

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE FACILITATING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Introduction

As part of the Horsham District Core Strategy, adopted in February 2007, Policy CP4 made provision for housing to be allocated in the most sustainable locations, through a site specific allocations document, or through a separate contingency DPD.

HDC began preparation of a contingency DPD (the Reserve Housing Sites DPD), to help meet any shortfall in housing numbers. However, a number of factors, including the timing of the Core Strategy Review and the current economic climate has meant that the Reserve Housing Sites Document would be unlikely to deliver any identified shortfall in housing numbers. To help enable the continued deliverability of housing numbers within the District to take place as soon as economic conditions allow, a Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared to help set out the criteria by which sites that are put forward to the Council for development will be judged as an expansion of existing policy.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

In accordance with planning legislation, it is necessary to ensure that the documents that the Council produces contribute to the principles of sustainable development as far as is practicable. In order to ensure that this is the case documents are subject to a process known as sustainability appraisal (SA), which incorporates the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) directive.

Both the Horsham District Core Strategy, the Site Specific Allocations of Land, General Development Control Policies Document, and the Preferred Options Reserve Housing Sites DPDs have all been subject to an SA/SEA examining the effects of the policies or development locations on sustainable development. The results of this process show that the development is likely to have the following effects:

Positive Impacts

- There will be positive impacts on the provision of affordable housing
- The local and sub-regional economy is likely to benefit from an increased number of residents in the area.

Negative Impacts

- The development could have an adverse impact on biodiversity, the landscape and the historic /cultural environment.
- There is some potential for the new development to place pressure on existing services and facilities.
- Construction and operational stages of the development will require raw materials and energy. This is likely to result in increased emissions of carbon dioxide and have a negative impact on climate change.
- Construction and operation of the new development is likely to increase the number of vehicle journeys. This has the potential to cause congestion and also adversely impact the air quality of the area.
- Increased hardstanding associated with the new development could increase the risk of flooding.

The SA/SEA process found that the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents will help to minimise many of the adverse impacts of the development that were identified for example by ensuring that the development is located on the most sustainable sites possible and are sensitively designed so as to protect and enhance the landscape as far as possible as well as minimising the impact on climate change. The SA/SEA of the Site Specific Allocations of Land and the Reserve Housing Sites documents also identified the likely effects of developments at specific sites. Although none of these sites are being brought forward as part of the FAD SPD, the information as to the effects of the development of a site is known to the Council and would be taken into account as part of the planning application process. (This is reflected in the wording of the FAD). In the event that the Council is minded to grant planning permission for a site, any mitigation measures identified as part of the existing SA/SEAs would be incorporated into the Planning Conditions as appropriate.

Need for Further Sustainability Appraisal of the Facilitating Appropriate Development SPD

It is considered that under the terms of the SEA regulations the Facilitating Appropriate Development SPD is a minor modification of an existing plan or policy (i.e. the 'parent' documents of the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies DPD) The content of the SPD amounts to an amplification of the existing Core Strategy and Development Control Policies; in particular, CP5, CP8 and DC3. It is therefore considered that this document will not have any additional significant effects on the environment or sustainable development, and that as a consequence there is no need to carry out any further sustainability work other than that which is outlined in the paragraphs above.