

3 Appraisal method

3.1 Approach adopted to the SA

An integrated SA and SEA process can be defined as:

*"a systematic and iterative process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy, which identifies and reports on the extent to which the implementation of the plan or strategy would achieve the environmental, economic and social objectives by which sustainable development can be defined, in order that the performance of the strategy and policies is improved"*¹.

The appraisal is therefore a qualitative exercise using the expertise of the appraisers and available information to assess how the proposed policy, plan or proposal is aligned with each objective. 'The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities', October 2003 and 'The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Draft Practical Guidance', July 2004 issued by ODPM highlighted that the new areas of emphasis of the SEA Directive were on:

- Collecting and presenting baseline environmental information;
- Predicting the significant environmental effects of the plan and addressing them during its preparation;
- Identifying the strategic alternatives and their effects;
- Consulting the public and authorities with environmental responsibilities as part of the assessment process; and
- Monitoring the actual environmental effects of the plan during its implementation.

The consultation guidance on SA, 'Sustainability Appraisals of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks', September 2004 highlights some refinements to the broad approach:

- The review of plans and programmes precedes the determination of objectives and information gathering;
- The scope and detail of the baseline report has been considerably expanded to include detailed information on the social and environmental aspects of the area;
- A scoping report of the SA is required at the end of the baseline and appraisal development stage;
- Formal consultation with statutory consultees is required at three stages in the process.

¹ PPG11 "Regional Planning", October 2000

It is important to realise that the objective of sustainability appraisal is not to 'score' the strategy or proposals but rather to work closely with their developers to help overcome conflicts, or to make explicit the nature of any trade-offs that may result. Sustainability appraisals should be an objectives-led approach that makes use of clearly articulated objectives which are achievement-orientated and implemented through policies and proposals which, where possible should be quantified by targets which can be measured.

In applying the approach of SA to the Warwick plan, there are a number of distinct stages in the work. These as follows:

- Sustainability Appraisal of the Warwick District Local Plan 2003.
- Development and consultation of a revised set of appraisal objectives (January 2005).
- Completion, issue and consultation of a draft SA Scoping Report that defined the proposed approach to appraisal (February 2005).
- Completion of the appraisal of the policies within the revised deposit draft Warwick Local Plan.
- Completion issue and consultation on the draft Final SA Report.

3.2 Sustainability Appraisal of the Warwick District Local Plan 2003

Warwick DC completed and published a sustainability appraisal of the first draft deposit version of the Plan in November 2003. This SA was carried out at that stage by members of the Council and verified by Action 21, using the criteria set out in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Criteria used in the appraisal of the first draft deposit Local Plan

Topic areas		Criteria
Global sustainability criteria		Transport energy: efficiency - trips
		Transport energy: efficiency - modes
		Built environment energy - efficiency
		Renewable energy potential
		Global warming
Natural resources		Water quality
		Land quality
		Minerals and energy conservation
		Flood management
		Wildlife habitats and ecology
Local sustainability quality	Environmental sustainability	Noise, air and light pollution

Topic areas	Criteria
	Landscape and open countryside
	Cultural heritage
	Public access and open space
	Building quality
Social sustainability	Inequalities
	Liveability
	Housing
Economic sustainability	Jobs
	Economy

The completed SA Report concluded that:

“The Sustainability Appraisal as a process has had a positive influence on the policies of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996 – 2011 in terms of shaping them to reflect sustainable development objectives. This will assist in the achievement of sustainable development within Warwick District.

“...It highlights the inevitable tensions between certain policies and the environmental, social and economic objectives. This has brought closer scrutiny of these policies and has required decisions to be taken which have sought to balance competing aims and minimise, where possible, negative impacts.”

The appraisal was produced prior to recent guidance issued by the ODPM in light of the SEA Directive and therefore did not include baseline information or the use of an evidence base. In addition, the published report did not contain any examples of where, if the performance of a policy included a number of negative impacts against the criteria, how these impacts could be mitigated or avoided. Similarly, it was not clear, how the findings of the SA were integrated into the development of the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan.

3.3 SA of the Revised Deposit Draft Warwick District Local Plan

Warwick DC commissioned Entec UK Ltd on the 11th January 2005 to complete the second SA of the Revised Deposit Draft Warwick District Local Plan. The approach taken has been informed by the ODPM guidance and experience gained elsewhere in providing support to Local Planning Authorities.

3.3.1 Development and consultation of a revised set of appraisal objectives (January 2005)

Following provisional work to complete the review of plans, programmes and strategies, a draft set of SA objectives were developed. These objectives define the long term aspirations for the

district with regard to social, economic and environmental considerations. Under the SA, the performance of the plan policies are assessed against these objectives.

The objectives were discussed, revised and agreed at a workshop on the 7th January, held at the Council offices. In addition to Council officers and a representative of Action 21, the four statutory consultees (the Countryside Agency, English Nature, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) were invited to attend the meeting. This is consistent with subsection (5) and (6) of S12 of the SEA Regulations 2004.

Following this meeting, the revised set of objectives was circulated to all attendees to provide a further opportunity to consider and comment.

3.3.2 Completion, issue and consultation of a draft SA Scoping Report that defined the proposed approach to appraisal (February 2005)

Following agreement of the proposed SA objectives by the Council and statutory consultees, indicators were developed for each objective. Information was then sought to quantify these indicators, supplemented with the identification of targets and trends within the datasets. Information was gathered from a number of sources that included:

- Warwick District Council;
- Warwickshire County Council;
- Warwickshire Energy Advice Centre;
- Warwick Investment Partnership;
- UK Tourism Survey;
- National Statistics (Census 2001).

Key sustainability issues were identified from the analysis of the baseline information.

An appraisal framework was developed which combined the baseline information and the objectives. This was presented within a draft SA Scoping Report that was circulated to key consultees in February 2005 for comment. Key questions raised included:

1. *Are there additional plans and policies beyond those covered that you think are relevant to this appraisal?*
2. *Do you think that the sustainability objectives and key questions are appropriate?*
3. *Do the objectives cover all the areas of interest, without repeating each other?*
4. *Do you or your organisation have information that you feel would provide better information for the objectives and indicators?*
5. *Do you think that the appraisal matrix provides a useful framework for assessment?*

Feedback from this consultation was then used to inform the subsequent appraisal process.

3.3.3 Completion of the appraisal of the policies within the Revised Deposit Draft Warwick District Local Plan

Following agreement on the proposed approach to appraisal, a workshop was held on the 16th February to consider the key plan policies. These had been reviewed prior to the workshop by Entec, who sought to focus attention on these policies likely to be either key to the Local Plan implementation or responsible for potentially significant adverse impacts. In addition to Council officers and an Action 21 representative, all four statutory consultees were invited to attend the workshop. Subsequently, Entec completed the appraisal of the remainder of the Local Plan policies.

3.3.4 Completion issue of the Final SA Report

The findings of the SA of the revised deposit draft of the Local Plan have been collated by Entec and are presented in this Final SA. A draft final SA report was circulated to the Local Strategic Partnership Board; the Action 21 directors; and the Local Strategic Partnership Environment Strategy Steering Group.

3.4 When the SA was carried out?

The SA of the revised deposit draft Warwick District Local Plan was completed between 16th February 2005 and 10th March 2005.

3.5 Who carried out the SA?

The SA of the revised deposit draft Warwick District Local Plan was completed in two phases:

- A workshop to consider in detail those policies with potentially significant adverse impacts when considered against the sustainable development objectives;
- A desk based appraisal of the remaining policies by Entec staff.

The following individuals attended the workshop:

Philip Clarke, Warwick District Council	Lindsey Mann, Environment Agency
Tony Ward, Warwick District Council	Gary Stephens, Warwick District Council
Jenny Sansom, Action 21	Pete Davis, Entec
Alan Mayes, Warwick District Council (also representing English Heritage)	Sabrina Dann, Entec
Claire Parlett, Warwick District Council	Katie Elmer, Entec
Sally Jones, Warwick District Council	Richard Wyatt, Entec

Representatives of English Nature and the Countryside Agency were also invited to attend the appraisal workshop.

3.6 Who was consulted, when and how

Consistent with the requirements of the SEA Regulations 2004 (Section 12 and 13), and the principles outlined in PPS 1: Creating Sustainable Communities concerning engagement and the concept of front loading, the Council has sought to involve the statutory consultees and Action 21 at each stage of the SA process.

Action 21 Directors:

- Claire Douglas,
- Steven Coulsting
- Gareth Davies
- Richard Hicks
- Bill Evans
- Adrian Lee
- Judy Steele
- Jeanne Ashkenazi

LSP Environment Strategy Steering Group

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| • Anton Irving | English Nature |
| • Beth Gardener | Warwickshire Wildlife Trust |
| • Chris Begg | Cycleways |
| • Chris Crean | WM Friends of the Earth |
| • David Julien | Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre |
| • Diane Whitehouse | Warwickshire College |
| • Ewan Calcott | Forestry Commission |
| • Frances Beatty | Countryside Landowners Association |
| • Gill Smith | CPRE |
| • Graham Folkes – Skinner | Environment Agency |
| • Janet Alty | Regenesis |
| • Jenny Sansom | Action 21 |
| • Joanna Illingworth | Kenilworth society |
| • John Archer | Warwick District Council (Planning) |
| • Julie Healey | Severn Trent Water |

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- Leela O'Dea British Waterways
 - Linda Ridgely Warwickshire Rural Community Council
 - Liz Young Warwick District Council
 - Lucy Hawker BTCV
 - Natasha Reading Environment Agency
 - Sandra Harvey NFU
 - Pam Brown Warwickshire County Council
 - Peter Hunter WCC
 - Phil Dickin Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
 - Rob Millar Environment Agency
 - Steven Nightingale CVS Warwick District

LSP – Warwick Partnership Board

Jim Wright	Racing Club Warwick/Neighbourhood Initiatives
Danae Sheridan	Policy for Older People
Cllr C Davis	Warwickshire Police Authority
Rob Pearce	South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust
Cllr B Crowther	
Cllr B Kirton	
Cllr R Randev	
Cllr Mrs S Boad	
Joanne Adams	Citizens Advice Bureau
Keir McDonald (Chair)	De Brus Marketing
Tom Holloway	c/o Regenesi
Paul Brophy	Young Housing Project
Jonathan Hearn	St Paul's
Phil Dickin	Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
Cllr Mrs M Begg	
Cllr M Kinson OBE	

Bridget Mauldridge

Government Office West Midlands

Paul Tolley

Council of Disabled People Warks. & Coventry Social
Justice, Rights & Participation Team Co-ordinator.

Gurpal Atwal

Charles Barlow

Warwickshire Rural Community Council

The draft SA Report was circulated to allow a further opportunity to comment on its content to inform this final report.