressed
- The measures to be taken for monitoring the significant sustainability effects of the Core Spatial Strategy

This statement will accompany the Adoption Statement for the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy as required by the Local Development Regulations.

For further information on this document or on the preparation of the City of Stoke-on-Trent or Borough of Newcastle-Under-Lyme Local Development Framework, please contact a member of the Development Plan Team  
At

Planning Policy Team  
Directorate of Regeneration,  
PO Box 630,  
Civic Centre,  
Glebe Street,  
Stoke on Trent  
ST4 1RF

or by email:  
stoke.ldf@stoke.gov.uk  
or by telephone on:  
01782 232302

or

Planning and Housing Strategy,  
Regeneration and Development Directorate,  
Civic Offices,  
Merrial Street,  
Newcastle,  
Staffordshire  
ST5 2AG

or by email:  
planningpolicy@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk  
or by telephone on:  
01782 742452

Any part of the **Local Development Framework** can be reproduced on request in large print, on CD or as spoken word on tape.

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ਜੇ ਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਕਿਤਾਬਚਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਸਕਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ  
ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮੱਦਦ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ । 01782 232302

यदि आप यह पुस्तिका नहीं पढ़ सकते तो हमें बताएं  
हम आपकी सहायता करेंगे । 01782 232302

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