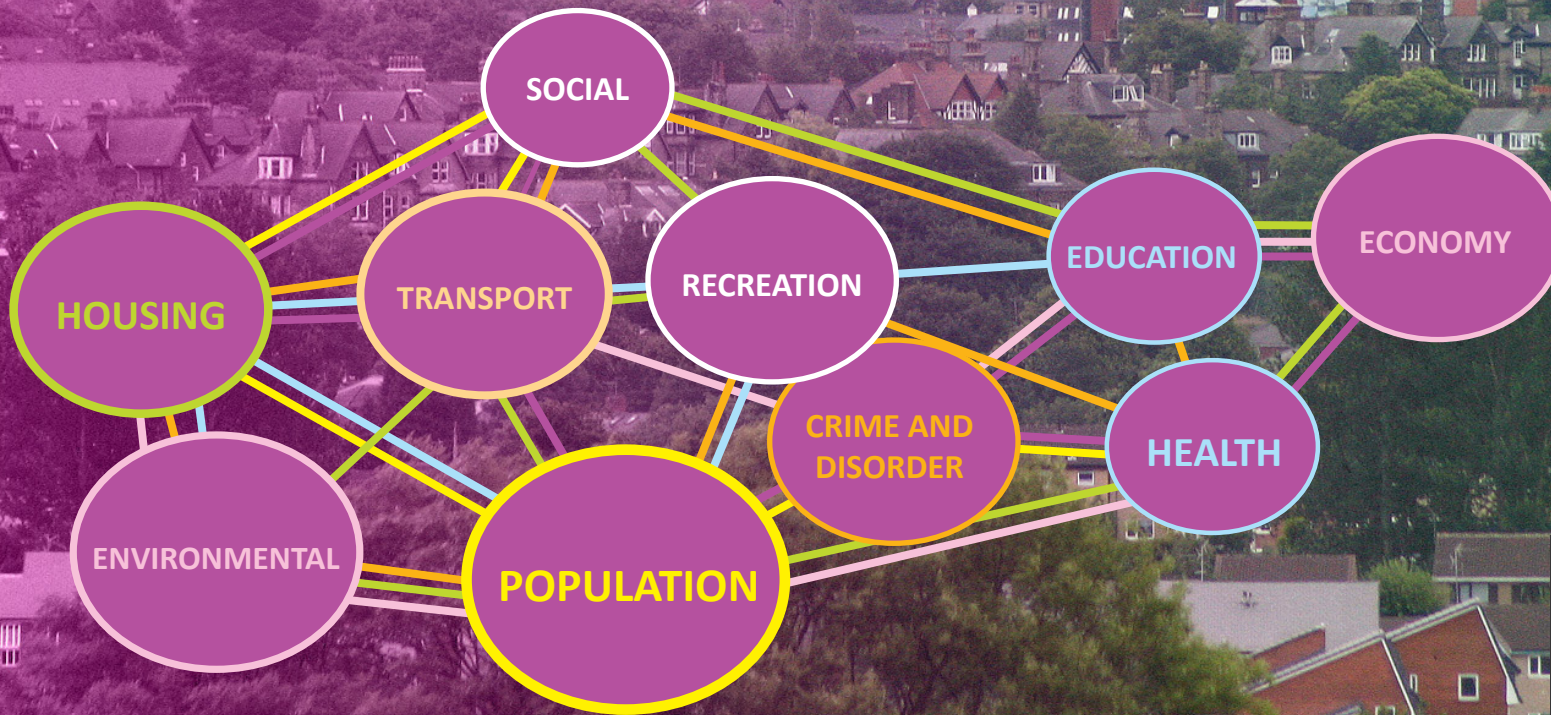




Draft SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT

September 2014



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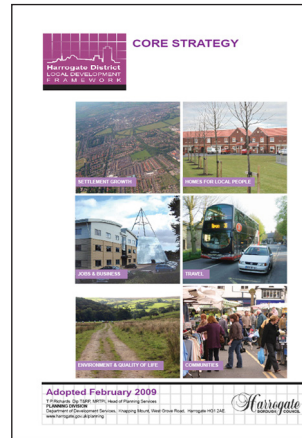
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1. INTRODUCTION

Planning policy background

1.1 Harrogate Borough Council was one of the first authorities to adopt its Core Strategy in 2009, under the former Local Development Framework system. Soon after this, work started on a Sites and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) in order to deliver the growth strategy set out in the Core Strategy through the allocation of land for development and development management policies. However, between the adoption of the Core Strategy and the submission for Examination of the Sites and Policies DPD the government introduced significant changes to the planning system and national planning policy through the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Having reached an advanced stage in preparation of the DPD it was considered that submitting the plan for examination was the best way to meet the housing needs of the district.

1.2 However, at Examination the Inspector raised significant concerns relating to the evidence base for employment provision, and that the housing growth being planned for represented a considerable shortfall when compared against objectively assessed need. His concerns had far reaching implications requiring a fundamental review of the council's strategic approach. The council therefore took the decision to withdraw its Sites and Policies Development Plan Document Submission Draft from Examination on 18 June 2014 and proceed with a new Local Plan for the Harrogate district.



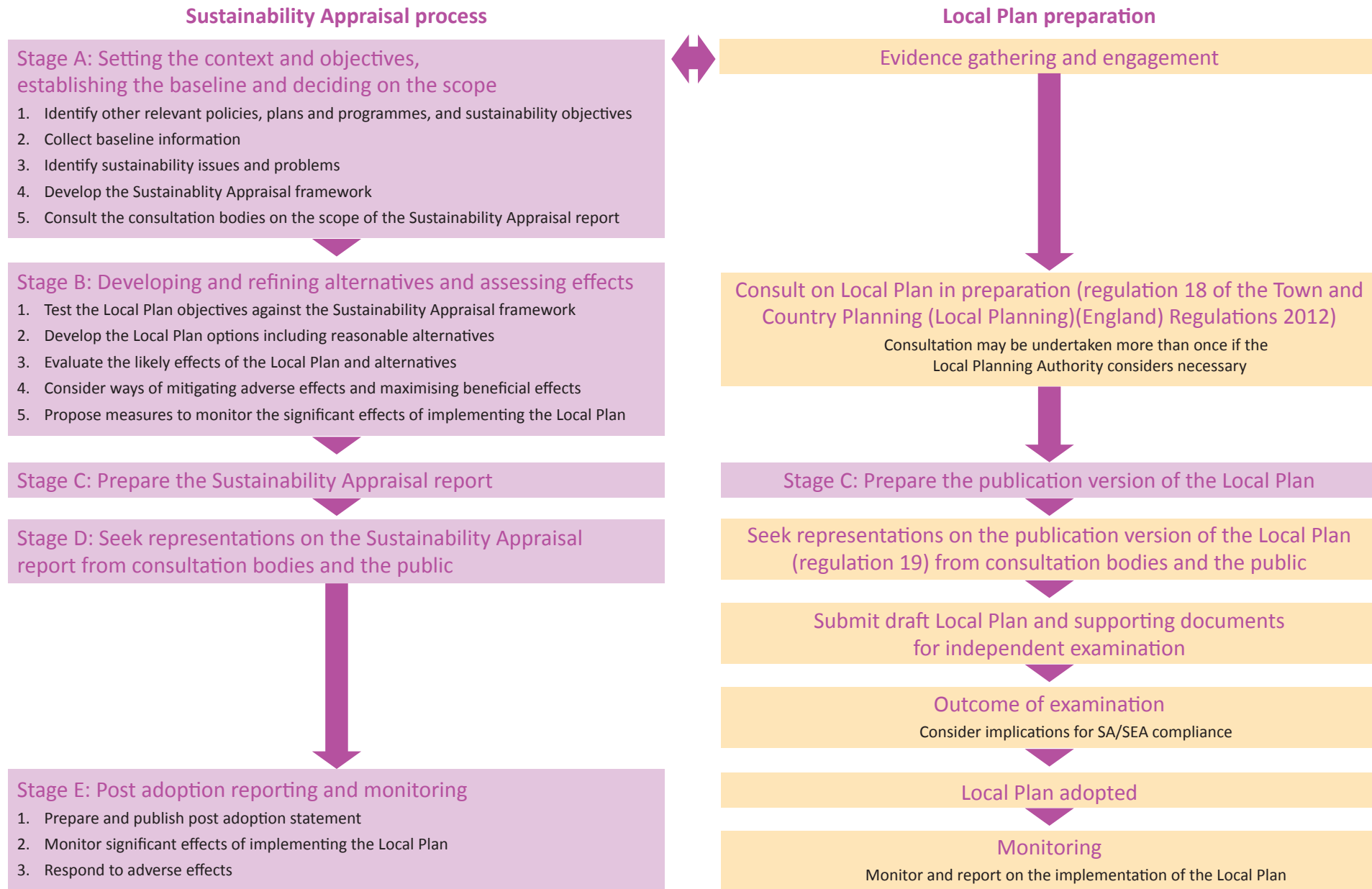
1.3 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) work, was an integral part of the plan making process for both the Core Strategy and the Sites and Policies DPD and copies of the reports prepared can be viewed at <http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/plan/Pages/Sustainability-Appraisal.aspx>. This work will inform the Sustainability Appraisal process undertaken for the new local plan where this is appropriate.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.4 There is a mandatory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of Local Plans. Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic and iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of strategies and policies to ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

1.5 Alongside this is a requirement to comply with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC. 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. Sustainability Appraisal is an essential part of the plan making process which must be integrated into it at each stage as shown in the diagram below. The scoping report is the first stage in the Sustainability Appraisal process (Stage A).

Diagram 1: Stages in the Sustainability Appraisal Process compared to the Local Plan Process.



source: planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk. 2014

What is required at the scoping stage?

- 1.6 The scoping stage (stage A in the diagram) must identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Sustainability Appraisal report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives. A key aim of this procedure is to help ensure that the Sustainability Appraisal process is proportionate and relevant to the local plan being assessed. When deciding on the scope and the level of detail to be provided key consultation bodies, as defined by Regulation 4 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, must be consulted.

Draft Local Plan objectives

- 1.7 Preliminary draft objectives have been produced for the Local Plan but are likely to change as work progresses towards the preferred options stage and the production of a Sustainability Appraisal report. Objectives have been developed within the context of national, regional and local policy and objectives and in line with best practice are appraised against the SA objectives in section 3.0.

Report structure

- 1.8 The rest of this report covers:
- A characterisation of the area drawn from the baseline information documented in Appendix 2 and the review of other plans, programmes and their objectives, detailed in Appendix 3, which together with the guidance included in NPPF has helped to highlight a number of sustainability issues
 - Assessing the SA objectives previously adopted against NPPF for compatibility
 - Appraisal of the draft objectives of the Local Plan against the SA Framework
 - An outline of the approach adopted to the development of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework, drawing on work previously undertaken for the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD where this is still relevant, and developing the process further to provide a robust framework for assessing the sustainability of potential growth options, site selection and policy development

- Proposed methodology for the later stages of the Sustainability Appraisal and the proposed structure and level of detail of the SA report

Consultation

- 1.9 Consultation on this document is an integral part of the Sustainability Appraisal process and will help to ensure that the SA will be comprehensive, robust and adequate to support the Local Plan during the later stages of full public consultation and Examination. In accordance with the guidance the three consultation bodies have been consulted:

- Natural England
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency

In addition the following organisations have been consulted:

- Adjacent local authorities
- North Yorkshire district councils
- Leeds City Region LEP
- York, North Yorkshire and the East Riding LEP
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Board
- Neighbourhood planning bodies
- Harrogate District Public Services Leadership Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board North Yorkshire
- Utility companies
- Rail Safety Standards Board

A full consultation is not necessary at this stage of the SA process. However, 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 baseline 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?
- Do you consider that this scoping report meets the requirements of Stage A of the sustainability process as identified in Diagram 1 above?

The consultation will run for a period of six weeks from 5 September 2014 to 17 October 2014. Comments should be sent to:

planningpolicy@harrogate.gov.uk or in writing to
Planning Policy,
Planning and Development,
Knapping Mount,
West Grove Road,
Harrogate, HG1 2AE



Williamson Drive, Ripon

2. Establishing the Baseline and Providing a Context

Links to other strategies, plans and programme

2.1 A review has been carried out of the other relevant plans, programmes and objectives set out in policies and legislation which may influence the development of the local plan.

The following strategies and plans have been reviewed:

International and European Context

- Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (UNDESA, 2002)
- Kyoto Protocol to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 1992); and the Copenhagen Accord (2009)
- Convention on the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972)
- The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (The Ramsar Convention) (1971)
- The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (The Bern Convention) (1979)
- EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
- EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)
- EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC as amended by 97/62/EC)
- EU Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)
- EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
- European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC)
- EU Seventh Environmental Action Programme: Living Well, Within the Limits of Our Planet (2013)
- European Spatial Development Perspective (Potsdam 1999)

- European Sustainable Development Strategy 2001 (Renewed 2006, reviewed 2009)
- EU Biodiversity Strategy: Our Life Insurance, Our Nature Capital (2011)
- EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2002/91/EC)
- European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (revised) (1992)

National Context

- Securing the Future: The UK Sustainable Development Strategy (HM Government, 2005)
- The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013
- The Plan for Growth (BIS, 2011)
- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (HM Government, 2011)
- Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods (DCLG, 2008)
- Heritage Protection for the 21st Century: White Paper (DCMS, 2007)
- The UK Post 2010 Biodiversity Framework (JNCC, 2012)
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010, as amended 2012)
- The Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010)
- Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England (DEFRA, 2009)
- Agricultural Land Classification - Protecting the best and most versatile: 2nd edition (Natural England, 2012)



- The Code for Sustainable Homes- Setting the Standard in Sustainability for New Homes (DCLG, 2008)
- Future Water: The Government’s Water Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2008)
- National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012)
- PPS10 Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (DCLG, 2011)
- Waste Management Plan for England (DEFRA, 2013)
- Updated National Waste Planning Policy: Consultation Draft (DCLG, July 2013)

Regional, Sub Regional and County

- Realising The Potential: The Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Plan (LCR Partnership, 2011)
- Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan: Draft for consultation (LCR Partnership, Jan 2014)
- York, North Yorkshire, and the East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan: draft version (York, North Yorkshire, and the East Riding LEP, 2013)
- North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2016 (North Yorkshire County Council)
- People, Paths and Places: The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire 2007-2011 (North Yorkshire County Council, 2007)
- North Yorkshire Minerals Local Plan (North Yorkshire County Council, 1997)
- North Yorkshire Waste Local Plan (North Yorkshire County Council, 2006)
- Yorkshire and the Humber Green Infrastructure Mapping Project (Natural England)
- Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy (Leeds City Region Partnership, 2010)
- The Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan (Environment Agency, 2010)
- North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project (North Yorkshire County Council, 2011)

- North Yorkshire Community Plan 2014-17: Draft version (Local Government North Yorkshire; Chief Executives Group North Yorkshire, 2014)
- North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018 (Health and Wellbeing Board North Yorkshire, 2013)
- Police Crime Plan 2013-2017 (Police and Crime Commissioner North Yorkshire, 2013)

Local

- Harrogate Borough Council: Corporate Plan 2013-2016 (Harrogate Borough Council, 2013)
- A Strong Local Economy: Strategic Action Plan 2012- 2015 (Harrogate Borough Council, 2012)
- Harrogate District Partnership Plan (Harrogate District Strategic Partnership, 2013)
- Harrogate District Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2014 (Harrogate District Community Safety Partnership)
- Harrogate District Climate Change Strategy (Harrogate Borough Council, 2009)
- Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment SPG (Harrogate Borough Council, 2004)
- Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan (Harrogate Borough Council, 2012)
- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Management Plan 2014-2019 (Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Committee, 2014)
- Harrogate District Sport, Recreation, Open Space and Village Halls Study: Part 1 Standards Assessment (Harrogate Borough Council, 2012)
- Harrogate District Outdoor Sports Strategy (Harrogate Borough Council, 2013)
- Clinical Commissioning: Our Five Year Ambition 2013 to 2017 (Harrogate and Rural District CCG, 2013)

2.2 Appendix 2 details the outcome of this review. The review has identified a large number of issues to take into account in the preparation of this scoping report and the preparation of the Local Plan. The key issues are summarised below (in no particular order); the Local Plan needs to:

1. Set out a development strategy that promotes sustainable development in the district.
2. Positively seek to allocate sufficient deliverable sites to ensure that development needs are met.
3. Deliver well-designed homes providing a range of sizes and tenures and the appropriate level of affordable housing.
4. Positively seek to allocate sufficient employment land in appropriate locations, and promote a varied and sustainable economy, including supporting key economic sectors, such as tourism.
5. Set out a development strategy that reduces the need to travel, provides opportunities to travel by means that are capable of improving health and wellbeing such as cycling and walking.
6. Seek to use development to deliver improved and expanded transport links, public transport and electronic infrastructure, such as superfast broadband.
7. Seek to protect, enhance and, where necessary, increase outdoor sports facilities, parks and open spaces.
8. Seek to protect heritage assets and sites of potential archaeological interest in ways appropriate to their significance. Specific protection is required for the World Heritage Site at Studley Royal Park.
9. Develop effective community engagement techniques to deliver a plan that responds to the views of wider communities and facilitates effective neighbourhood planning.
10. Promote the efficient use of resources, including moving to a low carbon economy, use of waste as a resource, energy efficient buildings, and appropriate renewable and low carbon energy.
11. Set out a strategy that has no negative impacts on Air Quality Management Areas and seeks to improve air quality generally.
12. Create no negative impacts on internationally and nationally designated nature sites, fully assess and appropriately mitigate negative impacts on locally designated sites.

13. Give full consideration to the potential impacts on water, including water quality, ecosystems, sustainable use of water, capacity of sewerage, flood risk and the opportunities to improve flood risk management etc.
14. Seek ways to maximise Green Infrastructure coverage and connectedness across a wide range of scales and increase ecosystems services including biodiversity. Seek ways to maximise the wider social and economic benefits of Green Infrastructure.
15. Use land efficiently and consider soil quality and agricultural land classification when assessing potential development sites. Investigate ways to improve soil management during construction.
16. Promote and support sustainable agriculture including wildlife friendly farming and local food production.
17. Recognise the different landscapes within the district and their differing capacity to accommodate change. Promote development that minimises landscape impacts and protects landscapes appropriate to their significance.
18. Fully recognise and seek to protect and enhance the special qualities of Nidderdale AONB.

Baseline information

- 2.3 In order to be able to predict and monitor the effects of the strategies and policies contained within the Local Plan it is necessary to have an understanding of the baseline position. This requires the collection of data to assess the current and likely future state of the plan area. The SEA Directive requires an assessment of the 'relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.' In addition this exercise also helps to identify sustainability issues of particular relevance to this district. The outcome of this work is set out in detail in Appendix 3. A characterisation summary of the area is set out below. In the course of this work where baseline information is not available, or where it is considered unsatisfactory, this has also been documented.

Administrative context

- 2.4 Harrogate district lies within the County of North Yorkshire and is one of the largest in England, extending over some 1,308 sq km. It lies to the north of the Leeds/Bradford conurbation and on the eastern fringes of the Yorkshire

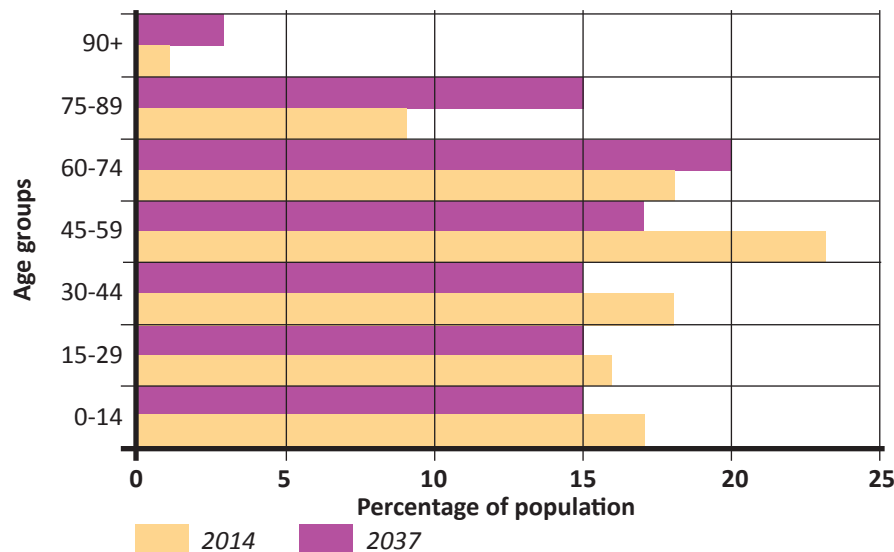
Dales. The district is essentially rural in character but it contains a number of important urban areas. The major settlements of Harrogate, Ripon and Knaresborough account for 65% of the district's population. In addition the market towns of Pateley Bridge, Masham and Boroughbridge provide local services and employment opportunities to the surrounding rural populations.

2.5 The A1 London-Edinburgh passes through the district with connections to the M1 via a link to the south and east of Leeds. Other important routes are the A61 Ripon-Harrogate-Leeds road and the A59 provides a link via Skipton into Lancashire and to the east of York and beyond. The Leeds-Harrogate-York railway line also runs through the district, providing important connections to the inter-city network at Leeds and York.

Population

2.6 The population of Harrogate is projected to rise by 10,000 by 2037; the majority of this due to people moving into the district from other parts of England. An increase in the percentage of older people is a national trend, however, this is exaggerated within North Yorkshire and Harrogate as there is already a smaller proportion of younger people and this will decrease further. Currently the largest age group in Harrogate is the 45-59 year olds and the trend will see this change to 60-74 year olds.

Diagram 2: population projections for 2014 and 2037 by age group



source: ONS (2014) 2012-based subnational population projections

2.7 There is a small and regular international in-flow of people. Although this will not affect population numbers (as it is offset by greater outflows) an international community will continue to grow within the district. The greatest movement is within the 15-29 year old age group. Internal inflow (from other parts of England) is greatest within 22/23 year olds; presumably graduates gaining work and/ or returning home. However, the yearly inflow for this age group is still only half the yearly outflow of 18/19 year olds so it can be presumed that of those that go to university a significant number do not return to the district.

Housing

2.8 The number of dwelling completions has fallen each year since 2007 and the rate is now significantly below the projected need. The rise in population coupled with a decrease in the average household size could lead to a requirement of at least 860 dwellings per year¹. The provision of new housing has the greatest impact on other sustainability objectives. To deliver these dwellings it will be paramount for the plan to mitigate negative impacts on other sustainability objectives to ensure positive outcomes are optimised.

2.9 Housing affordability has been an issue within the district since the initial Sustainability Appraisal in 2005 and the drop in housing completions would be expected to exaggerate this issue. While house prices are slightly more affordable than prior to the recession it does not appear that the housing market has fully recovered and this could be masking the impact that a low building rate could have on house prices. There is already a significant need for affordable housing, this combined with the current rate of house building and a recovering housing market could lead to the issue escalating.

2.10 There is evidence that the current housing stock no longer meets the requirements of current and future needs. Residents often require two bedroomed dwellings rather than larger three and four bedroom dwellings which the district largely comprises. Approximately a third of households with support needs feel these are not met in their current home². These include those with age related illnesses, an issue which is set to grow as the proportion of older people increases. There will be an increasing need for homes to be adapted or new dwellings built to meet these support needs.

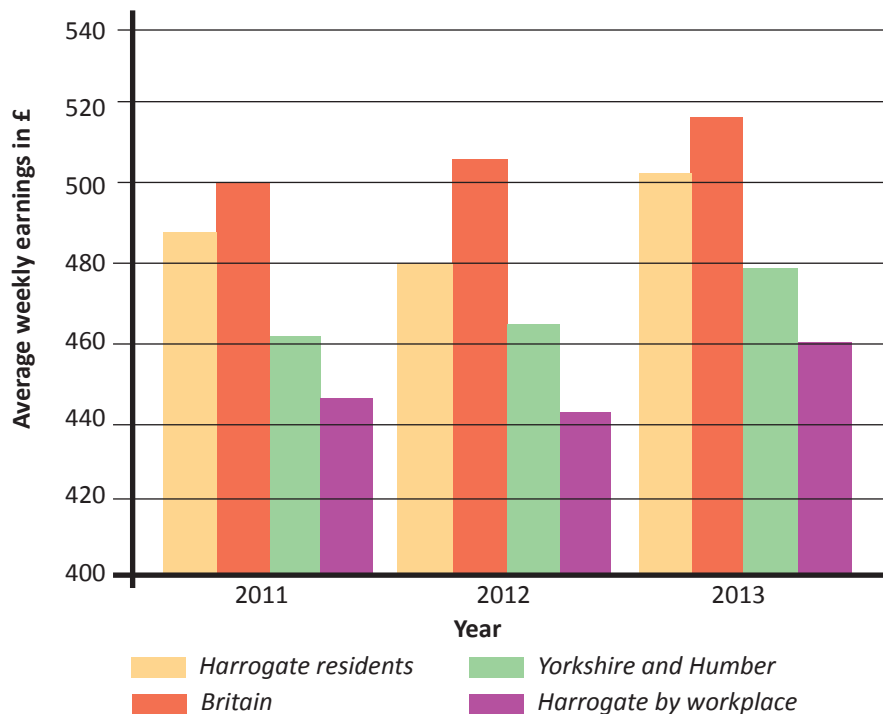
1 GVA (2011) North Yorkshire SHMA Appendix 3: Harrogate Specific Analysis. This document is currently being updated

2 GVA (2011) North Yorkshire SHMA Appendix 3: Harrogate Specific Analysis.

Economy

2.11 Although in general the economy is healthy and in a favourable position in regards to employment rates, there is a divide between the residents of the district and those who work within the district. The local economy is diverse however the majority of job opportunities have been within the real estate and business services. Hotel and catering and retail have been the other main industries. In contrast, the industries which employ Harrogate residents include human health and social work activities and professional, scientific and technical services³. There is disparity between pay, with residents earning above the regional average whereas those who work within the district earning less.

Diagram 3: Average weekly earnings comparing people who live in Harrogate and those who work in Harrogate



³ 2011 Census accessed via www.nomisweb.co.uk June 2014

2.12 The district has a higher percentage of small business units compared to national and regional averages. This is also reflected in the higher proportion of self-employed people; 17% compared with 11% (Yorkshire and Humber) and 13% (England). The district has the highest new business rate in North Yorkshire, but also a high closure rate. This is considered to be a positive sign of a competitive and entrepreneurial market. In contrast, 0.5% of businesses employ over 250 staff and provide 21% of jobs within the district⁴.

Transport

2.13 There is a trend towards increased car usage within the district evidenced by increased car ownership. However the percentage of commuters who choose to commute by car has not changed since the 2001 census. The origins of people coming into the district cover a large area while the destinations of Harrogate district residents is more focused on the urban centres of Leeds, Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon and Wetherby. There is also a link to the Nidd Valley ward, presumably the impact of employment at Menwith Hill. Many people who work within the district and commute by car actually start their journeys within Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon where most public transport options are available.

2.14 Current high car ownership and use does mean that key parts of the transport network will require investment in order to accommodate future housing and employment growth required as part of the new Local Plan, which will cover the period up to 2035. The council will need to work closely with North Yorkshire County Council, the Highways Agency and the Local Enterprise Partnerships to develop an appropriate evidence base to assess the impact of future development proposals, unlock development sites and assess where transport investment will be required to accommodate future growth.

2.15 The use of the bus for commuting has remained the same although the bus links between Harrogate and Knaresborough and to Ripon and Wetherby are shown to be strong commuting links. There are low levels of bus use across the rest of the district. This is particularly concerning as figures for distance travelled to work indicated that a significant proportion of residents (53%) travel less than 5km to get to work⁵. Commuting by train has also shown minimal change, with Leeds city centre being the main destination. However

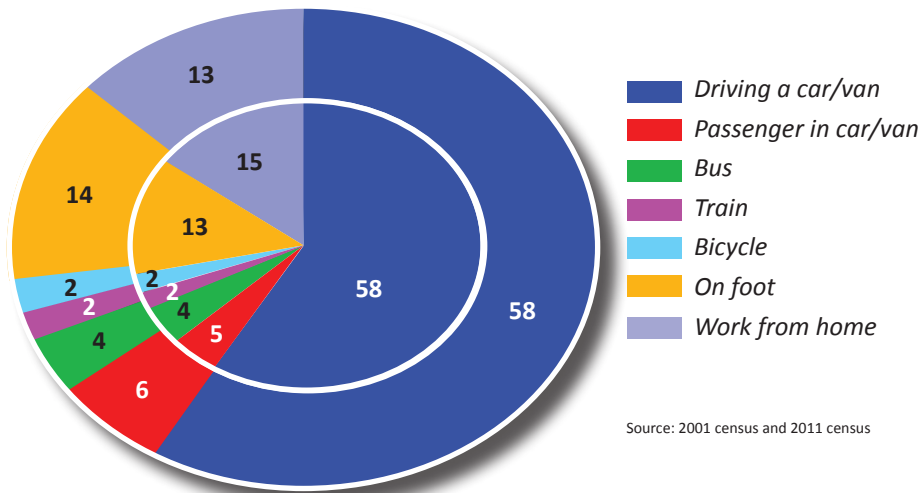
⁴ Harrogate Borough Council (HBC)(2013) Harrogate District Profile

⁵ 2011 Census accessed via www.nomisweb.co.uk June 2014

the catchment areas for journeys into Harrogate remain concentrated to a few areas; central York and northern Leeds. There has been little change to the number of people commuting by bicycle. The proportion of residents who cycle for any duration for utility purposes is below the national and county council averages. As a recreational activity cycling is very popular so there is potential to improve this situation and promote cycling as a form of commuting. The percentage of people who work mainly at or from home has increased slightly, which reflects the general increase of home working across the country.

- 2.16 The high car usage will impact on a number of sustainable objectives including road safety. Harrogate experiences a higher number of accidents compared to neighbouring districts and only in the last couple of years has the number of deaths and serious injuries decreased. Harrogate Community Safety Partnership has identified that the majority of the accidents occur on 'A' roads and that speeding is one of the common causes.

Diagram 4: pie chart comparing method of travel in 2001 (outer circle) to 2011 (inner circle)



Social Inclusion

- 2.17 The district is host to a range of cultural events and festivals including Harrogate and Ripon International Festivals, the Harrogate Crime Writing Festival, Knaresborough Feva and the Northern Aldborough Festival as well as a number of vibrant rural events, the largest of which being the Great Yorkshire Show. Regular events and groups are held across the district at local village halls and public libraries. Participation in activities is above average and in addition neighbourhood plans are being produced by residents of Ripon, Knaresborough and Otley (a small part of Otley Neighbourhood Area is in Harrogate district).
- 2.18 There are various characteristics which could lead people to have a higher risk of social exclusion. The proportion of over 60 year olds within Harrogate is projected to increase to over a third by 2037. An ageing population could have physical disadvantages limiting access to social activities. The decreasing population of young people, as well as other minorities such as non-English speakers, travellers and those on lower incomes may become marginalised and have limited access to social activities. Any policies will need to consider the impact on these groups.
- 2.19 Owing to the rural nature of the district accessibility to services is considerably lower than other more densely populated areas. The majority of the district is ranked within the worse 10% of England for geographical distance to services⁶. The percentage of people living within hamlets and isolated dwellings is also above the national and county percentages with the Nidd Valley in particular having a large number of individual houses and hamlets.
- 2.20 Access to broadband is increasingly important for modern living and is often viewed as a fourth utility after gas, electricity and water. It is becoming an integrated part of many people's lives, including banking services, online educational resources and entertainment. Across the district the Superfast North Yorkshire programme has enabled 91 cabinets with superfast fibre broadband. The programme is on target to ensure 90% of premises have superfast broadband by the end of 2014. The remaining 10% will have access to high quality broadband by 2017⁷.

⁶ 2010 English Indices of Deprivation accessed via www.streamlis.org.uk June 2014

⁷ Provided on request by Harrogate Borough Council's Strategic Development Team

Health

2.21 In general, the district enjoys a good standard of healthy living with longer life expectancy and healthier lifestyles for residents. The percentage of physically active adults is above national and regional averages and consequently the mortality rate from preventable causes is lower. The percentage of residents affected by a long-term illness or disability is under the regional and national averages. In particular, the percentage of people limited a lot by their illness is significantly lower. Although the percentage of people who provide unpaid care is similar to national trends, Harrogate differs in the amount of hours provided, with fewer people providing over 20 hours care a week. This may reflect better general health. The district is relatively affluent, however small pockets of deprivation exist within Harrogate town; one area is ranked within the 20% most deprived in England⁸. The percentage of children in poverty, is below the national average for all wards, however, there are significant differences between some urban wards within Harrogate compared with the rest of the district. In addition to these inequalities it has been suggested that there is an urban bias on these types of calculations and that there could be unrepresented rural deprivation.

Crime and Disorder

2.22 Harrogate has experienced a slight rise in the number of violent crimes over the last three years; although the number of incidents remains lower than the county average this is an unfavourable trend. Burglaries and vehicle crimes have remained low. The number of incidents of anti-social behaviour peaked in 2010/11. Since this time the number of incidents has fallen and the percentage of serious problems has also decreased to 2.5%⁹.

Education

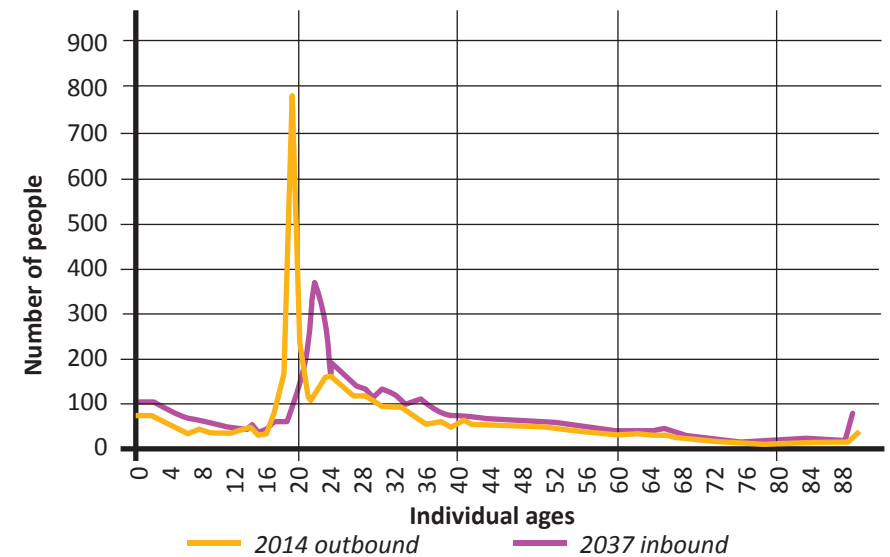
2.23 Although there are many schools within the district a proportion of these are independent and will be schooling pupils from outside the district. For state-funded schools across North Yorkshire, there is a mixed picture of rural schools struggling to fill places and urban schools already being over capacity. In Harrogate there are two secondary schools oversubscribed and the projected figures for primary school pupils show a yearly increase which will create greater pressure on these schools and others already nearing capacity. A more immediate issue will be new development within the urban areas which will impact on school pupil numbers.

⁸ 2010 English Indices of Deprivation accessed via www.streamlis.org.uk June 2014

⁹ Harrogate District Community Safety Partnership 2014/15 Partnership Plan

2.24 The district has high levels of academic success, above both national and LEA averages. For those who study at Key Stage 5 (17/18 year olds) the vast majority continue in education heading to universities outside of the district. There is no evidence of students going directly into work or work-related training, however, a significant number are not captured within the data and it is not clear whether these are remaining in the area. The population projections suggest that after graduating only a small proportion of students return to the district.

Diagram 5: migration projections for 2014 show 18/19 year olds leaving the district and far less returning in their early 20s



source: ONS (2014) 2012-based subnational population projections

2.25 There are only a few colleges offering further, higher and vocational education and most are based within Harrogate. The adult learning centre provides courses at various locations around the district and Harrogate College provides an apprenticeship scheme which can be utilised by local businesses. Good transport links and broadband availability will be essential to help people access these opportunities.

Local Distinctiveness

- 2.26 The quality of the built and natural environment is key to the character of the district. This quality is reflected in the number of designations including a World Heritage Site at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal. The number of listed buildings has increased since 2010 reflecting the high regard for the quality of buildings within the district.
- 2.27 The district's high quality and diverse landscape and wildlife are important assets, for attracting visitors, supporting agricultural productivity and contributing to the wellbeing of residents. Kirk Deighton Special Area of Conservation and North Pennines Moors Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area are internationally important for their habitats and protected species. However, they are sensitive to a wide range of activities ranging from agriculture, industry, recreational activities and pollution. Since 2010 the Harrogate Biodiversity Action Plan has identified and implemented actions to mitigate these pressures. Although this work is still ongoing, the publication of Biodiversity 2020 changed the focus from individual species and sites to large scale whole natural systems. Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) have been formed to co-ordinate action; Nidderdale AONB is within the Northern Upland Partnership and the rest of Harrogate within the North Yorkshire and York Partnership. This may make it harder for impacts and consequences to be recognised and more focus will be required on potential impacts of policies on areas outside of the district. Both these LNPs have aspirations for future projects within the district.
- 2.28 The Water Framework Directive has introduced much tighter standards and consequently the quality of the district's rivers is now perceived to be less favourable than in previous reports. The River Nidd from Birstwith to Crimple Beck and Crimple Beck to the River Ouse both have unfavourably high levels of phosphate due to continuous treated sewage discharges. Oak Beck also fails the assessment for phosphate and diatoms due to combined (foul drainage and surface water) sewer overflows. Intermittent incidents from agriculture and sewerage assets contributed to the River Crimple failing the assessment for fish. Cundall Beck fails for invertebrate and is linked to enrichment due to the high proportion of treated sewerage making up the flow in drier months, runoff from agricultural land in wetter months and modification made for land drainage. All these areas highlight the importance of understanding the impact of additional flows on the sewer

network and infrastructure assets. Substantial investment from the water company would be required to reduce the phosphate levels and the new plan must consider the available capacity within the infrastructure and at the treatment works¹⁰.

Pollution and use of resources

- 2.29 Air pollution is an issue with concentrations of pollutants increasing across the district in general. Since 2010 there have been 12 sites which breach the standards set in the Air Quality Regulations 2010 and despite designating Air Quality Management Areas in both Knaresborough and Ripon high levels of pollutants remain. Both areas exceed targets for Nitrogen dioxide which mostly come from traffic pollution. An Air Quality Action Plan is currently being produced.
- 2.30 The average energy efficiency of housing within the district is lower than regional and national averages and much lower than local authority owned dwellings. This may be a reflection of the percentage of older housing stock within the district and will also impact on affordability of housing. If this issue were addressed it may help to ensure that the consumption of gas and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions continues to reduce.
- 2.31 Domestic consumption of electricity is gradually rising. This is possibly due to increasing numbers of electrical powered technologies, including those designed to mitigate the use of fossil fuels. Although progress is being made towards greater use of renewable energy the capacity from Feed in Tariffs is small.
- 2.32 The percentage of development on previously developed land dipped significantly during the recession although the position has become favourable by 2013. A substantial percentage of dwellings were developed at a density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, however these were provided by eight sites which necessitated a lower density due to their character¹¹. The variety of densities of new dwellings reflects the constraints of the district.

Limitations of Baseline Data

- 2.33 The baseline data has been collected from published sources notably data reports published by the council, Census data and statistical/official websites.

¹⁰ Provided on request by Environment Agency information © Environment Agency and database right

¹¹ Harrogate Borough Council (2013) Local Planning Annual Monitoring Report

Where it was possible to obtain, the most up to date information has been used. New data was not collected as part of this exercise. Where there are gaps in the available data then consideration will need to be given to whether this indicator should be monitored in the future. This will need to be considered as part of the monitoring framework.

Predicted Future Trends

2.34 Predicting future trends with any certainty is always difficult. However, it is anticipated that the following trends are likely to continue without the preparation of the Local Plan.

Social

- Despite the economic downturn and the current anticipated recovery house prices remain high which in turn widens the gap of affordability for many within the district. Lower housing completion rates of recent years will exacerbate this.
- Number of homeless people within the district is decreasing.
- Access to services is likely to remain a significant issue for many parts of the district.
- Continued high level of educational achievement.
- The district's population is forecast to increase over the period to 2037.



Penny Pot Lane, Harrogate

- The percentage of 60 year olds within Harrogate is projected to increase by over a third by 2037. This will have implications for future housing requirements, health and social isolation.
- Sport and active recreation contribute to quality of life and broader social objectives such as health improvement and crime reduction.

Environmental

- Continued increase in car ownership levels, and use of the car to travel to work
- The amount of household waste arising is decreasing, and the percentage that is recycled is predicted to increase
- District's high quality and diverse landscape subject to increasing development pressure
- Continued high levels of water and energy consumption
- Pressure on historic buildings and areas
- Potential for inappropriate development to take place in floodplain

Economic

- Low levels of unemployment persist, although there is a parallel increase alongside regional and national figures
- Continued out commuting
- In rural areas, in particular, reliance on limited range of job types often characterised by low pay and seasonality.

Main Sustainability Issues

2.35 Sustainability issues include "existing environmental problems ... in particular those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance ..." as required by the SEA Directive (Annex I (c)). These have been identified from analysis of the baseline information as part of the characterisation of the area, exploring the relationship with other plans and programmes, existing information held by Harrogate Borough Council in connection with annual monitoring and other survey work and issues identified through previous SA work undertaken for the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD. These are set out below together with a commentary as to the implications for the Local Plan. The identification of sustainability issues has been fed into the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

Sustainability Issues

Key issues	Implications for Local Plan
Social	
Higher than average elderly population with outward migration of younger people. There may be increased cases of age related illness and social isolation.	There is a need to plan for and provide different forms of accommodation to reflect the make-up of the various sections of the community, particularly in respect of affordable housing (see below) and the needs of the elderly.
The rate of house building has been decreasing since 2007 and is now significantly below projected needs. House prices have continued to exceed regional and national figures but earnings continue to be lower than the national average. This means that many cannot afford to continue living in the district.	Affordability of housing continues to be a major issue throughout the district and brings with it implications for public service delivery and the wider district economy. The Plan will need to seek to maximise the stock of affordable housing and dwelling size to meet identified need .
Crime levels are low within the district but incidents of anti-social behaviour are an increasing problem.	Mainly a problem with younger people. The Plan will need to address better facilities for young people.
Studies indicate that there is a shortfall of sports provision across the district.	The plan will need to seek to make allocations of land and/or include policies to support the development of land for sports provision. Swimming and cycling are the most popular sports within the district.
Environmental	
Development pressures, changing agricultural practices and inappropriate development have had a negative impact on landscape character and historic buildings and areas.	Good planning and design (in terms of both function and impact) is an important element of sustainable development and this needs to be adequately reflected within the strategy and policies of the Plan.
Concerns about biodiversity at national and international levels are reflected locally, with a decline recorded in certain common species.	The main threats to biodiversity are associated with human activities which cause damage to or loss of habitats. Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity should be taken into account within the Plan.
Access to the countryside from towns or links to the countryside via Green Infrastructure Corridors.	The Local Plan should identify and provide policy protection to Green Infrastructure Corridors.
Certain areas of the district experience flooding problems from fluvial and drainage sources.	The Local Plan should seek to avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood risk and on floodplains.
Gypsum related subsidence is an issue in the Ripon area.	The Local Plan will need to ensure that land allocations do not place development in unstable locations without appropriate precautions.
The district has high levels of energy and water consumption and waste production all of which contributes to climate change.	The Plan should encourage well designed developments that make efficient use of natural resources and encourage energy efficiency.

<p>Car ownership levels within the district are high and increasing, a reflection in part on reliance on the car in rural areas where public transport provision is limited. These characteristics are likely to continue.</p>	<p>Reducing the need to travel by car will be a key challenge for the Plan. Promoting development patterns that reduce the need to travel and securing improvements to public transport to provide a genuine alternative to the private car will be issues to address.</p> <p>Provision for walking and especially cycling should be considered to reduce car usage in the district.</p>
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Economic

<p>Reliance in rural areas on limited employment sectors resulting in a limited range of job types often characterised by low pay and seasonality.</p>	<p>The Plan will need to seek to promote alternative economic activity in rural areas to enable the rural economy to diversify whilst not damaging the essential nature and environment of the area.</p>
<p>Market towns in the district have been the subject of various regeneration initiatives to improve their economic position.</p>	<p>Consider the Plan's continued role in this respect. Currently it is supporting Neighbourhood Plan preparation in Ripon and Knaresborough.</p>

3. Sustainability Appraisal Framework

3.1 Sustainable development can be defined as ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. Achieving sustainable development requires that the following four objectives are met simultaneously:

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

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in para 6 states that: 'The purpose of the Planning System is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.' and in para 7 goes on to define the economic, social and environmental roles for the planning system. Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development (para 151) and this is expanded upon in para 152:

'Local Planning authorities should seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and net gains across all three. Significant adverse impacts on any of these dimensions should be avoided and, where possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, measures to mitigate the impact should be considered. Where adequate mitigation measures are not possible, compensatory measures may be appropriate.'

3.3 Central to the Sustainability Appraisal process is the Sustainability Framework; this provides a format for describing, analysing and comparing sustainability effects. The initial Draft SA Framework developed for inclusion in this scoping report is based on that previously used for the council's Core Strategy adopted in 2009, and work undertaken for the Draft Sites and Policies DPD which reached the Examination stage in May 2014, but this has been modified to reflect any changing local concerns and priorities, the introduction of the NPPF and the nature of the Local Plan now being developed.

The Sustainability Framework, objectives and indicators are set out at Appendix 4.

Comparing the SA objectives previously adopted in plan preparation against the National Planning Policy Framework

3.4 This original SA framework is based on the aims and objectives developed in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) prepared by the former Regional Assembly. From the four objectives set out in 'A Better Quality of Life: a strategy for sustainable development in the UK 1999' the RSDF set out 15 aims, to which a further aim was added by the council to reflect the importance of the historic environment within the district. These are listed below, together with extracts from the NPPF which support their continued use:

Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone

1. Quality housing available to everyone

The NPPF requires Local Plans to meet the full requirements for market and affordable housing and deliver a wide choice of high quality homes and create inclusive and mixed communities.

2. Conditions and services to engender good health

A core planning principle is 'to take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs'. Planning policies should also assess the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities.

3. Safety and security for people and property

Developments should 'create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion' (NPPF para 58). Places should contain 'clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas' (NPPF para 69).

Plans should create 'safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists and pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establish home zones.'

4. Vibrant communities which participate in decision making

A key social message from the NPPF is that the planning system should 'support vibrant and healthy communities.' Local authorities should also 'aim to involve all sections of the community in the development of Local Plans and in planning decisions, and should facilitate neighbourhood planning.'

5. Culture, recreation and leisure activities for all

The NPPF expects Local Plans to ensure the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and their settings. In addition, the Local Plan needs to improve 'cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs'. Planning policies should also assess the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities.

6. Local needs met locally

Local Plans should ensure that: developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be minimised.' A core planning principle is 'to take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.'

7. Education and training opportunities which build the skills and capacity of the population

The NPPF states that the government 'is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.'

Effective protection of the environment

8. Biodiverse and attractive natural environment

In order to contribute to the government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity the NPPF expects the planning system to minimise impacts on biodiversity and that improvements in biodiversity are realised wherever possible. Para 117 sets out how planning policies should minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity.

9. Minimal pollution levels

The NPPF para 110 states that 'In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value', where consistent with other policies in the framework.

10. A transport network which maximises access whilst minimising detrimental impacts

The NPPF para 34 states that 'Plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes will be maximised. However, this needs to take account of policies set out elsewhere in this framework, particularly in rural areas.'

11. Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and a managed response to the effects of climate change.

The NPPF para 94 states that 'local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply and demand considerations.

Para 95 explains that in order 'To support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should:

- plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; *and*
- when setting out any local requirement for a building's sustainability, do so in a way consistent with the government's zero carbon buildings policy, and adopt nationally prescribed standards.'

Prudent use of natural resources

12. Prudent and efficient use of energy and natural resources with minimal production of waste.

The core planning principles set out in para 17 of the NPPF include the need to 'encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources ...' and paras. 95 and 97 support the move to a low carbon future. Para 111 states that 'In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this framework.' Para 112 emphasises the need to 'take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.'



13. Protect and enhance historic heritage assets

The NPPF para 111 states that ‘Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.’ Para 126 states that ‘Local Planning authorities should set out in their local plan, a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.’

14. A quality built environment and efficient land use patterns, that make good use of derelict sites, minimise travel and promote balanced development.

The NPPF states that ‘the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment’ and expects local plans to ensure the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and their settings.’

Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

15. Good quality employment opportunities available to all.

The economy is a key theme in the NPPF. Para 19 states ‘The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.’



St James Retail Park, Knaresborough

16. Conditions for business success, economic growth and investment

Local Plans need to be based on an assessment of the existing and future supply of available land for economic development to ensure there is sufficient, suitable land to meet the identified requirements, including monitoring of the suitability of previously allocated land (NPPF para 161).

Para 21 sets out the requirements for local plans in promoting competitive town centre environments, their management and growth.

In conclusion, the above analysis indicates that the SA objectives used for the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD are compatible with the requirements of the NPPF and are appropriate for continued use.

Appraisal of Draft Local Plan Objectives

3.5 In accordance with best practice and advice, the draft objectives of the Local Plan have been tested against the SA objectives to determine areas of compatibility or inconsistency. Testing the draft objectives of the Local Plan in this way can help to refine them. Similarly, the Local Plan objectives should be consistent with each other and the SA objectives will be one way of checking this. Where conflict is identified between objectives it is for decision makers to decide on priorities. Consideration may need to be given to refining the Local Plan objectives as a result of this exercise and this will be detailed in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report which will accompany future public consultation.

3.6 The appraisal has been carried out on the basis of the following assumptions:

- any development should have regard to the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, and the natural and historic environment;
- development should take place in a way that limits the potential for pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and uses resources efficiently to limit waste production.

Future stages of the appraisal will look in more detail at growth options, site allocations and development management policies as they develop throughout the preparation of the Local Plan.

3.7 The outcome of this initial assessment of the compatibility of the draft Local Plan objectives is summarised in the matrix below. A commentary is then provided for those objectives where there are acknowledged incompatibilities or areas of uncertainty.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> <p>KEY</p> <p>● compatible</p> <p>◆ inconsistent</p> <p>○ uncertainty</p> <p>no link/neutral</p> </div>	quality housing available to everyone	conditions and services to engender good health	safety and security for people and property	vibrant communities which participate in decision making	culture, leisure and recreation facilities for all	local needs met locally	education and training opportunities	biodiverse and attractive natural environment	minimal pollution levels	transport network which maximises access	minimise greenhouse gas emissions	prudent and efficient use of energy and resources	protect and enhance the historic heritage assets	a quality built environment and efficient land use patterns	good quality employment opportunities available to all	conditions for business success, economic growth and investment

To contribute to sustainable patterns of development, the Local Plan will:

1. Manage development patterns by focusing housing and employment development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable. These are locations that take full advantage of existing opportunities to walk, cycle, or use public transport, or have the potential to increase these opportunities in order to access jobs, shops and services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2. Allocate land of lesser environmental value for development, including prioritising the use of previously developed land, where it is not of high environmental value	◆					○		●	●	○	●	●	●	●	◆	◆

To address housing needs for all, the Local Plan will:

3. Deliver an appropriate scale and mix of house types, sizes and prices	●			●		●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
4. Deliver affordable housing to meet the needs of local people	●			●		●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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To support business, enterprise and job creation to achieve a sustainable and diverse economy that provides a range of employment, including apprenticeships, the Local Plan will:

5. Support local investment and inward investment aimed at achieving business growth, particularly in key economic sectors						●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
6. Support business start-ups and the growth of small and micro businesses							●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
7. Support a growing tourism sector attracting greater numbers of both domestic and overseas visitors and providing a vibrant offer for business and leisure visitors				●		●	○	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
8. Maintaining the position of Harrogate International Centre as one of the UK's leading conference and exhibition destinations, providing a range of venues and a thriving conference, exhibition and events programme				●	●		●			○	●	●			●	●
9. Deliver sufficient employment land to enable a thriving economy						●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
10. Help deliver a higher proportion of high value jobs				●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

To create successful places providing quality environments that enable communities and individuals to enjoy an excellent quality of life, the Local Plan will:

11. Protect and enhance the roles of vibrant urban areas as the (to be determined), market towns as the (to be determined), and thriving rural villages as the (to be determined) within protected countryside (NPPF para 17)	●			●		●		●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
12. Encourage high quality public services to be provided close to home so that essential needs for access are met		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
13. Encourage high quality design that recognises local character and contributes to local distinctiveness, and health and wellbeing, including community safety	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
14. Deliver appropriate sport and recreation facilities, play areas and accessible open space in all communities	●	●		●	●	●		●	●					●		
15. Give people opportunities to be involved in the planning decisions that affect them, and enable communities as a whole to take more control of shaping their neighbourhoods				●		●	●									

To secure and maximise the contribution of the district's historic environment to local distinctiveness and achieving wider social and economic objectives, the Local Plan will:

16. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance				●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
17. Promote and increase understanding of the wider historic environment				●	●		●	●			●	●	●	●		

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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To facilitate the delivery of the infrastructure necessary to support a flourishing local economy, reduce the impact of transport on the environment and communities, and enable reliable journeys between key centres regionally, nationally and internationally, the Local Plan will:

18. Enable greater opportunities to travel on foot and by bike		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
19. Support increased access to public transport and improvements to quality and quantity				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
20. Seek to deliver good rail, bus and road connectivity between key centres				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
21. Deliver infrastructure to accommodate and support new housing and employment sites, and seek ways for new development to contribute to reducing existing congestion	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
22. Support the expansion of good electronic infrastructure, including high speed broadband	●			●		●	●		●		●	●			●	●

To safeguard the natural environment and manage natural resources, the Local Plan will:

23. Protect and enhance the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and locally important areas of high landscape quality				●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
24. Protect internationally, nationally and locally designated natural habitats, and take opportunities to enhance their quality and biodiversity				●				●	●		●	●		●		
25. Protect the widest range of Green Infrastructure assets to secure their eco systems services, and seek opportunities to improve their quality, extent, connectivity, biodiversity, multi-functionality and access arrangements in order to maximise their contribution to wider environmental, social and economic objectives	●	●		●	●	●		●	●		●	●		●		●
26. Secure development that is resilient to the consequences of climate change, including supporting and contributing to achieving sustainable flood risk management	●		●	●				●	●		●	●		●		
27. Promote the efficient use of natural resources, including: reducing carbon emissions, the greater use of sustainable construction techniques, effective waste management that minimises the amount of waste requiring treatment and disposal, and avoiding the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral deposits	●	●		●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●		

COMMENTARY

Local Plan Objective 2: Allocate land of lesser environmental value for development, including prioritising the use of previously developed land, where it is not of high environmental value.

SA Objective 1: To provide new sites to meet the district’s objectively assessed housing requirements over the plan period up to 2035, it is likely that there will be a need for development on greenfield land and also potentially on land where development has previously been resisted because of its local environmental value. The council’s most up to date evidence, (the North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2011) shows a housing need of between 862 and 1086

dwellings per annum. This will involve the identification of considerably more land for housing than the 390 dwellings per annum previously planned for. Work to update the district’s requirements for housing and employment is currently being updated. In addition, an Infrastructure Capacity Study and assessment of environmental constraints will be undertaken which will also inform the level of future growth which can be accommodated. This suggests that following this work Local Plan Objective 2 may need to be refined in order to address the red score, as part of the next stage of the plan preparation process.

SA Objective 6: Local needs met locally. In order to provide local housing to address needs throughout the district over the plan period it may be necessary to release greenfield land in preference to previously developed land. Meeting local needs for employment and other uses may also result in the need to consider what is the appropriate level of greenfield development relative to the re use of previously developed land.

SA Objective 10: This objective is concerned with increasing access and reducing traffic impacts. This Local Plan objective may be in conflict with this where there is a greenfield site that offers better access, less impact on the local highway network and the potential to provide services and facilities as part of the development, including new or improved public transport links and better facilities for walking and cycling.

SA Objectives 15 and 16: The requirements for new employment land are currently being assessed. However, it is likely that the re use of previously developed land in preference to greenfield land would be incompatible with any requirements given the limited supply of brownfield land, especially given the environmental constraints which exist in a significant part of the district.

Local Plan Objective 7: Support a growing tourism sector attracting greater numbers of both domestic and overseas visitors and providing a vibrant offer for business and leisure visitors.

SA Objective 10: Growth in tourism, attracting a greater number of both domestic and overseas visitors will result in an increase in visitor numbers which has the potential to increase congestion in towns such as Harrogate without improvements to public transport and development of an integrated approach to traffic management, and also within more rural areas where there is limited scope to provide commercially viable public transport.

Employment opportunities to meet this growth may meet local needs but also has the potential to increase travel requirements if it results in significant amounts of inward migration or commuting due to skill shortages.

SA Objectives 8 and 13: Attracting more tourists may also impact on the ability to protect and enhance the district's historic heritage assets and biodiverse and attractive natural environment. This may also impact on one of the key assumptions upon which this Sustainability Appraisal is based, as identified in para 3.6, that: any development should have regard to the need to protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural and historic environment. Local Plan Objective 7 may therefore also need to be refined as part of the next stage of the plan preparation process.

Local Plan Objective 8: Maintaining the position of Harrogate as one of the UK's leading conference and exhibition destinations, providing a range of venues and a thriving conference, exhibition and events programme.

Similarly, growth in the role of Harrogate as a conference and exhibition destination will result in an increase in visitor numbers which has the potential to increase congestion within the town of Harrogate.

Local Plan Objective 9: Deliver sufficient employment land to enable a thriving economy.

Providing additional employment land may generate additional travel movements resulting in increased congestion unless the transport infrastructure necessary to support such growth is also provided as part of development proposals. Planning for local needs, and providing new housing and employment sites together in locations accessible to public transport, or in locations where this can be improved, has the potential to reduce the need to travel and/or encourage more sustainable travel.

Local Plan Objective 10: Help deliver a higher proportion of high value jobs.

The same issues as above apply. However, as there is currently a high level of commuting out of the district to access high value jobs in places such as Leeds, attracting a higher proportion of high value jobs in the district may reduce commuting and the associated traffic congestion created in adjacent authorities such as Leeds.

Local Plan Objective 11: Protect and enhance the roles of vibrant urban areas as the (to be determined), market towns as the (to be determined), and thriving rural villages as the (to be determined) within protected countryside (NPPF para 17).

This objective seeks to protect and enhance the roles of those settlements that are likely to be the most sustainable so it is considered reasonable to expect that there should be a high degree of compatibility with the SA objectives. However, as with Local Plan objectives 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10 above there is uncertainty in relation to transport and accessibility issues. Development of a growth strategy for the district will inform this objective further.

4. Developing a Draft Assessment Rationale

- 4.1 A standardised decision making rationale has been developed for appraising sites for housing and employment over a number of years of plan preparation, and more recently for sports sites as part of the Sites and Policies DPD work. Over this time the procedure has been refined to make the process more robust. This allows sites to be compared against the SA Framework and against each other on an equal basis.
- 4.2 As part of the initial work undertaken for the preparation of the Local Plan, and for this scoping report, further refinement of this process has been undertaken to enable a more detailed assessment of site analysis factors within the SA, and to also develop a system of assessment which provides a greater number of scoring possibilities using a traffic light scoring system. This enables a clear comparison of sites to be made, and enables simple colour matrices to be produced and used to compare groups of

sites, for example those within a particular settlement or within a group of settlements. This is also considered to be a more easily understood approach for consultation purposes. It is also proposed to provide a more detailed commentary in relation to the SA framework to enable a clearer understanding of the process and factors considered. In particular, it is considered that this will also assist those commenting on the scoping report .

- 4.3 In addition to the refinement of the assessment rationale for individual sites, an approach to the assessment of growth options is being developed.

The draft assessment rationale is set out alongside the SA Framework at Appendix 4.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 This SA scoping report is the first stage in the plan making/SA process. A Local Development Scheme has been prepared for the preparation of the Local Plan and a provisional timetable for the SA/SEA of the Local Plan is as follows:

Preparation of SA/SEA scoping report and consultation	September 2014
Appraisal of emerging options and preparation of Initial Sustainability Report	June 2015
Consultation on Initial Sustainability Report	June 2015
Selection and Appraisal of Preferred Options	June 2015 to 2016
Preparation of Final Sustainability Report and Preferred Options Report	June 2016
Consultation on Final Sustainability Report and Preferred Options Report	December 2016
Submission of documents to the Secretary of State <i>(Final SA modified to reflect any changes)</i>	Summer 2017
Examination	Winter 2017
Plan Adoption	Spring 2018

- 5.2 The next stage in the process is the appraisal of emerging options and the preparation of the Initial Sustainability Report and this stage is detailed further in Diagram 1 at the beginning of this report. The assessment will identify positive as well as negative effects with uncertainties about the nature or significance of any effect documented. At this stage it may be possible to discount a number of potential options and where this is the case the reasons for doing so will be set out. The Initial Sustainability Report will be the subject of public consultation, the response from which will inform the identification of Preferred Options.

- 5.3 The Preferred Options will also be appraised against the SA Framework. Here adverse effects are identified and proposals for mitigation will also be considered. The final SA Report will be produced at this stage and published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Report.

Monitoring

- 5.4 An Annual Monitoring Report has been published since 2002 and whilst this process is no longer a legal requirement it is intended that it should continue and include monitoring information in connection with the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 5.5 A monitoring framework has been developed to ensure that significant sustainability effects of implementing the plan are monitored to identify any unforeseen adverse effects and enable remedial action to be taken.
- 5.6 In developing the proposals for monitoring regard will be paid to:
- the objectives, targets and indicators developed for the Sustainability Appraisal Framework
 - baseline information and identified sustainability issues
 - likely significant effects that were identified
 - proposed mitigation measures
- 5.7 Monitoring proposals need to consider both positive and negative impacts. It is not necessary to monitor everything or to monitor an effect indefinitely. Instead the focus of monitoring should be on significant sustainability effects that may give rise to irreversible damage and significant effects where there was uncertainty in the Sustainability Appraisal and where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigation measures to be taken.
- 5.8 The table below suggests the type of information that should be monitored and associated indicators.

Proposals for Monitoring

What should be monitored (effect)	What sort of information is required (indicator)	Sources of information
Homes for local people in need	Affordable housing completions	Harrogate Borough Council (Housing and Planning Policy)
Access to services	Geographical access to services (defined as a post office, GP, food shop and primary school)	Harrogate Borough Council
Reduce the need to travel and reliance on private car; integration of modes of transport	Levels of car ownership Availability of cycle network Amount of new residential development within 30 mins public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary school, areas of employment and a major retail centre	Census Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation Plan Use of Accession is currently being investigated by Harrogate Borough Council
Anti-social behaviour/crime and the fear of crime	% of residents who feel safe outside Domestic burglaries per 1000 population	Harrogate Borough Council Harrogate Borough Council
Bio-diverse environment	Reported condition of SSSIs (% area) Change in priority habitats and species % of rivers of good or fair ecological condition	Natural England Natural England Environment Agency
Quality built environment	% of residential development completed on brownfield land Developments incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)/ other drainage issues	Harrogate Borough Council To be considered further following the setup of SUDS approval bodies
Prudent use of natural resources	Amount of waste arising per household % of total household waste recycled Energy efficiency of housing stock Energy generated which is grid connected and requires planning permission	North Yorkshire County Council Harrogate Borough Council Harrogate Borough Council Yorkshire Energy Partnership
Landscape character	% of district designated as AONB % of district area covered by characterisation study	Harrogate Borough Council Harrogate Borough Council
Historic Environment	Number and % of Scheduled Monuments at risk in the district Number of conservation areas and % of district covered by designation % of conservation areas in the district with an up to date character appraisal	English Heritage Heritage at Risk Register Harrogate Borough Council Harrogate Borough Council
Diverse and robust economy	% of individuals of working age in employment Shop vacancy rates in market towns Total tourist visitors to the district and Spend % of adults with NVQ level 3 and 4 (economically active)	Census Harrogate Borough Council (survey every other year) Harrogate Borough Council Census
Employment Land Provision	Employment land available by type Loss of employment land to other uses	Harrogate Borough Council To be developed