

Selby District Local Development Framework



Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Appraisal Report
March 2007



Sustainability Appraisal of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document

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Non-technical Summary and Outcomes

This Sustainability Appraisal of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Guidance was undertaken 'in house' in the Council's Planning Policy Team. It was undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the SPD itself and in a manner which maintained a degree of independence whilst providing an input into the preparation at appropriate stages.

The Council has made a determination that the nature of the SPD and its proposals would not have any 'significant' environmental impacts within the spirit of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) and that it was not necessary for the SPD to be subjected to the full rigours of SEA regulations. Nevertheless, the sustainability appraisal has covered the more limited environmental impacts arising from the SPD on an equal basis with the social and economic impacts, to form a comprehensive appraisal.

The outcome of the appraisal may be summarised as follows:

In general, policies, which promote the provision of new and/or improved local services and infrastructure, are very sustainable across the timescales (short/medium/long). Only in one or two cases, when providing hard infrastructure e.g. waste recycling facilities or highway improvements may there be some negative environmental impacts unless sufficient mitigating measures are included, through attention to good design and the quality of the local environment. Highway improvements also require particular care as they may be contrary to the objective of reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. However, if highway schemes of this nature are focussed on improving highway safety, detrimental impacts will be offset by such improvements.

This SPD deals specifically with the processes of obtaining developer contributions towards local facilities and services. The greatest potential for negative sustainability impact through the SPD proposals occurs if the contribution requirements become so onerous as to discourage development. At that point the proposals would become self-defeating. Particular attention has been paid to this point in appraising a range of options for affordable housing provision.

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1. Introduction

The Concept of Sustainable Development

1.1 Over the last 10 years the Government has increasingly included the concept of sustainable development into a broad range of policies and in its 2005 strategy¹ set out the following five principles for sustainable development:

- i) Living within environmental limits
- ii) Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- iii) Achieving a sustainable economy
- iv) Promoting Good Governance
- v) Using Sound Science Responsibly

1.2 The following two paragraphs are extracted from the central 'purpose' set out in the Government's strategy.

1.3 "The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

For the UK Government and Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well-being. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the environment and use resources as efficiently as possible."

Sustainability Appraisal

1.4 In accordance with the national, and international, commitment to achieving sustainable development, recent planning legislation² requires a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be undertaken to assess the environmental, economic and social implications of all emerging strategies and documents within the Local Development Framework³ (i.e. Development Planning Documents of which the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Guidance is one). The aim of the appraisal is to ensure that the documents' policies fulfil as far as possible the objectives of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that an appropriate balance is achieved between the often conflicting environmental, social and economic issues associated with planning policies.

¹ Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy March 2005

² Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004) see Section 39.

³ Selby district Council Local Development Scheme April 2005

Strategic Environmental Assessment Determination

- 1.5 In addition to the statutory requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), recent European legislation⁴ requires that an assessment of the environmental effects of certain plans and programmes (including planning documents) is undertaken, wherever these effects are considered to be 'significant'. Annex II of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive provides criteria for assessing the significance of environmental effects (see Appendix 1 of this report). The Directive has been incorporated into English law by virtue of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004.
- 1.6 It is possible that certain policy documents do not contain policies which would have 'significant environmental effects'. Examples given under the SEA Directive are those dealing with small areas at a local level or those which make only minor modifications to an existing plan. In the case of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document, it is considered that the majority of the topics and policies (i.e. developer contributions towards affordable housing, public open space, education, health facilities, community facilities, economic development training and public realm) have social and economic rather than environmental impacts and therefore do not need to be examined under the SEA Directive. The provision of facilities through, for example, new public open space and group recycling facilities, will have limited local environmental impacts but it is considered that these will not be 'significant' within the spirit of the SEA Directive. Environmental issues will however be appraised as an integral part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.
- 1.7 In accordance with the regulations, statutory consultees were given the opportunity through the Scoping Report⁵ to comment on the decision that SEA was not appropriate in this case. The Countryside Commission make the comment that the SPD could have some environmental impacts but make no judgement as to whether these are significant or not. The Environment Agency also make the point that that there will be some environmental effects, but accept that these will be limited. However, they advise that environmental considerations form part of the Sustainability Appraisal. In addition, the Agency poses the question as to whether the SPD, in obtaining funds for projects, will set the framework for projects to a degree that would bring the SPD within the criteria for undertaking an SEA, as set out in Annex II of the Directive. English Heritage accepts the determination that the SPD will not have any significant environmental effects. English Nature made no comment on the issue.

⁴ Strategic Environmental Assessment (Sea) Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC)

⁵ Sustainability Appraisal of the Developer Contributions SPD - Scoping Report
Selby District Council September 2005

- 1.8 None of the statutory consultees take a definitive view that the environmental impacts of the report will be 'significant'. Only one (North Yorkshire CC) out of all statutory and non-statutory consultees has taken a view positively in favour of undertaking an SEA. However, it is not considered that this SPD sets the framework for projects it only seeks to obtain an element of developer contributions towards projects, the framework for which is set elsewhere outside the scope of the SPD. In any event it is also considered that any environmental impacts arising directly from the SPD would not be 'significant' in a strategic sense in the European legislation context. In the light of the above response the Council feels justified in reaffirming its view that the SPD need not be subject to the full rigours of a Strategic Environmental Assessment under European legislation. However, it should be noted that the Sustainability Appraisal is fully inclusive of more limited environmental impacts, as far as they can be assessed at this stage.

Purpose of Report

- 1.9 The purpose of this Sustainability Appraisal Report is:
- to document the Sustainability Appraisal process
 - to set out the findings of the Scoping Report with regard to the context for the SPD and the baseline information;
 - to present consultation responses to the Scoping Report and identify any amendments to the scope of the assessment;
 - to set out the Sustainability Appraisal framework itself and
 - to provide a detailed appraisal of the SPD policies and options.

The Appraisal Process

- 1.10 Stage A Scoping - Information Gathering/Establishing an Appraisal Framework
- Collecting baseline information on relevant environmental, social and economic topics.
 - Outlining other policies, plans and programmes which will inform the Developers Contribution SPD (e.g. Primary Care Trust and North Yorkshire County Council policies on the provision of health and education facilities).
 - Identifying appropriate indicators and developing a framework for undertaking the appraisal systematically.
 - Identifying key sustainability issues with regard to the topics being dealt with in the SPD

- Consulting with statutory bodies with social, environmental or economic responsibilities to ensure the scope of the appraisal is satisfactory.

Stage B Identifying Issues and Options and Prepare for Consultation

- Testing the objectives and options for the policies
- Refining preferred options for publication

(In practice, because of the limited and specialised nature of the subject matter of this SPD, it is considered there is only limited scope for significant alternative options in the case of affordable housing. Potential alternatives in the other topics are not thought to be sufficiently different as to have meaningfully different appraisal outcomes).

Stage C Prepare comprehensive sustainability appraisal report to accompany Draft SPD.

Stage D Consulting on the Plan and SA Report, appraising any consequential amendments to the SPD and proceeding to Adoption

Appraisal Methodology

- 1.11 This Sustainability Appraisal of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Guidance was undertaken 'in house' in the Council's Planning Policy Group. It was undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the SPD itself and in manner, which maintained a degree of independence whilst providing an input into the preparation at appropriate stages.
- 1.12 The basis for the appraisal is the sustainability objectives (as revised) set out in Table 1 (see Section 5 of this report). The SPD policies and options are assessed against these objectives and the baseline position (using the indicators wherever possible) in order to take a view on whether their effect is positive, negative or neutral and within what timescale (short, medium or long) these effects will become apparent.

2. Context - Other Plans and Programmes Influencing the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document

- 2.1 There are many other policies and plans which will influence the preparation of the Developers' Contributions Supplementary Planning Document. Identifying those policies and plans which offer guidance on sustainability issues, assists in drawing attention to the wider context, which should contribute, to the formulation of the guidance within the SPD. In particular the national context for the Strategy is

established by the Government through its Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and subsequently, Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). These set out the Government's development strategy for the economy, transport and the environment. All PPSs contain strong references to the need for a sustainable approach to development.

- 2.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy⁶ for Yorkshire and the Humber provides a further interpretation of strategic planning policies at the regional level, which also influence local policies and proposals that will be reflected in the Developer Contributions SPD,
- 2.3 The District Council also has a number of corporate planning documents – notably the District Council's Corporate Plan 2005 – 2006, the Selby Strategy Forum's 'Community Strategy' 2005 – 2010 and the Selby District Local Plan which provides the current spatial framework and planning policies for the District. The policies in the Local Plan provide the statutory basis for the majority of the proposals, which will be included within the current Developer Contributions SPD.
- 2.4 The other relevant documents to the SPD, such as the Draft Recreation Open Space Strategy, the Housing Needs Survey and other current Interim Policies are summarised below in Section 3, as they are part of the baseline for this appraisal. A comprehensive list of documents and a brief indication of their sustainability implications for the Developer Contributions SPD is given in Appendix 2.
- 2.5 It should be noted that, because of the timing of its production, the Selby District Local Plan, has not been the subject of a sustainability appraisal. Relevant policies in the SDLP, which are relied upon in the Developer Contributions SPD will be appraised as part of this current process.

3. The Baseline – Current Circumstances Relevant to Developer Contributions Topics

Affordable Housing

- 3.1 Contributions to affordable housing have been sought by the Council, in accordance with PPG3 – Housing (2000) and Circular 6/98, for a number of years based upon the need identified by a Housing Needs Study undertaken in 1999. In the two years to 31st March 2005, 30 affordable dwellings have been completed via developer contributions and, at that date a further 168 had been granted planning permission.

⁶ Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber – Yorkshire and Humber Assembly (2004)

As at 1st January 2006, the council is negotiating on current applications which could yield a further 300 affordable units.

- 3.2 The District Council's current policy with regard to the provision of Affordable Housing through planning permissions is formally contained within Policies H4 and H11 of the adopted Selby District Local Plan (2005) and an Interim Policy approved in June 2005.

Selby District Local Plan

- 3.3 The reasoned justification for Policy H4 indicates that the "community's need for affordable housing is a material consideration ...in formulating proposals." and that Circular 6/98⁷ (Planning and Affordable Housing) and PPG3 (Housing) address the importance assessing local need realistically (paras. 5.43 – 5.45 of the Adopted SDLP). Also it is made clear in the reasoned justification (para. 5.51) and the policy wording, that the negotiation of the amount of affordable housing, will take account of the extent of local need. Circular 05/2005⁸ provides support for the implementation of Affordable Housing policies through Section 106 Planning Obligations, agreements and Undertakings.

Interim Policy

- 3.4 In the light of the significant changes in the housing market and the importance of having an up-to-date assessment of housing need, an entirely new study of housing needs was carried out in 2004. In summary the Study reveals the following situation.⁹
- There is shortage of affordable housing – of between 294 dpa and 415dpa, depending upon the approach taken to the calculation. This level of need is shown to be below the United Kingdom average but above average for the North of England.
 - The requirement supports an affordable housing target consistent with current custom and practice of (40% and rising) applied to site thresholds of 15+ dwellings/0.5hectares.
 - The majority of the need can only be met by social rented housing or intermediate housing with only a very small fraction of those in need being able to afford housing at costs just below market housing.
 - During years 2003 and 2004 there was a net loss of 100 dpa in the social rented stock, largely as a result of 'right to buy' diminishing the Council's stock. There was an average provision of 11 new affordable dwellings per annum between 2001/2 and 2003/4.

⁷ Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing

⁸ Circular 5/2005 Planning Obligations

⁹ Selby District Housing Needs Study 2004 - Executive Summary Conclusions

- 3.5 As a result of the latest study findings and emerging Government guidance, the interim policy seeks a target of 40% affordable housing on sites of 15 dwellings or 0.5ha and above. This has subsequently been supported by the publication of Draft PPS 3 (Housing) and the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

Recreation Open Space

- 3.6 The District Council's current policy with regard to the provision of recreation open space and facilities, in connection with new residential development, is contained within Policy RT2 of the adopted SDLP (2005). This policy and supplementary planning guidance, to amplify its provision, are based on, and justified by, guidance in PPG3 and PPG17 (Sport and Recreation 1991). The policy provides a framework for ensuring that schemes of five or more dwellings either secure a financial contribution to upgrading local facilities or provide open space within the development site or off-site (or a combination of the above). This policy is amplified in the Recreation Open Space Supplementary Guidance (SPG) (December 2001), which outlines the mechanism for operation of the policy.
- 3.7 In order to supplement and provide a basis for up-dating the 2001 SPG, the District Council published a Draft Open Space Strategy in May 2005. The Council wishes to ensure that the delivery of recreational open space provision is achieved in a sustainable manner. This means sustainable in terms of the effect of provision on the environment and in terms of the ability of communities to be able to manage open space/sports and recreational facilities in an efficient and effective manner, for the foreseeable future.
- 3.8 The Council no longer sees itself as the direct provider of first resort for local community facilities for sport and recreation. However, the Council wishes to encourage and enable local communities to be proactive in local provision and management.
- 3.9 The Strategy assesses the adequacy of provision on a parish basis in terms of quantity of open space, range and variety of the types of open space and the standard of equipment and facilities.
- 3.10 The survey results indicate that only 40% of the survey areas (largely parish based) meet the Council's basic standard for the amount of open space required. Deficiencies in one form or another are identified in most areas, supporting the continued need for developer contributions to new open space provision otherwise current deficiencies will become progressively worse.
- 3.11 The District Council has been systematically obtaining contributions from developers towards open space in accordance with Local Plan

Policy RT2 and the 2001 draft supplementary planning guidance. The overall total contributions available to Parish Councils was boosted by major residential planning permissions granted in the year to 31st March 2005 and the Commuted Sum account stood at £240,689 pounds at that date. A total of £56,789 was paid out to Parish councils for ROS schemes during 2004/2005 financial year.

- 3.12 The Council's current policy is that for the first three years, the funding from contributions is available exclusively to the parish in which the development takes place. If the money remains unspent at the end of three years, then adjacent parishes are given the opportunity to put forward detailed bids. Finally, at the end of year four, if the money remains unspent then the District Council can use the money within the District for the improvement of existing or the provision of new recreation open space facilities. Money unspent after five years is returned to the developer.
- 3.13 Approximately 44% of the strategy survey areas have money available either now or when approved agreements come into force. Of course, in the first instance the distribution of improvements will be closely tied to those areas containing new development, however, with the above distribution arrangements, as the scheme matures, the benefits of the funding will become more widespread within the District.

Waste and Recycling Facilities

- 3.14 The District Council places considerable importance on the minimisation and management of waste. The Community Strategy's section on the environment recognises that one of the main actions needed is to encourage people to reduce the amount of waste they produce, and work with partners to develop more friendly ways of getting rid of waste'.
- 3.15 The Council's Corporate Plan 2005/6 also puts waste recycling as a priority and sets out a series of targets for recycling of the different types of waste products as follows:
- Provide an integrated kerbside collection service across the district.
 - Provide a kerbside collection of refuse weekly and dry recyclables fortnightly to 100% of suitable homes (excluding flats).
 - Provide a kerbside collection of garden green waste to 63% of suitable homes (excluding flats). This equates to 20,200 properties.
 - Provide an assisted collection for qualifying persons for all collection streams.
 - Deliver a recycling rate of 21% of combined dry recyclables (paper, card, glass, cans and plastics) by March 2006.

- Provide diversification opportunities for local farmers in the composting of garden green waste collected in the District.
 - Assist in the delivery of the draft countywide waste minimisation strategy.
 - Hold events and provide information to the local media to publicise waste minimisation issues to the general public.
 - Provide community recycling sites throughout the District.
 - Provide advice to the public and business community on waste minimisation issues including recycling.
- 3.16 In order to meet targets for household waste recycling, significant co-operation in waste separation by householders is required. One part of achieving this involvement is the designing-in of appropriate storage in all new development and requiring that developers provide bins and containers when new dwellings become occupied.
- 3.17 In order to encourage the inclusion of such facilities in new residential development, the Council published Interim Policy Guidance on this subject in May 2005, which will be incorporated with minor modification into the Developer Contributions SPD. The Interim Guidance notes that currently it relates only to residential developments (including conversions); but that the Council intends to supplement this guidance in due course to include advice on requirements for non-residential developments.
- 3.18 The Interim Guidance relies on the strategic objectives of Selby District Local Plan and on policies ENV1 and CS6 as enabling policies underpinning the guidance. The SDLP contains objectives to safeguard the environment from the effects of pollution, to ensure new development meets appropriate technical requirements, respects the character and amenity of the locality in which it is situated and achieves high standards of design and improvements in environmental quality. ENV1 indicates that proposals will be permitted provided a good quality of development would be achieved.
- 3.19 Policy CS6 states that the District Council will expect developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure and community facility needs that are directly related to development and to ensure that measures are incorporated to mitigate or minimise the consequences of that development. (Policies H6 and H7 – Criteria 2) in each case are also relevant.)

Education Facilities

- 3.20 Policies ENV1 and CS6 of the SDLP are the enabling and underpinning policies for developer contributions for education facilities. These policies, in turn, derive their legitimacy from the RSS for Yorkshire and Humber, PPG3 and Circular 05/2005.

- 3.21 North Yorkshire County Council, as Education Authority, has operated a policy of seeking developer contributions towards primary education since 1997¹⁰ in respect of residential developments of 25 dwellings or more. The policy establishes an indicative level of contribution for each estimated additional primary school place resulting from the new development. The estimate will depend upon the mix of housing being provided in the scheme.
- 3.22 The County Council's policy has been implemented since 1997 by the District Council through the development control process. Contributions towards primary education facilities have recently been negotiated on major sites at Ousegate and Staynor Hall in Selby and at South Milford (STM1 North). The policy was based on the provisions for planning obligations set out in Circular 1/1997 (now superseded by Circular 05/2005).
- 3.23 The need to maintain the policy remains and Circular 05/2005 on Planning Obligations continues to provide guidance on the use planning obligations. The current guide figure used by the County Council is £8585 per primary school place.

Health Facilities

- 3.24 New residential development also increases pressure on health facilities and the need to seek developer contributions is increasingly being appreciated by the York and Selby Primary Care Trust. Following adoption of the Selby District Local Plan in February 2005 and the consequential release of major residential sites in Selby and South Milford the opportunity has been taken to obtain contributions for improvement to primary health care facilities in the area, using Policy CS6 as an enabling policy. Policy ENV1 is also supportive of this approach.
- 3.25 The York and Selby Primary Care Trust have recently developed guidance on calculating contributions.

Community Facilities

- 3.26 The release of larger residential allocations also highlights the need to provide additional community facilities, to assist in increasing the sustainability of newly created communities and existing communities within which they have been located, and in addressing the objectives relating to social inclusion in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPG3 (Housing) and PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas).

¹⁰ Report to NYCC Education and Library Services Committee - Policy and Development Sub-Committee 16/12/97

- 3.27 To date there has been only one example of where a significant contribution has been made towards such facilities. At the large Staynor Hall development in Selby, land has been donated by the developer for community use (e.g. a community hall facility).
- 3.28 The potential to improve, or remedy a lack of, local community facilities to help cater for new local residents will assist in creating and maintaining more stable and sustainable communities within the District. Local Plan policy CS6 again provides an enabling tool, supported by advice in Circular 05/2005.

Transport/Highways

- 3.29 The principle of developers undertaking or paying for off-site highway improvements to cater for the increase in traffic being created is well established and has been implemented by North Yorkshire County, as highway authority, through the District development control process, for many years. In some cases improvements have been supported and facilitated by Selby District Council through conditions attached to planning permissions and/or through section 106 Agreements. More recently Government guidance PPG13 (Transport) has placed substantial emphasis upon encouraging the provision and use of alternative modes of transport. The guidance recommends the use of Green Travel Plans for larger developments and promotes the provision of and assistance to alternative travel modes, which may involve the provision of cycleways and improved or new bus services.
- 3.30 Contributions to alternative mode facilities are a relatively recent introduction and there is, as yet, only a limited number of examples within the District where developer's have made contributions to off-site facilities and services for these other modes. However, Green Travel Plans have been required in the cases of a recent application for large warehouses at the Potter Group in Selby, the Staynor Hall residential development, in Selby and the expansion of the British Gypsum factory near Sherburn-in-Elmet. The potential to improve transport facilities to help create an increased choice in transport modes for new local residents will assist in creating and maintaining more stable and sustainable communities within the District. Local Plan policy CS6 again provides an enabling tool, supported by Circular 05/2005 and PPG13.
- 3.31 In addition the Environment Agency is keen to see public access to rivers and watercourses through the creation of new walking/cycling routes and developer contributions could contribute to improving access to the countryside generally by these means.

Drainage Infrastructure

- 3.32 Drainage issues are important in Selby and, while direct flood risk issues are not dealt with in this SPD – they will be the subject of a separate document within the Local Development Framework – there may increasingly be a need for developers to undertake or contribute towards off-site drainage improvements to allow the drainage network to cater for the additional development and also to incorporate sustainable drainage systems on site to minimise surface water run-off from their development.
- 3.33 The Staynor Hall (SEL/2) development in Selby has been a recent example where contributions have been obtained towards the provision of a new off-site pumping station.
- 3.34 Although the need for improvements to existing drainage facilities to accommodate new development may occur throughout the District. There are many areas throughout the District where flooding issues increase the complexity of the situation. Currently information on flooding is primarily contained within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) undertaken for the Selby and Barlby areas (November 2002), which has been adopted by the Council as an interim strategy. It is intended, however, to extend the coverage of the strategic assessment to include the whole District within the near future.
- 3.35 The establishment of a robust drainage system in association with new development is essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the development and the local community generally. Therefore, there remains a continuing need to ensure new development adequately mitigates any deficiencies in the existing network to cater for the increased growth, where additional drainage could not otherwise be adequately accommodated.

Enhancement of the Public Realm

- 3.36 In the case of larger, more prominent schemes it may be appropriate to seek a contribution to create a work of public art or other feature which contributes to the public realm. The aim would be to assist in integrating larger developments into the community by creating an individual and distinct design character to the development, which creates an enhanced sense of place, local identity and community pride – all of which contribute to a sustainable and inclusive community.
- 3.37 There have not been any examples of developers providing public art on development sites within Selby District to date. However, a definite policy for seeking public art in appropriate circumstances will be included within this current SPD under the auspices of Selby District Local Plan Policies CS6 and ENV1.

Economic Development Training

- 3.38 Up to the present the Council has not had a policy of requesting contributions from commercial development towards training. However, one of the six objectives of the Draft Regional Economic Strategy 2005 –2016 is the increase the number of skilled people in the Region. Selby District Council's economic strategy aims to promote and secure the regeneration and diversification.
- 3.39 One of the main planks of sustainable communities is an innovative and productive economy and it is important that there is capacity of institutions within the District to undertake skills training to match the needs of new as well as existing industry. It is the Council's intention to require developer contributions towards improving skills training capacity within this current SPD under the auspices of District Local Plan Policy CS6 and to develop this policy further in future development plan documents. One of the strategic objectives of the Local Plan employment policies is 'to promote the diversification of the local economy,.....'. To achieve this, provision for economic development training can be justified in connection with some new employment developments.

4. Main Sustainability Issues With Regard to Developer Contributions Policies

- 4.1 The main sustainability issues associated with the topics and policies dealt with in this SPD are as follows:

Social

- 4.2 As a relatively dispersed rural area, settlements tend to be relatively small and dispersed with attendant problems in providing adequate services locally. New development can often create substantial changes in the demand for local services, which existing facilities would have difficulty in meeting without new or extended provision. The development of appropriate facilities to accompany new development is therefore of major importance and one of the central themes of the Developer Contributions SPD.
- 4.3 Recent increases in demand for housing in Selby District, often from commuters to neighbouring towns and cities, and the attendant substantial rises in house prices, has increased the need to provide affordable housing for local residents on lower incomes who have been excluded from the general housing market. The size of the problem has recently been quantified by the Council's 'Housing Needs Survey' 2004 which indicates a substantial requirement for new affordable dwellings and a level of provision far exceeding what has been achieved in recent years.

- 4.4 The many varied communities within the District have active local parish councils and take pride in their locality. Measures, which build social and community capital, capacity and confidence, will be of benefit to them and the District as a whole. Developer contributions towards local facilities should provide substantial encouragement for local community development. Policies for developer contributions towards facilities and services will need to consider the sustainability of provision, in terms of the ability of the appropriate authorities/voluntary bodies etc. to manage them in an effective and efficient manner over the longer term.
- 4.5 Developer contributions towards Recreation Open Space, Education and Health provision can mitigate the social loss that could be caused by new developments in communities not adequately provided with such services and facilities or where new developments would result in additional calls on existing facilities that would lessen the quality of service to existing residents. It should be noted that North Yorkshire County Council advocate the co-location of facilities in association with the school service and point out that the requirements of the new Children's Services will make this even more important.
- 4.6 Developer contributions to public transport, cycleways/footpath networks and other 'Green Transport' initiatives can also increase access to local facilities and the surrounding countryside.
- 4.7 Public art can also help to integrate larger developments into the community by creating a distinct character to the development, which in turn creates a sense of place and local identity - all of which contribute to a sustainable and inclusive community.

Environmental

- 4.8 Environmental protection does not form a major element in the Developer Contributions SPD, however, policies for contributions necessary to make development proposals acceptable can often result in wider improvements to the local environment which otherwise would not be achieved. Developer contributions could make local impacts on a wide variety of environmental issues depending upon the location and circumstances relating to the development being applied for. The Selby District Biodiversity Action Plan encourages the incorporation of such principles into developments. In addition developer contributions can also be used for mitigating measures where development unavoidably leads to a loss or damage to important landscape and environmental features.
- 4.9 The Waste and Recycling element of the SPD, in particular, will have positive environmental effects in terms of encouraging recycling and making it safer and more efficient, but it should also assist in mitigating any consequential undesirable visual impacts of increased collection facilities within new developments.
- 4.10 In addition Recreation Open Space provision through developer contributions can enhance the ecological, amenity and landscape value

of a development site and the immediate local area and the provision of SUDS drainage schemes and certain off-site provision can have a beneficial effect on the biodiversity of the environment and the availability of open space in the local area.

Economic

- 4.11 Provision of mixed housing schemes and affordable housing should have positive economic effects in terms of assisting local residents to remain in the area and assist lower paid workers to live close to work opportunities. In addition the higher densities, which are likely to arise from the affordable housing policy, will ensure the efficient use of land for the benefit of the community as a whole and can result in support for existing local services and occasionally the impetus for new provision.
- 4.12 However, there is also potential for a negative effect on economic activity within the District if too great a burden on developers is imposed through developer contribution policies. Care is required to ensure that the contributions being sought are necessary and of an appropriate scale in relation to the development being proposed.

5. A Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 5.1 The following section presents the Sustainability Appraisal Framework through which the policies and options within the SPD will be assessed.

Sustainability Objectives and Indicators

- 5.2 In order to measure the success of the guidance included within the Developer Contributions SPD in sustainability terms, a range of objectives have been identified covering the broad spread of sustainability issues. The objectives are based on the five Government aims for sustainability set out in Paragraph 1.1 above. The objectives are accompanied by appropriate indicators to provide, as far as possible, an objective basis for measurement of success of the Developer Contributions SPD policies in meeting them (See Table 1). As this document is limited in its range of content, not all objectives will necessarily be relevant, but have been included in the interests of obtaining agreement to this assessment through the consultation process.
- 5.3 The indicators are primarily related to planning matters in an attempt to keep them as relevant as possible to the realistic impact of land use planning on many wider issues. The SPD policies may well only make a limited contribution to the realisation of many broader sustainability objectives, and therefore other factors, beyond the compass of the SPD can be equally, if not more important in some instances.
- 5.4 The indicators also have a significant role in the longer term monitoring and review of the SPD.
- 5.5 The Sustainability appraisal Framework set out in Table 1 (see below) has been substantially amended from the earlier version presented in the Scoping Report (December 2004) based on the consultation

responses received on that report. The amendments and consultation responses are specifically addressed in the following Section 6. The revised framework is believed to cover all the aspects of sustainability as set out in the Regional Sustainability Framework, whilst also highlighting objectives of particular relevance to Selby District and the Developer Contributions SPD.

**Table 1: Proposed Objectives and Indicators to Measure Sustainability:
(Text in bold italics has been added following the Scoping Report consultation)**

Objective Number	Objective	Indicator
1	To ensure <i>that local needs are met locally and</i> that all groups have access to adequate and appropriate health, education, community, leisure, recreation and cultural services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Amount of developer contributions dedicated to health, leisure, education and cultural services and facilities. b) <i>No. of new facilities to which developer funding has assisted.</i> c) % of new house building in i) Market towns ii) SDLP Policy H6 villages iii) Other areas. d) <i>Access to a GP</i> e) <i>Access to local green space</i>
2	To ensure that quality housing is available to everyone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The number and types of affordable homes built c) The affordable house price/earnings affordability ratio d) The level of identified housing need e) No of social housing dwellings built
3	To provide a safer, more secure environment by reducing crime and fear of crime and improving road safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Trends in the numbers killed and seriously injured on the roads. a) <i>Level of crime</i> b) <i>Percentage of residents surveyed who feel 'fairly safe' or 'very safe' whilst outside in their local authority area</i>

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Objective Number	Objective	Indicator
4	To maintain and promote identifiable, viable <i>communities which participate in decision making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gain/loss of health, leisure and education facilities in each community. b) % of residents with good access to local facilities c) <i>Percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their own area</i> d) <i>Percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously</i>
5	To maintain and enhance the viability and vitality of town centres in Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn-in-Elmet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Retail floorspace changes in town centres b) Vacancy rates
6	<i>To provide conditions and services which engender good health</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Mortality by cause/ Death Rate by Cause/Infant mortality</i> b) <i>Death rates from, cancer, circulatory disease, accidents and suicides</i> c) <i>Access to a GP</i> d) <i>Participation in sport and cultural activities</i> e) <i>Proportion of journeys on foot or by cycle</i> f) <i>Access to local green space</i>
7	To conserve and enhance the rural landscape	Proportion of District with Locally Important Landscape Status
8	To protect and enhance the biodiversity and abundance of species, through the protection and extension of wildlife habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Condition of protected sites b) Number of protected sites lost as the result of development c) Provision of mitigation schemes as a result of development. d) Area under Countryside Stewardship and Woodland Grant Schemes

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Objective Number	Objective	Indicator
9	To make the most efficient use of previously developed land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of development on 'brownfield' land b) Density of new housing development
10	To conserve and enhance the quality of the townscape within the District's towns and villages and maintain and foster distinctiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of Conservation Areas b) Number of Conservation Areas with appraisals assessing condition c) Number of communities with village/town design guides available
11	To preserve and enhance the historical and cultural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of Listed Buildings in each grade b) Number of Listed Buildings at risk c) Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments d) Number and % of archaeological sites at risk and lost to development e) Number of registered historic parks and gardens f) Number of registered historic parks and gardens at risk g) Number/area of sites subject to archaeological conditions/agreements
12	To minimise pollution in order to maintain and improve the quality of air, soil and water conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of air quality managed zones designated b) Number of days per year of air pollution c) Water Quality of main rivers and canals

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Objective Number	Objective	Indicator
13	To reduce greenhouse gases production and respond to the effects of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of buildings built to eco home/other energy standards. b) Number of exhaust gas cleansing measures introduced at Eggborough and Drax Power Stations
14	To reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, reduce highway congestion and maximise the accessibility by, and use of public transport and other alternative modes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The level of provision for alternative modes of transport as part of new development b) Changes in availability of local services c) % of new house building in i) Market towns ii) SDLP Policy H6 villages.
15	To encourage the use of renewable energy production within the District	The number of renewable energy schemes in the District
16	To reduce the risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of development taking place on the functional floodplain b) % of development approved contrary to Environment Agency advice c) **Number of new Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SuDs) associated with new development including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) amount of developer contributions and ii) area of land benefiting from improved drainage. <p>**Added following comments from Environment Agency at Draft SPD consultation stage.</p>
17	To ensure energy and water consumption is as efficient as possible	Per capita consumption of energy and water

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Objective Number	Objective	Indicator
18	To reduce the amount of waste produced and maximise recycling of waste materials	a) Tonnage of waste recycled or composted b) Number of developments which incorporate waste efficiency measures
19	To minimise unnecessary loss of mineral resources	Land lost to development where there are significant mineral stocks
20	To minimise the loss of high quality agricultural land	% of high grade agricultural land lost to development
21	To maintain and enhance good quality employment opportunities within the District	a) Number of jobs within the District b) Number of employment sites lost to other uses. c) Number of rural diversification schemes
22	<i>To encourage conditions which enable business success, economic growth and investment</i>	a) <i>Net changes in land use class A2 and B2 floorspace</i> b) <i>Net VAT registrations (new business start-ups net of closures)</i> c) <i>The number of social and community enterprises</i>
23	<i>To encourage education and training opportunities to build skills and capacities</i>	a) <i>Proportion of pupils aged 16 achieving 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C (or equivalent qualifications)</i> b) <i>Number and amount of developer contributions received towards training facilities and school places</i>

6. Changes to the SA Scope and Framework Following the Scoping Report Consultation and on the Appraisal at Draft SPD stage.

A. Scoping Report Stage

Changes to the Context

- 6.1 Following consultation responses on the Scoping Report from the Countryside Agency, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, North Yorkshire County Council and Sport England, the following documents have been reviewed and reference to them is included in Appendix 2 to this report.
1. PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment (Department of the Environment/ Department of National Heritage, September 1994)
 2. PPG17 Companion Guide – ‘Assessing Needs and Opportunities’ ODPM, 2002)
 3. Yorkshire and Humber Regional Sustainable Development Framework Update 2003 – 2005 (Yorkshire and Humberside Assembly July 2003.)
 4. North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 (North Yorkshire County Council, 2005)
 5. North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Report (North Yorkshire County Council, 2005)
 6. North Yorkshire Second draft School Organisation Plan 2004 – 2009 (North Yorkshire County Council, 2004)
 7. North Yorkshire Adult Learning Plan 2003 – 2006 (North Yorkshire County Council, 2003)
 8. North Yorkshire Cycling Strategy (North Yorkshire County Council, 1999).
 9. North Yorkshire Community Strategy 2005 – 2008 (North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership 2005).
 10. Yorkshire Plan for Sport (2004 – 2008) Sport England Yorkshire
- 6.2 The Consultation Drafts of PPS3 – Housing and PPS25 Development and Flood Risk were published in December 2005 and have been added to the list of documents influencing the Developer Contributions SPD. (Appendix 2)
- 6.3 The Countryside Agency suggested that reference should also be made to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. However, as this Plan

is still in the course of preparation by North Yorkshire County Council it will not influence the current SPD.

Changes to Main Sustainability Issues

Social Issues

- 6.4 The Environment Agency note that new cycle/walking routes can also be used to access rivers and watercourses and the Countryside Agency make a similar point with regard to green corridors and the countryside generally. The wording of Paragraph 4.6 has been amended to accommodate this point:

'Developer contributions to public transport, cycleways/footpath networks and other 'Green Transport' initiatives can also increase access to local facilities and the surrounding countryside.'

- 6.5 North Yorkshire County Council Education Department point out that it is their policy to advocate co-location of facilities in association with the school service and point out that the requirements of the new Children's Services will make this even more important. A note to this effect has been added to Paragraph 4.5 above.

Environmental Issues

- 6.6 English Nature comment on the statement in the Scoping Report that 'Environmental protection does not form a major element in the Developer Contributions SPD' (Para. 5.6 of the Main Issues section) – indicating that it seemed to be a missed opportunity and quoting a reference to contributions in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan. Whilst the original statement is still considered to be a fair reflection of the SPD document, the following wording has been added to Paragraph 4.8 above, in recognition of the point being made.

'The Selby District Biodiversity Action Plan encourages the incorporation of such principles into developments.'

- 6.7 The Countryside Agency make a point that developer contributions can appropriately used to mitigate environmental loss. The following wording is also added to the end of Paragraph 4.8 above.

'In addition developer contributions can also be used for mitigating measures where development unavoidably leads to a loss or damage to important landscape and environmental features.'

- 6.8 In response to comments by the Environment Agency a reference is made to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and reference is included in Paragraph 4.10 as follows:

'and the provision of SUDS drainage schemes and certain off-site provision can have a beneficial effect on the biodiversity of the environment and the availability of open space in the local area.'

Changes to Sustainability Objectives

6.9 Following consultation responses from the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, the Environment Agency and Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber the SA Framework has been modified to take their responses into account. The changes made as a result of consultation are presented in bold and italics in Table 1 above. In addition a number of small changes have been made to the indicators as a result of further consideration of the RSDF and the draft Core Strategy Appraisal framework currently being prepared for the Council. All consultation responses relating to the Sustainability Appraisal are attached as Appendix 3. The changes made are as follows:

i) **Three new objectives and associated indicators added** (the numbers refer to the amended list of objectives in Table 1 above – the objective numbers in the Scoping Report are included in brackets below):

- 6. To provide conditions and services which engender good health
- 22. To encourage conditions which enable business success, economic growth and investment.
- 23. To encourage education and training opportunities to build skills and capacities

These additional objectives ensure that the framework covers the full range of sustainability issues, as reflected in the Regional Sustainability Framework whilst retaining the previous objectives which are intended to reflect the particular issues relating to this SPD and Selby District.

ii) **Objective 1(1) To ensure that local needs are met locally and that all groups have access to adequate and appropriate health, education, community, leisure, recreation and cultural services**

Three new indicators included:

- No. of new facilities to which developer funding has assisted.
- Access to a GP
- Access to local green space

iii) **Objective 2(2) To ensure that quality housing is available to everyone.**

Amend indicator (a) to read:

“The number *and types* of affordable homes built”.

iv) **Objective 4(4) To maintain and promote identifiable, viable communities which participate in decision making**

- Percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their own area

- Percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously
- v) **Objective 10(9) To conserve and enhance the quality of the townscape within the District's towns and villages "and maintain and foster distinctiveness"** added to the objective.
Replace indicator (a) with the following:
 - a) Number of Conservation Areas
 - b) Number of Conservation Areas with appraisals assessing condition
- vi) **Objective 11(10) To preserve and enhance the historical and cultural environment.**
Replace the indicators with the following:
 - a) Number of Listed Buildings in each grade
 - b) Number of Listed Buildings at risk
 - c) Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments
 - d) Number and % of archaeological sites at risk and lost to development
 - e) Number of registered historic parks and gardens
 - f) Number of registered historic parks and gardens at risk
 - g) Number/area of sites subject to archaeological conditions/agreements
- vii) **Objective 12(11) To minimise pollution in order to maintain and improve the quality of air, soil and water conditions**
"To minimise pollution in order" added to the objective
- viii) **Objective 16(15) To reduce the risk of flooding**
Amend the indicators to read as follows:
 - a) % of development taking place on the functional floodplain
 - b) % of development approved contrary to Environment Agency advice

All other suggestions for indicators have been rejected either because of limited relevance or, more usually because of the practical/resource difficulties for the Council of measuring and monitoring them.

Other Comments

Objective 7(6) To conserve and enhance the rural landscape

- 6.10 English Heritage note that the indicator used (% of Locally Important Landscape Area) is unlikely to demonstrate negative impact on landscape, as a development proposal in an area of Locally Important Landscape Area (LILA) could significantly harm it, but would not affect the overall area of LILAs. Whilst the point is accepted, English Heritage does not suggest a practical, measurable objective to replace the one suggested and therefore no change has been made.

B. Comments Received at Draft SPD Stage

- 6.11 Only two respondents made comments specifically on the Sustainability Appraisal at the Draft SPD consultation stage.
- 6.12 English Heritage wished to correct the impression given in Paragraph 1.5 that English Heritage considered there would be no environmental effects arising from the SPD – only that it accepted there was unlikely to be any *significant* environmental effects. Paragraph 1.5 has been amended to correct this.
- 6.13 The Environment Agency note that in relation to Objective 16 (Section 5, Table 1 above) it would wish to see an objective relating to the number of new Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUD's) associated with new development; the amount of developer contributions towards them and the resulting area of land benefiting from improved drainage. The indicators for Objective 16 have been amended accordingly.
- 6.14 The Environment Agency also disagrees with the conclusions in Section 7 of the Sustainability Appraisal relating to Drainage Infrastructure. This point has highlighted the need to clarify this conclusion as the Environment Agency have interpreted it as relating primarily to SUDs, rather than to, as is more likely in the majority of cases, standard drainage schemes. The conclusion relating to the appraisal of Drainage Infrastructure issues in Appendix 4(ii), repeated in Section 7 above, has been amplified to clarify the distinction between the two types of drainage schemes.
- 6.15 Finally the Environment Agency note that the baseline information relating to Drainage Infrastructure (See Paragraphs 3.32 to 3.34) contains no quantifiable information and notes that the SPD would benefit if data were included on the problem drainage areas in the District, as contained in the North East Yorkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). An additional paragraph has been added to this section drawing attention to the current situation with regard to Strategic Flood Risk Assessments pertaining to the District.

7. Sustainability Appraisal of SPD Policies and Options

- 7.1 This section presents a summary of the sustainability appraisal of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (DCSPD). The assessment has followed the methodology described in Section 1.
- 7.2 The tables below present a summary of the appraisals of proposals included within the Draft SPD for each contribution element. It also includes an appraisal of two alternative options for the Affordable Housing element, in addition to the option included within the Draft SPD. In addition the Selby District Local Plan (SDLP) policies most relevant to this SDP are also being appraised as part of this report. This is because they form the underlying basis for the Developer Contributions SPD and have been saved for three years under the transitional arrangements to the new Local Development Framework (LDF) but have not been subjected to any previous, formal Sustainability Appraisal.
- 7.3 The summary tables list the option appraised and a conclusion of the appraisal. The conclusion comments on how sustainable the options are and any considerations that may need to be taken into account when implementing the option.

Appraisal of Relevant SDLP Options

<p>SDLP Policy CS6 The District Council will expect developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure and community facility needs that are a directly related to a development, and to ensure that measures are incorporated to mitigate or minimise the consequences of that development. (Abridged)</p>
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<p>Conclusions</p>

<p>This policy is very sustainable with virtually no negative impacts upon sustainability objectives.</p>

<p>The only note of caution, which is common to all developer contribution policies is that too high a level of contributions could discourage development thereby reducing, rather than increasing, the level of achievement.</p>
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<p>SDLP Policy H4 Residential Sites of 25 dwellings or more will be expected to contribute toward the provision of new affordable dwellings. Minimum target provision - 25% of site capacity. (Abridged)</p>

Conclusions

This policy is sustainable but only to a limited degree. 25% of total current building rates is approximately 100 – 150 affordable dwellings per annum and as only a proportion of sites are large enough to contribute, a significant under-shoot of the current target in the latest Housing Needs Study (294 dwellings) would result. This policy is considered as Option 1 for Affordable Housing

SDLP Policy RT2 Proposals for new residential development comprising 5 or more dwellings will be required to provide recreation open space at the rate of 60 square metres per dwelling.(Abridged)

Conclusions

This policy is sustainable with no negative impacts. The levels of contributions expected are based on longstanding NPFA standards and have been in operation since the adoption of the SDLP and do not appear to be such as to have any negative economic effects on the levels of residential development.

SDLP Policy H11 In rural areas the District Council may grant planning permission for small-scale affordable housing schemes immediately adjacent to the Development Limits of a village provided it meets an established local need. (Abridged)

Conclusion

This policy has some sustainable impacts in meeting the need for affordable housing locally and encouraging local people to remain in the villages. However, housing in small villages tends to encourage car journeys for work, shopping and access to facilities, which are negative impacts. These sites, which would not normally be developed are will usually on 'greenfield' sites and may detract from the character of the village. The overall impact is therefore relatively neutral.

Appraisal of SPD Proposals

SPD Affordable Housing Policy Option 2 (Deposit Draft Option) (See above for Option 1) Residential Sites of 15 dwellings or more will be expected to contribute toward the provision of new affordable dwellings. Minimum target provision 40% of site capacity. (Abridged)

Conclusions

This policy is undoubtedly more sustainable than the SDLP Policy H4, with the housing benefits, especially, being magnified by the change in thresholds. However, even at 40%, the 294 dwellings per annum affordable housing target identified in the 2005 Housing Needs Study is unlikely to be satisfied due to the reduction in house building rates proposed in the latest draft Regional Spatial Strategy (400 dpa for market and affordable housing), plus the fact that a significant amount of house building occurs on sites below the 15 dwelling threshold where no affordable units are required. This policy is included in the SPD as the preferred Option for Affordable Housing and is termed Option 2 for the purposes of this Sustainability Appraisal. Option 3 (following) appraises a policy with higher threshold levels of 50%+.

SPD Affordable Housing Option 3 Residential Sites of 15 dwellings or more will be expected to contribute toward the provision of new affordable dwellings. Minimum target provision 50%+ of site capacity.

Conclusions

This policy option increases the housing benefits for local residents and, depending upon the precise threshold will come closer to achieving the Housing Need Study's target of 294 affordable dwellings per annum. Potentially it is therefore the most sustainable option. However, if developers are discouraged by the very high thresholds, then the policy will be self-defeating. At the present time it is considered that the 40% threshold in the preferred option (Option 2), may be closer to the optimum threshold level, before more negative commercial impacts become significant.

SPD Proposals - Recreation Open Space. The District Council will expect developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure and community facility needs that are directly related to a development, and to ensure that measures are incorporated to mitigate or minimise the consequences of that development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

This policy is sustainable with no negative impacts. The levels of contributions expected have been in operation since the adoption of the SDLP and do not appear to be such as to have any negative economic effects on the levels of residential development.

SPD Proposals – Waste and Recycling Facilities The District Council will expect that all new residential developments of 4 dwellings or over are designed to accommodate refuse bins and waste recycling facilities in a way that readily facilitates the collection of domestic refuse without causing harm to residential and visual amenity. (Abridged)

Conclusions

This option has only implications for two sustainability objectives. Primarily it is of major benefit for the recycling of waste materials (Objective 19). However there may be a limited negative impact on visual amenity of residential areas. This is not considered to be such as to override the prime objective and the proposals within the SPD provide guidance on mitigating this impact.

SPD Proposal – Education. The District Council will expect residential developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure in relation to education facilities that are directly related to a development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Proposals to assist the provision of necessary education facilities have a generally positive impact on sustainability. Only if requirements become so onerous as to discourage development is there any significant negative impact.

SPD Proposal – Health. The District Council will expect residential developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure in relation to health facilities that are directly related to a development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Proposals to assist the provision of necessary health facilities have a generally positive impact on sustainability. Only if requirements become so onerous as to discourage development is there any significant negative impact.

SPD Proposal – Community Facilities. The District Council will expect residential developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of infrastructure in relation to community facilities that are directly related to a development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Proposals to assist the provision of necessary community facilities have a generally positive impact on sustainability. Only if requirements become so onerous as to discourage development is there any significant negative impact.

SPD Proposals – Transport and Highways (including Green Transport).

The District Council will expect developers to provide Green Transport Plans where appropriate, contribute to the provision of transport requirements that are directly related to a development, and to ensure that measures are incorporated to mitigate or minimise the consequences of that development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Developer contributions which encourage travel by modes other than the private car have strong sustainability benefits. Contribution towards highway infrastructure may be environmentally detrimental unless designed sensitively and may be contrary to the objective of reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. However, if highway schemes of this nature are focussed on improving highway safety, detrimental impacts will be offset by such improvements.

SDP Proposals – Drainage Infrastructure. The District Council will expect residential developers to provide for or contribute to the provision of drainage infrastructure requirements that are directly related to a development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Overall improved drainage schemes have a positive sustainability benefit by reducing the risk of flooding and pollution. The main negative impact on sustainability may be through the reduction of wetland habitats and care will be required to mitigate any such effects.

Wherever possible implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes (SUDS) should be encouraged. Developer contributions towards SUDS would be particularly beneficial environmentally in terms of providing open space and increasing biodiversity.

SDP Proposals – Economic Development Training. The District Council will expect developers of commercial property to provide for or contribute to the provision of economic development training that are directly related to a development. (Abridged)

Conclusions

Developer contributions towards economic development training will contribute strongly towards economic sustainability objectives, subject to the general proviso that contributions are not set at a level which discourages economic investment

SDP Proposals – Public Realm The District Council will expect developers to contribute to improvements to the local public realm on a voluntary basis in appropriate circumstances. (Abridged).

Conclusions

The sustainability impacts arising from public realm projects will be largely positive. The only reservation is that their visual impact should respect the any inherent qualities within the local townscape/landscape and the importance of existing historical or cultural features.

Overall Conclusion

- 7.4 In general, policies, which promote the provision of new and/or improved local services and infrastructure, are very sustainable. Only in one or two cases, when providing hard infrastructure e.g. waste recycling facilities or highway improvements may there be some negative environmental impacts unless sufficient mitigating measures are included, through attention to good design and the quality of the local environment.
- 7.5 This SPD deals specifically with the processes of obtaining developer contributions towards local facilities and services. The greatest potential for negative sustainability impact through the SPD proposals occurs if the contribution requirements become so onerous as to discourage development. At that point the proposals would become self-defeating. Particular attention has been paid to this point in appraising a range of options for affordable housing provision.

8. Appraisal of Changes Made to the SPD Policies Following Draft SPD Consultation Stage

- 8.1 A list of the most significant changes made to the SPD following the Draft SPD consultation stage is included as Appendix 3(iii) to this report.
- 8.2 The majority of changes are either for clarity and/or more explanation of the justification for, and administration and processes of, obtaining developer contributions. It is considered that all changes are relatively minor in sustainability terms and do not fundamentally alter the conclusions drawn at the Draft stage regarding the sustainability of the policies.

9. Monitoring

- 9.1 The monitoring measures linked to the sustainability aspects of the SPD will rely primarily on the annual monitoring process of planning and development issues, as now required by central government. Every attempt will be made within the resources available to utilise that process in undertaking an on-going assessment of the effectiveness of the SPD policies. Particular attention will be paid to those areas where

the Sustainability Appraisal highlights some potential for negative impacts.

- 9.2 In relation to monitoring changes to the baseline information set out in the SPD and the Sustainability Appraisal, the Council will continue to strive to improve the quality and range of information on which it bases its policies. The annual monitoring process is continuously reviewed and the framework and indicators set out in the Sustainability Appraisal provides a valuable reference for this work.

END OF MAIN REPORT