

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee



Date of Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## East Devon Local Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

### Report summary:

There is a legal requirement for Local Plans to be supported by an exercise called Sustainability Appraisal. It is a process that seeks to assess the environmental, social and economic impacts that could arise from implementation of plan policy and in so doing the work should help inform strategy and policy choices as a plan evolves from early drafts through to the final document. The work starts with a scoping report that seeks, amongst other outputs, to establish what East Devon is like now so that the potential impacts of future policy can be measured and compared against a baseline position. The draft scoping report is appended to this paper, there is a requirement for consultation and authority is sought to undertake this consultation.

### Recommendation:

1. That Strategic Planning Committee approve the Sustainability Appraisal scoping report for consultation to run for six weeks starting in January 2021.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the opportunity is provided for people to comment on the sustainability appraisal scoping report and that legal requirements are met.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

**Financial implications:** There are no financial implications at this consultation stage.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications arising out of this consultation report.

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** [Sustainability Appraisal draft scoping report](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#):**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 A draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report has been produced and it is appended to this paper. The appended report, and the ongoing exercise of assessment that will follow on, will also address a parallel legal requirement in plan preparation called Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 1.2 The scoping report is a starting point in SA work, it provides an overview of environmental, social and economic considerations that exist in East Devon. By understanding the 'where we are now position' it establishes a baseline against which future policy making work can be assessed. The scoping report also includes a series of sustainability objectives that will be used for testing future and evolving strategy and policy choices.

## **2 Consultation on the scoping report**

- 2.1 Legislation requires that we undertake, as a minimum, consultation on the scoping report for at least five weeks with;
  - Environment Agency;
  - Natural England;
  - Historic England; plus
  - any other parties that may have an interest in the work.
- 2.2 To be inclusive the intent is to make the SA report publically available so that anyone can comment on it. It is proposed that the SA should be available for comment alongside the local plan Issues and options report though because it is a specialist document and to make handling comments easier and to draw a distinction between it and the issues and options report a six week consultation period is proposed.
- 2.3 Consultation on the SA report is planned to run from Monday 18 January 2021 until midday on Monday 1 March 2021. Responses will **not** be treated as confidential.

## **3 Follow on work after scoping report consultation**

- 3.1 At the end of consultation all comments received on the scoping report will be summarised and used to help inform any amendments to the document. A report will be presented back to Strategic Planning Committee advising of feedback received and any changes made to the report.

- 3.2 As local plan work progresses the SA will be used to test and assess emerging strategy and policy choices and options. One aspect of this work will be to help assess the comparative suitability of alternative development sites that have been proposed or promoted for development. The intent is that committee will receive assessment tables for all sites and this assessment will help inform any officer recommendations on potential land allocations for development and subsequent member deliberations.
- 3.3 An SA report will be part of the technical assessment documentation that will be produced and published alongside a draft of the local plan when it is consulted on, at this stage we would envisage also consulting on the SA report. At the Publication stage of plan making the SA report, as refreshed and revised, will also be consulted on again and it will be part of the documentation that is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.