

Sustainability Appraisal – Policy and Site Matrices

Explanatory Note:

Introduction

The methodology used during the Sustainability Appraisal process is set out in Section 2 of the SA Report. This includes clarification of the significance criteria, definitions of the nature and duration of effects and the seven-point scoring scale used as part of the appraisal. The assumptions and difficulties encountered during the process are set out in the SA Report and, where applicable, within the appraisal comments of each site/policy matrix.

The SA uses a colour coded seven point 'scoring' scale which is designed to be an easily legible and consistent approach across all the site/policy matrices. The seven point scale is reproduced below for ease of reference:

Score	Description
++	Option likely to result in a significant positive effect
+	Option likely to result in a positive effect
0	Neutral (neither positive or negative significant effect)
?	The impact between the option and SA objective is uncertain
/	No relationship
-	Option likely to result in a negative effect
--	Option likely to result in a significant negative effect



Sustainability Objective

The SA objectives set out in column one of the matrices were defined taking into account the national, EU and international obligations together with local sustainability issues/problems. The process of defining the SA Objectives is set out at Section 2 of the SA Report and Appendix A of the Scoping Report (A full copy of Scoping Report (2016) is available on the Borough Council's web-site). At each stage of the Borough Plan's evolution the SA objectives were reviewed to confirm whether they still addressed the specific sustainability issues/problems associated with the Borough.

Appraisal Questions

In order to ensure consistency in the appraisal of the preferred and alternative options a set of appraisal questions were developed to enable the SA team to consider each effect within clear parameters. Where mitigation measures have been proposed within the appraisal table, the long term effects have been scored on the basis that the mitigation measures have been applied.

The appraisal questions are set out in Table 4 of the SA report.

Following a review of relevant appraisal questions, each matrix contains a 'score' for the Site/Policy to identify the likely effect of the site/policy on the SA objective. The appraisal question scores are spread across two columns so that should different questions, within the same SA objective, produce difference 'scores' then these can be recorded. In these instances, the difference is explained in the appraisal comments. This instance does not occur to any of the sites/policies in the Borough Plan - Publication Version but the table format has been retained to ensure consistency with previous SA Report associated with earlier iterations of the Borough Plan.

Short, Medium and Long Term

A definition of all terms used in the Site/Policy matrices is set out in Section 2 of the SA report. Columns 4-6 of the matrices record any changes in impact of the development of a site in the short, medium and longer term on the relevant SA objective. The policy matrices record a single score across the short, medium and long term as it is assumed that the policy will come into force once the Borough Plan is adopted and remain valid during the plan period.



Mitigation or Enhancement

Columns 7 & 8 record any changes in the long term score following the implementation of any mitigation and enhancement measure identified as part of the site's development.

The appraisal question scores are spread across two columns so that should mitigation and enhancements, within the same SA objective, produce difference 'scores' then these can be recorded. This instance does not occur to any of the sites/policies in the Borough Plan - Publication Version where mitigation and enhancement is taken together but the table format has been retained to ensure consistency with previous SA Report associated with earlier iterations of the Borough Plan. The mitigation/enhancement measures are discussed in the appraisal comments. If no mitigation/enhancement is identified then a score equal to the long term score is recorded.

Appraisal Comments

Column 9 comprises the SA assessor's assumption, difficulties and justifications for the score set out in columns 2-8 of the matrix. The comments also identify any mitigation/enhancement identified together with any specific inter-relationships between the SA objectives.

The 'significance' and 'effect' terms used in the appraisal comments are defined in Section 2.6 of the SA Report.

A summary of the overall appraisal for the specific sites/policies together with the enhancement/mitigation measures are presented at the end of each matrix.