

Our ref:  
Your ref:  
Date: 5 September 2014

Dear Sir or Madam

**CONSULTATION ON THE HARROGATE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN DRAFT  
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT**

I am writing to inform you that the Council has started to prepare a new Local Plan for the district and as part of initial work being undertaken it has prepared the Harrogate District Local Plan Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The report was agreed for consultation purposes by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development on 27 August 2014.

**Reasons for undertaking the work**

This work is being undertaken to meet the mandatory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of Local Plans. The scoping stage must identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the sustainability appraisal report and agree this with the three consultation bodies: Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency.

The process of Sustainability Appraisal is also being undertaken to ensure that the requirement for local plans to comply with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC is met. This requires that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) be undertaken for plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The requirements of the SEA Directive will be fully incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal.

**Development of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report**

The work builds upon Sustainability Appraisals undertaken for previous local planning documents by:

- **Updating the characterisation of the District** from a review of other plans, programmes and their objectives, the base line information and the guidance included in the National Planning Policy Framework in order to identify a number of sustainability issues.
- **Continuing to use the SA objectives previously used** for the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD. This was considered to be appropriate following an assessment of compatibility with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- **Testing the new preliminary draft objectives for the Local Plan**, currently being developed, against the SA objectives in order to determine areas of compatibility or inconsistency.
- **Refining the Sustainability Appraisal Framework** to incorporate more site assessment information, adopting a traffic light colour assessment, and the provision of a more detailed assessment of the advantages and disadvantages associated with potential development options. This will make the process easier to understand and comment on.

## Consultation

The consultation will run for a period of 6 weeks between Friday 5 September and 17 October 2014. In addition to the key consultation bodies of Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency the Council has also specifically consulted other key bodies such as adjacent local authorities, North Yorkshire District Councils and North Yorkshire County Council and a list of the additional bodies consulted is included in paragraph 1.9 of the report.

A full consultation is not necessary at this stage but all comments received are welcome. We would particularly welcome comments on the following:

- Are there any other relevant policies, plans or programmes which will affect the Local Plan and should be added to the list in appendix 2?
- Can anything be added to the base line information collected and documented in appendix 3?
- Do you agree with the SA objectives?
- Are there any issues relevant to the Local Plan which are not being addressed by this Scoping Report?
- Do you have any comments on the draft Sustainability Appraisal Framework and Assessment Rationale in Appendix 4?
- Do you consider that this Scoping Report meets the requirements of Stage A of the sustainability process as identified in Diagram 1 of the report?

Comments should be sent to: [planningpolicy@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@harrogate.gov.uk) , or in writing to: Planning Policy, Planning and Development, Knapping Mount, West Grove Road, Harrogate, HG1 2AE

Yours faithfully

**Gill Ritchie**  
**Principal Planner (Policy)**  
[planningpolicy@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@harrogate.gov.uk)  
01423 500600