
1. Summary and outcomes

1.1 Non-technical summary

1.1.1 Introduction to Sustainable Development

A widely used definition of sustainable development (SD) is “Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development, as defined by UK Government, is the integration of social, economic and environmental objectives.

A new Sustainable Development Strategy¹ has now been introduced by UK Government. This contains four priority areas for immediate action, and emphasises a need for changing behaviour to bring about long term sustainability improvements. The four areas for action are:

1. Sustainable Consumption and Production.
2. Climate Change and Energy.
3. Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement.
4. Sustainable Communities.

1.1.2 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

This document is the Final Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Warwick District Local Plan. It has been produced following the implementation of the European Commission Directive 2001/42/EC (enacted in the UK under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires a ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment’ (SEA) of Development Plans, as well as other plans and programmes. This report has also been informed by guidance from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on undertaking a SEA combined with Sustainability Appraisal.

To ensure that the process was independent, objective and rigorous, Warwick DC commissioned Entec UK Ltd to complete this SA Report.

The Directive seeks to promote sustainable development and in consequence, this appraisal considers the effects of policies on social, economic and environmental objectives that collectively define sustainability within the district. Where those effects are considered likely to be significantly detrimental, mitigating measures are proposed. These will take the form of proposed amendments to the plan policy wording. In completing this work, this SA Report has assembled relevant baseline information, outlined key sustainability issues, highlighted future trends and targets and outlined proposals for monitoring the impacts of the subsequent implementation of the Plan policies.

¹ DEFRA, (March 2005). *Securing the Future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy*

There will always be significant tensions in the process of appraisal. The process makes explicit the potential conflict between economic growth and environmental impacts. Whilst these cannot always be resolved, the appraisal, in highlighting such tensions is able to provide this information to decision-makers. Decisions can then be taken that are informed, based on evidence and that have sought to balance potentially competing interests.

Whilst no local authority development plan can claim to ever achieve sustainability, its contribution towards realising sustainability can always be improved. For Warwick, this completed SA aims to aid this process.

1.1.3 Scope of the Report

This Final SA Report comprises of the following:

- Background to the purpose and objectives of the appraisal process;
- The methodology used to complete the appraisal;
- A summary of the current sustainability issues in Warwick (the baseline situation) and the key issues that need to be considered;
- An assessment of the contribution of the plan policies to social, economic and environmental objectives within the district;
- An outline of proposed mitigating measures, for where these impacts are negative;
- Proposed monitoring arrangements.

The Council has had the opportunity to respond to the comments made in this report; however, it has remained at the Council's discretion whether it decides to accept or decline the proposed amendments to plan policies.

1.2 Statement on the difference the process has made

This Final SA Report is an integral part of the process of plan preparation and development. It builds on the early appraisal completed by Warwick DC in November 2003 of the first draft Warwick District Local Plan. The original SA has informed the Revised Draft Warwick District Local Plan, and policies have been modified where appropriate. The completion of this second SA highlighted specific policies that were suggested to require amendment to mitigate specific effects.

Suggested recommendations from the appraisal are given in Table 2.1 below. This also includes the Council's responses to these.

Table 1.1 Sustainability Appraisal Recommendations

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
DP1 (Layout and Design)	Policy DP1 (Layout and Design) could be strengthened by including statements to encourage improvement as well as to prevent harm through design and layout (for example clause (j) of the policy). The positive impacts of the policy also rely on implementation alongside other policies in the plan, and the reasoned justification could be improved with more explicit, greater reference to these, such as DP11, 12 and 13. The promotion of recognised sustainable design through the adoption of recognised standards, such as Eco-homes or BREEAM, could be useful additions to either the accompany text in this policy or that of DP12 Energy Conservation.	<p>The reasoned justification (and the overall relationship of the policy with other sustainability objectives) could be strengthened by the addition of cross references to the requirements of DP11, DP12, DP13 and DP14.</p> <p>Reference to the relevance of the use of BREEAM environmental design standards in preparing applications for development could be added to Policy DP12 (Energy Efficiency) to promote their usage / sustainability benefits.</p>	<p>Add reference to reasoned justification of DP1 to make note of the need to refer to other related policies of the Plan (see new paragraph 4.5a).</p> <p>Add reference to DP12 (see new para'4.7a) regarding the use of BREEAM audit systems.</p>
Policy DP2 (Amenity)	Policy DP2 (Amenity) includes reference to 'unacceptable adverse impacts', however, further clarification in the supporting text would be useful to describe what is meant as an unacceptable impact.	It is difficult to be prescriptive in defining 'unacceptable adverse impacts' as the relationship between existing and new development is considered on a case by case basis (dependant on the particular new use being introduced/ proposed).	No change proposed.
DP5 (Density)	DP5 (Density) concerns proposals to permit development that meet net density targets. Such proposals are expected to have a positive impact on the objective to protect and improve land quality by reducing the demand	1. The Reasoned Justification should highlight the need to refer to the Development Policies and Sustaining Communities Policies	1. Add to Para 4.30 after "...character of the locality." "Applicants should refer to the other Development Policies and the Sustaining

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
	for land for building. Where more people live close to amenities, it is also expected to reduce the need to travel, improve economic vitality and improve access to services. However the policy may create additional pressure on open space, other amenities and infrastructure in the local area. There is also potential to create additional neighbourhood tensions due to the proximity of occupants. Consideration should be given to ensure that the management of these issues through cross referencing to other policies be incorporated into the accompanying text.		Communities Policies.
DP7 (Traffic Generation)	Policy DP7 (Traffic Generation) allows for increases in traffic, but is intended to minimise the negative impacts associated with such increases. These negative effects could include impacts on health, air quality, and climate change. The policy could be strengthened with an explicit reference to the negative effects in the reasoned justification. It might also benefit with cross references to DP6 (Access), DP9 (Pollution) other policies that prioritise reductions in need to travel and use of sustainable transport.	It is agreed that it would be beneficial to refer to some of the negative impacts associated with road traffic to provide a context to the policy.	Amend the first sentence of Para 4.38 to state: 'Road traffic can have a significant negative impact on the environment particularly through its effect on air quality and climate change. It is also linked to associated health problems. As such the unchecked growth of road traffic can undermine the achievement of'

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
		There are strong links between this policy and DP6 (access) and DP9 (pollution). In view of this it would be useful to include a reference to these at the end of the reasoned justification.	Insert new sentence in Para 4.43 to state 'In addition whilst considering proposals the Council will give regard to other policies in the plan in particular, DP6 (access) and DP9 (pollution)'.
DP9 (Pollution Control)	Policy DP9 (Pollution Control) helps to prevent harm to sensitive receptors, and has a positive impact on the protection of the natural environment and human health and amenity. However, it does not recognise the scope for improvements in pollution through development, and the policy could be strengthened by including the potential for positive contributions such as water minimisation. The supporting text of this policy should make reference to PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed that the Plan should address the issue of remedial works on contaminated sites. 2. The re-use and recycling of surface water and domestic waste water is referred to in Policy DP11. 3. Reference could be made to PPS23 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extend policy to refer to the need to make land "fit for purpose" and amend reasoned justification in para 4.48 and 4.50 accordingly. 2. No change 3. Make reference to PPS23 in para 4.49
DP11 (Drainage)	Policy DP11 (Drainage) (b) could be amended to make reference to increases in flood risk (rather than flooding). It could also include specific reference to the effects of climate change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed that policy should refer to "the risk of flood" rather than flooding itself. 2. Agreed that the reasoned justification should refer to the potential impact of climate change 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In sub section b) of the policy and para 4.61 substitute "flooding" for "the risk of flood". 2. At the end of para 4.61 add: "Further, government guidance on flood and coastal defence states that the potential effects of climate change may be a 20% increase in peak flows".
DP12a	Policy DP12a (Renewable Energy) is	1. Agreed that reference should be made to	1. At the end of para 71a add:

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
(Renewable Energy)	welcomed. Reference is made to PPS22: Renewable Energy, the Council may also wish to refer to the Companion Guide to PPS22.	the Companion Guide to PPS22	"The Companion Guide to PPS22 provides additional guidance"
DP13 (Crime Prevention).	DP13 (Crime Prevention) could be expanded to include Community Safety as well as Crime Prevention in the policy. Furthermore, the Council could consider making specific reference to the opportunity to incorporate safety and security measures into the refurbishment of existing developments.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed that the policy could cover Community Safety. 2. Refurbishment schemes which require planning permission come under the definition of "development" and, therefore, fall within the remit of this policy. Amendments could be made to the reasoned justification to clarify this. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the end of the first sentence of the policy, add: "and improve community safety." 2. In para 4.74 make reference to conversion schemes. 3. In para 4.75 delete reference to changes of use being exempt from the requirement.
SC1 (Securing a Greater Choice of Housing)	Policy SC1 (Securing a Greater Choice of Housing) requires a mix of development, but for many of the sustainability objectives, the impacts will depend on the particular circumstance of development and on implementation of this policy in conjunction with others such as DP1, DP6, DP12, DP13, SC9 and UAP1. Reference to these policies could be included in the reasoned justification.	This policy is specific in addressing the issue of the choice and mix of housing. The purpose of the policy would be less clear if it sought to cross reference too many other sustainability issues. (The User Guide (chapter 2) at paragraph 2.3a had been amended to include a more general reference to the need for the local plan to be read as a whole and this does negate the need for excessive cross referencing.) I do agree, however, that a specific cross reference to policy SC9 (affordable housing) would be helpful. The reasoned justification has also been amended to include a reference to "lifetime homes" that meet wider accessibility needs.	Amend paragraph 5.4 to include a cross reference to policy SC9.

Policy	Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal	Warwick District Council response	Recommended revisions
SC4 (Supporting Cycle and Pedestrian Facilities)	Policy SC4 (Supporting Cycle and Pedestrian Facilities) should help to encourage travel by cycle or foot, with associated positive impacts on reducing demand for travel by car and transport emissions. The policy could be strengthened by encouraging developments to incorporate cycle and pedestrian facilities, or by cross-reference to relevant policies such as DP6.	Proposed changes to SC10 (Sustainable Transport Improvements) in the Second Deposit Draft seek contributions in appropriate circumstances towards the provision of cycleways and footpaths as part of new development. To acknowledge this a reference to SC10 should be included in the reasoned justification.	Insert sentence at the end of Para 5.21 to state 'In the case of new development proposals, policy SC10 will seek contributions where appropriate, towards the provision of new cycleways and footpaths'
SC8a (Managing Housing Supply)	Policy SC8a (Managing Housing Supply) makes provision for the development of up to 8,000 dwellings in the district between 1996 and 2011. Clearly, there is a strongly positive contribution to meeting the housing needs of the whole community. However, the environmental impacts of this policy will be uncertain as they are dependent on the specific development and on the implementation of this policy in conjunction with others such as DP1, DP6, DP12, DP13, SC9 and UAP1.	1. The main purpose of this particular policy is to "plan, monitor and manage" housing development. It is not considered necessary to draw attention here to other policies which will control the actual developments.	1. No change
SC10 (Sustainable Transport Improvements)	Policy SC10 (Sustainable Transport Improvements) could be strengthened by referencing policies to sustainable design to ensure these opportunities are maximised.	The policy would benefit by reinforcing the message about the importance of good design and location in the implementation of sustainable transport improvements.	Insert new paragraph 5.64.a. <i>"The Council will expect all transport improvements to be located and designed to maximise their potential effectiveness and their attractiveness to users. Applicants should refer to all relevant policies of this local plan, particularly the development</i>

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
			<i>policies and policies SC3 and SC4 in appropriate instances.”</i>
UAP1 (Directing New Housing),	Policy UAP1 (Directing New Housing), UAP2 (Directing New Employment Development) and UAP3 (Directing New Retail Development) may benefit with cross-references to a number of other policies including DP10, DP11, DP12, DP13, SC9, SC8a and SC7/7a.	1. Paragraph 6.11 states that other policies are also relevant. This could be expanded. However it is not considered appropriate to specifically mention policies as the list will vary from application to application.	1. In para 6.11 make reference to the Development Policies and Sustaining Communities Policies”.
TCP3 (Providing for Shopping Growth in Leamington Town Centre)	Policy TCP3 (Providing for Shopping Growth in Leamington Town Centre) may benefit from cross-reference to policy DP14 (Accessibility and Inclusion). The policy may also wish to refer to the provision of cycleways as well as pedestrian routes.	A cross reference to DP14 (Accessibility and Inclusion), and the provision of cycle ways would prove beneficial to the reasoned justification of the Policy	See new bullet point added to paragraph 7.19 of TCP3. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “the ability of any proposal to include high quality pedestrian (and where appropriate cycle) access that meets the standards for accessibility and inclusion set out in policy DP14;”
RAP2 (Directing New Housing)	Policy RAP2 (Directing New Housing) may benefit from cross-references to RAP 5, 6 and 8.	1. RAP2 is the “parent” policy for all rural housing including that under RAP5, RAP6 and RAP8 which are referred to within the policy itself. It is not considered necessary to refer to them again.	1. No change but see change to RAP6
RAP6 (Housing for	Policy RAP6 (Housing for Rural Workers) limits rural development, thus protecting the	1. Reference could be made to other relevant policies in the parent policy,	1. Add to para 8.19 (parent policy RAP2):

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
Rural Roads)	other development policies.	clarity the final sentence of this paragraph should refer to policy DP7 (traffic generation).	Para 8.64 to refer to DP7.
SSP1 (Employment Allocations)	Each of the sites under Policy SSP1 (Employment Allocations) may benefit from the production of Supplementary Planning Guidance (for those where this guidance does not already exist) as this would assist in identifying further planning restraints and opportunities.	<p>Sites A, B and E all currently have supplementary planning guidance prepared for them. Production of SPG for the remaining sites is not considered necessary for the following reasons:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many of the sites are small and do not raise particular issues or problems that would benefit from production of an SPG. None of the sites are within a conservation area or otherwise covered by a protective designation. 2. Other policies of the local plan provide an adequate basis on which to consider any issues arising from their development, in particular those in chapters 4 (development policies) and 5 (sustaining communities). 3. Under the new planning act (Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) the use of SPG is not supported. SPG is now replaced with Supplementary Planning Documents which take longer to prepare and are required to go through more formal procedures (including Sustainability Appraisal). The local plan proposes that a number of Supplementary Planning Documents be prepared (open space, affordable 	No change proposed

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
		housing, etc) and it is considered that the issues that would be raised by the development of these SSP1 allocations do not require the work and input that preparing a Supplementary Planning Document would involve.	
SSP2 (Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt)	Policy SSP2 (Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt) could consider ways in which the net loss of green belt (and open space) could be minimised, possibly through the creation/allocation of additional green belt and open space.	<p>The purpose of this policy is not concerned with the loss or gain of Green Belt. Its role is to provide a policy framework to consider what development should be allowed on selected major sites within the Green Belt. No major developed site is taken out of the Green Belt; on the contrary they are kept in the Green Belt to ensure that the objectives of Green Belt designation are followed where any development proposals are considered there.</p> <p>The local plan does make a number of minor boundary changes to the Green Belt which make a small net gain to the overall land covered by Green Belt in the district. This is done through changes to the proposals maps.</p>	No change proposed.
SSP3 (Stoneleigh Park)	Policy SSP3 (Stoneleigh Park) recognises the importance to the rural economy of the district of the site; however, comment is also made in the accompany text to the potential for development to have negative impacts on the	A reference to the significant new development that will be expected at Stoneleigh Park over the next few years, and therefore to the need for policies in the local plan to help minimise any adverse	<p>Insert new paragraph 10.26.</p> <p>"In recognising the significant new development that will take place at Stoneleigh Park over coming years, the Council will</p>

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Recommendation of Sustainability Appraisal</i>	<i>Warwick District Council response</i>	<i>Recommended revisions</i>
	environment, the sensitivity of the surrounding environs and the potential effects on the local community. Whilst the surrounding text makes clear reference to SSP2, the management of the potential adverse impacts could be further enhanced through cross reference to the Development Policies in Chapter 4.	impacts, would be helpful.	wish to ensure that this takes place in an environmentally sensitive manner that meets the objectives of this local plan. It will ensure that all future proposals meet requirements contained within the policies of this Plan, particularly the development plan policies, where appropriate."
SSP7 (Coventry Airport)	Policy SSP7 (Coventry Airport) concerns the permission of development of the Airport within an existing defined area. This policy highlights the inherent tensions in completing an appraisal. Clause d) of the policy states that the number of movements should not significantly exceed 2 million per annum. It is considered useful if the policy could qualify the term significance in this regard.	The wording within Clause D reflects the wording within the Air Transport White Paper - The Future of Air Transport (December 2003). Any attempt to qualify what is meant by significant in this context would be inappropriate in advance of an assessment of the surface access, environmental and airspace impacts of further development beyond two million passenger movements per annum. Such assessment would be undertaken if, and when, a planning application is made to the Council.	No change proposed.
SSP8 (Hatton Country World)	Policy SSP8 (Hatton Country World) would be strengthened if it were to include all development types, and not just 'retail development'. The policy makes appropriate cross references in the supporting text to other policies including DAP1, DAP3 and RAP10.	The pressures being witnessed at Hatton Country World are from retail development. Other new uses such as craft uses and the farm park may be appropriate there. The policy does make it clear that no new building will be allowed at Hatton Country World and there already exists detailed SPG that controls detailed uses at Hatton Country World.	No change proposed.

1.2.1 Summary of effects of plan policies

The following table (1.2) summarises the impacts of the plan policies. Further detail on these impacts can be found in the main body of the report and in the appendices.

Table 1.2 Summary of the sustainability impacts of the plan policies

Air	<p>A number of the policies have positive impacts on air quality by protecting the natural environment or discouraging use of private transport.</p> <p>Policies on sustainable transport and access should help to reduce risks of air pollution from traffic, and policies promoting and protecting local facilities should also help to reduce demand for travel. Other policies supporting development in town centres should help to improve access by sustainable transport, with associated benefits for air quality. In all of these cases, the policy helps to offer alternatives to private transport to some extent, although the impact on air quality will depend on response to the policies. Policies helping to protect the environment, prevent pollution and protect open spaces may also help to improve air quality.</p> <p>However, some of the policies have uncertain or potentially negative impacts on air quality. Policies that allow development may also be associated with increases in transport, even though this may be limited in some way. Policies that allow traffic growth, even where the effects are minimised, may have a negative impact on air quality. The policies on tourism and renewable energy development may also lead to an increased demand for travel, although this will be determined by the way in which such development occurs.</p> <p>Other policies that may have negative impacts by encouraging travel by private car include those allowing for development in the greenbelt, where access by public transport or walking may be more limited. Two of the policies allow development that is expected to increase transport emissions by the nature of the activity.</p>
Landscape and Soil	<p>Many of the policies have an impact on landscape and soil by encouraging use of previously developed land, protecting greenfield sites from development or encouraging consideration of sites sequentially. Encouraging development on brownfield sites helps to protect land quality and also reduces impacts on open areas and landscapes. This is also supported by policies that encourage increased density and promote re-use of existing development.</p> <p>Other policies helping to protect the landscape include those requiring or encouraging incorporation of existing landscape features and countryside character. Policies protecting open space will also help to support visual and landscape impacts, and two of the policies explicitly address issues of visual amenity. Soil will also be affected by policies with impacts on pollution or contamination.</p> <p>However, some of the policies have more uncertain impacts. These include policies with uncertain impacts on the visual landscape, those which include development of greenfield land, and the policy related to density, where there may be contradictory impacts on landscape.</p>
Biodiversity (Fauna and Flora)	<p>A number of the policies have impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment, particularly by use of previously developed land, and restricting development on greenfield land, the green belt and areas of restraint. Policies protecting open space may also have similar positive impacts on biodiversity. However, those policies that allow for development of greenfield land may have negative impacts.</p> <p>In addition to policies related to greenfield sites, some policies directly address effects on the natural environment, including biodiversity. Some policies require prevention of harm, while one policy goes further by considering protection and enhancement. Policies that address pollution control are also considered to have a positive impact by preventing harm.</p> <p>However, for a small number of policies, the impact on biodiversity is uncertain. This includes one where it is not apparent whether the natural environment is included in</p>

the scope of the policy, and others where the impact will depend on implementation of the policy.

Climatic factors

The main relationship between the policies and climate factors is through impacts on travel and transport. A number of policies help to reduce travel demand, particularly through location of housing facilities, thereby helping to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. However, other policies have an uncertain impact on climate factors because although they allow for increased private transport the policy also requires minimisation of negative impacts. In addition, two policies support road and air traffic respectively and therefore may have negative impacts. Policies allowing development and the greenbelt may also have negative impacts by encouraging travel by private car.

A small number of policies also address domestic and commercial energy use, encouraging reduced energy consumption and allowing for development of renewable energy. In addition to affecting contribution to climate change, policies on flooding and drainage have a positive relationship by reducing risk of negative impacts associated with potential effects of climate change

Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage

Many of the policies support the built and historic environment, through explicit protection of features or by encouraging appropriate building and development.

Some policies include protection of the historic environment within the policy. Others require prevention of damage to the historic environment. In both cases, the policy has a positive impact on the cultural heritage of the district.

Policies that protect the existing character of particular areas in town centres and rural areas will also have a positive impact on the cultural heritage of the area. Policies that support a mixture of developments in new buildings will also have positive impacts. These will be supported by the impacts on townscape associated with good design.

However, the impacts of design may be uncertain as a number of policies require a balance between different objectives, including overall design, density, energy conservation, and crime prevention. The impact of density on townscape is also uncertain as it will vary depending on the existing character of the rural or urban area, and the nature and design of the development that takes place.

Human health

Human health may be affected by policies protecting and enhancing open space, which can have a positive impact on physical and emotional health. Other policies look to protect and enhance provision of more formal sports facilities, improving access to sports with benefits to human fitness and health. Human health may also be supported by policies encouraging walking and cycling. Provision of health facilities such as doctors and dentists' surgeries, can also have a positive impact.

As for other topics with impacts through transport, there is some uncertainty over the impacts of policies that allow for traffic growth. There may also be negative impacts on human health from any permitted telecommunication development, although any development under this policy must adhere to government health guidelines.

Material assets

Material assets include the natural resources used in the construction and use of buildings and a number of the policies have implications for resource use. This includes policies encouraging reuse of existing buildings and facilities and thereby minimising the need for the new buildings. On the other hand policies that allow for development may increase demand for raw materials. The policy setting a level of housing provision has uncertain impacts by allowing development, but potentially limiting the number of houses below the level that would occur unconstrained.

Where development takes place, some of the policies impact by encouraging good design and resource use. Sustainable resource use in buildings is encouraged by policies related to water recycling, energy minimisation and use of renewable energy, and sustainable transport.

For some policies the impacts on material assets are uncertain and will depend on the way in which the policy is implemented.

Population

Population covers a wide range of impacts on people, and as such, the Plan policies are associated with population in a variety of ways. This includes through impacts on the natural and built environment, which may encourage outdoor recreation and health, or may increase spending in the area by attracting tourists for example. Issues of health and the natural and built environment are summarised above and not

considered again here.

Many of the policies affect economic vitality through influencing the nature and location of development, with a number of policies affecting the mixture of development and retention of open space within the built environment. Encouraging a balanced mix of commercial, domestic and retail development should help to maintain economic vitality. In addition, there are other policies encouraging investment in town centres. Policies affecting the design and layout of town centres could add to the impacts of other policies by improving the economic environment within the towns.

Transport access may also influence economic vitality. Access issues are considered further below as of interest for community wellbeing beyond economic vitality. One policy has a positive impact by reducing risk of congestion, although the overall influence of the policies on traffic on economic growth is uncertain as the relationship between transport and economic growth is influenced by many factors.

Economic vitality may also be influenced through provision of employment land and buildings. However, other policies limit development, for example in the greenbelt, and this may restrict development that supports economic growth.

A number of the policies in the plan address issues of access, both to employment and facilities, and accessibility. These may have a positive impact on the population by providing opportunities and access to services. Policies affecting access include those which concern access in general, those which impact on access to employment, and those which affect access to facilities. One policy relates to accessibility, which could improve access to services and facilities, but may have negative impacts on those businesses or organisations who find it hard to adapt to the requirements.

In addition to affecting access to facilities, a small number of policies affect the provision of such facilities.

One of the key issues in the district is housing need, affordability and provision, and a number of the policies affect housing. These include providing for a mix of housing development. A number of policies have a positive impact on meeting housing needs, while others support an increase in the provision of affordable housing. However, some of the policies have a more uncertain impact on the provision of housing through restricting development. These include policies that constrain building on greenfield and greenbelt sites.

In addition to policies affecting access and affordability, other policies that may have a positive impact on community wellbeing, including those which help to improve the design and risks of crime and anti-social behaviour. Density may have a more uncertain impact on community wellbeing by improving access to facilities but reducing opportunity for open spaces and tolerance of neighbours.

1.2.2 Conclusions on the performance of the plan

In broad terms the Plan performs well against the sustainable development objectives and it provides a robust framework from which to progress sustainability within the District. Many of the individual plan policies make a positive contribution towards specific sustainable development objectives and the proposed changes refer predominately to improvements in the accompanying text. Through the completion of this SA and the earlier appraisal undertaken in 2003, the Council has ensured that through the various iterations of the Plan, its performance and contribution towards a more sustainable future is one that has improved.

Compared to the first draft of the Warwick District Local Plan, the proposed changes have strengthened the policy framework for achieving sustainable development. In particular, by promoting:

- A clearly articulated spatial strategy that directs development around existing Towns;

- Greater attention to the issues of flood risk and their assessment within development;
- Higher standards in design, for example the use of sustainable drainage systems;
- Provision for renewable energy;
- A stronger commitment to alternative modes of transport;
- Mixed use development and more effective use of land;
- Greater emphasis on protecting and enhancing existing designated sites; and
- Strengthening the role of rural settlements and rural service centres.

The role of the Plan is not to achieve sustainability on its own, but to make the land use planning contribution to sustainable development which needs to be implemented alongside other policy documents. The sustainability appraisal process has provided the opportunity for the sustainability issues associated with the Plan to be considered by policy makers, decision makers and the wider community. Whilst some issues remain, and some of these will be inherent within the trade off between the elements of sustainability, the revised draft Warwick District Plan provides a robust framework from which to progress sustainability objectives within the District.

1.2.3 Does this SA comply with the SEA Directive?

Whilst the term ‘sustainability appraisal’ has been around for a number of years, it is with the implementation of the SEA Directive, that the process has moved from being solely a qualitative process to one that relies more substantively on an evidence base. The guidance from the ODPM has detailed how SA could be undertaken in a manner to include the requirements of the SEA Directive. The ODPM guidance details the following four phase in the process of developing a Local Plan:

- Pre-production – evidence gathering (including establishing the social, economic and environmental baseline);
- Production – preparation and refinement of issues and options, assessing effects, determining preferred options, consultation and submission of development documents;
- Examination – representations, independent examination and binding report;
- Adoption – adoption and monitoring.

For each of these stages, there are a number of requirements outlined in the integrated SA/SEA guidance. This is detailed in table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Integrated SA/SEA requirements

Phase	SEA Stage	Action
Pre-production	Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope	<p><i>Develop and agree appraisal methodology and programme</i></p> <p><i>Ensure that stakeholder involvement in the appraisal process has been included in the community consultation process</i></p> <p><i>Identify and review other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainable development objectives that will affect or influence the Local Plan and undertake relevant surveys</i></p> <p><i>Collect relevant social, environmental and economic baseline information and production a characterisation of the district</i></p> <p><i>Identify key sustainability issues for the SA to address</i></p> <p><i>Develop the SA framework, consisting of the sustainability objectives, indicators and targets</i></p> <p><i>Test the Local Plan objectives against the sustainability objectives and whether the Plan objectives are consistent with one another</i></p> <p><i>Produce a scoping report and consult relevant authorities, the public and other key stakeholders on the scope of the appraisal and the key issues and possible solutions</i></p>
Production	Stage B: Developing and refining options	<p><i>Develop the SA consulting relevant stakeholders, and test issues and options against the SA Framework</i></p> <p><i>Consultation on issues and options and initial SA Report</i></p>
	Stage C: Appraising the effects of the Local Plan	<p><i>Take account of consultation on issues and options in ongoing SA approach</i></p> <p><i>Predict the effects and carry out detailed assessment of the effects of the Preferred Options</i></p> <p><i>Propose measures to maximise beneficial effects and mitigate adverse effects</i></p> <p><i>Develop proposals for monitoring</i></p> <p><i>Prepare the final SA Report of the Local Plan</i></p>
	Stage D: Consultation on the Preferred Options and SA Report	<p><i>Consult on the final SA Report along with the Preferred Options</i></p> <p><i>Carry out, where necessary, appraisal of any significant changes made as a result of public participation, including possible alternative site proposals</i></p> <p><i>Submit Local Plan and SA to Secretary of State</i></p>
Examination		<p><i>If necessary, carry out appraisal of any significant changes proposed as a result of representations, including possible alternative site proposals</i></p>
Adoption and Monitoring		<p><i>Inform consultees that the Local Plan has been adopted</i></p> <p><i>Issue statement summarising information on how the SA results and consultees opinions were taken into account, reason for choice of options and proposals for monitoring, in relation to any recommended changes</i></p> <p><i>Make the Local Plan and SA Report available to the public and other stakeholders</i></p>

Phase	SEA Stage	Action
	Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the DPD	<p><i>Monitor significant effects of the Local Plan to identify the at an early stage any unforeseen effect</i></p> <p><i>Publish sustainability monitoring reports periodically as part of the Annual Monitoring Report</i></p> <p><i>Undertake appropriate remedial action where necessary</i></p>

This process assumes that a planning authority has begun the work to prepare the Local Plan after the adoption of the SEA Directive and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Warwick DC is not in this position. The first draft of the Warwick Local Plan was produced in December 2003 and put on deposit with an accompanying sustainability appraisal. In consequence, the Local Plan was prepared in advance of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, and before the start date for the SEA Directive. Therefore, it has not implemented some of the actions identified in table 1.3 within the pre-production and production phases of the Local Plan. This is particularly in regard of the options development and their appraisal within an initial SA Report.

The methodology adopted for this study therefore reflects the very special position that the District Council finds itself in. A careful programme has been prepared that reflects the requirements of the new Act, but accepts the progress already made by the Local Plan towards adoption.

In consequence, whilst the development of the Local Plan has been undertaken consistent with the spirit of the SA/SEA guidance, **the Council does not claim that the approach enables them to comply with the full requirements of either the ODPM guidance on SA/SEA or the SEA Regulations 2004.** However, the approach taken has sought to meet specific stages of the SEA process (Stage A: Setting the Context, Stage C: Appraising the Effects of the Plan, Stage D: Consultation). In so doing, the Council has sought to ensure that the process aids the development of the plan by appraising the contribution of the proposed plan policies towards sustainable development, and to identify opportunities for this contribution to be improved through proposed plan policy changes.

1.3 How to comment on the report

We would welcome your comments on this Final SA Report. If you do have comments, please could you send them to:

**Philip Clarke,
Group Leader, Policy, Projects and Conservation,
Planning and Engineering,
Warwick District Council,
PO Box 2178,
Riverside House,
Milverton Hill,
Royal Leamington Spa,**

**Warwickshire,
CV32 5QH**

The Council will acknowledge receipt of your submission and provide a response to your views as part of the consultation process on the Plan.

