

Final Draft Sustainability Report (Updated)

August 2018 Update

Sustainability Appraisal
(incorporating Strategic
Environmental Assessment)



1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Plan examination hearing sessions took place in June 2018 where the soundness of the Plan was considered. During the hearing sessions it came to light that a number of modifications would be required to the Plan. The modifications fall into two categories: minor modifications such as minor wording changes and factual updates and main modifications required to make the plan sound such as the introduction of new policies and those which affect how a policy is implemented.
- 1.2 A Schedule of all modifications can be found in the Barrow Borough Local Plan Examination Library August 2018.
- 1.3 The NPPG states that the sustainability appraisal report will not necessarily have to be amended if the Local Plan is modified. It states that modifications to the sustainability appraisal should be considered only where appropriate and proportionate to the level of change being made to the Local Plan.
- 1.4 The Council considers that eight main modifications could potentially have implications for the Sustainability Report. These are considered in the sections below. The remaining modifications are not considered to have any implications for the Sustainability Report and have not been reviewed any further.
- 1.5 The main modifications that could potentially have implications for the Sustainability Report are as follows:
 - **Mod Ref MAM5, Policy C6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Proposals**
There are several amendments to this policy.
 - **Mod Ref MAM11, New Policy P1 – The Port of Barrow**
This is a new policy to ensure that the Local Plan supports Barrow Port.
 - **Mod Ref MAM17, Policy EC3 – Managing Development of Employment Land**
There are several amendments to this policy.
 - **Mod Ref MAM19, Policy EC7 – Energy Uses Opportunity Area**
This policy has been amended to reflect the expanded Energy Uses Opportunity Area on the Proposals Map.
 - **Mod Ref MAM22, Policy EC11 – Self-catering Holiday Accommodation**

An amendment to this policy has resulted in it being less restrictive.

- **Mod Ref MAM30, Policy H7 – Housing Development**
An amendment to this policy has resulted in it being less restrictive.
- **Mod Ref MAM33, New Policy H10 – Empty Homes**
This is a new policy that sets out the Council’s commitment to maximising the use of the existing housing stock.
- **Mod Ref MAM68, Appendices A-C: Proposals Map**
This is the revised Suitable Areas for Wind Energy.

1.6 The Council has reviewed the Sustainability Appraisal to determine whether these main modifications to the Local Plan would likely give rise to additional significant effects. The findings of this review are set out below.

Key: Sustainability Objectives

Social Objectives	SP1: To increase the level of participation in democratic processes
	SP2: To improve access to services, facilities, the countryside and open space
	SP3: To provide everyone with a decent home
	SP4: To improve the level of skills, education and training
	SP5: To improve the health and well-being of people
	SP6: To create vibrant, active, inclusive and open-minded communities with a strong sense of local history
Environmental Objectives	EN1: To protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity
	EN2: To preserve, enhance and manage landscape quality and character for future generations
	EN3: To improve the quality of the built environment
	NR1: To improve local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
	NR2: To improve water quality and water resources
	NR3: To restore and protect land, soil and geodiversity
	NR4: To manage mineral resources sustainably and minimise waste
Economic Objectives	EC1: To retain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities
	EC2: To improve access to jobs

	EC3: To diversify and strengthen the local economy
	EC4: To improve the vitality and viability of town and local centres

2.0 Assessment of Significant Effects

- 2.1 A review of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in light of the proposed main modifications has shown that there is unlikely to be any additional potential significant effects on the sustainability objectives. Further details are provided below.

Mod Ref MAM5, Policy C6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Proposals

- 2.2 A key change to this policy is the deletion of criterion (e) which required developers to engage with the community and local authority at an early stage prior to the formal submission of any proposals. This would have helped to identify potential adverse effects of development as a starting point in addressing these effects. However, the additional amendments to the policy should help to ensure that future renewable energy developments are sustainable. In particular, new criterion (c) requires large scale development to make provision for community benefits. In addition, new criterion (d) provides a clearer link to the Suitable Areas for Wind Energy Technical Document, which seeks to ensure that adverse impacts are minimised. Developers are also required to comply with all relevant policies of the Development Plan in new criterion (e). It is therefore considered that the amendments will not impact upon the results of the SA.

Mod Ref MAM11, New Policy P1 – The Port of Barrow

- 2.3 See the Appendix for an assessment of this new policy.

Mod Ref MAM17, Policy EC3 – Managing Development of Employment Land

- 2.4 Criterion (a) of this policy deletes the term “urban boundaries” and changes it to “built-up area”, therefore making the policy less restrictive. This change could have a negative impact on the environmental objectives by potentially allowing more development on greenfield land on the edge of settlements,

with the potential for negative effects on the natural environment. Notwithstanding this, the purpose of the policy continues to be to manage the development of employment land. The listed criteria in the policy requires a Traffic Impact Assessment for major sites, promotes sustainable forms of travel, protects groundwater, and requires sustainable energy usage. These criteria will help to ensure that the policy will not have a negative effect on sustainability objective EN1. By requiring new development to be adjoining the built-up area, it directs development away from the open countryside, therefore it is unlikely that there would be any significant negative landscape impacts. The effect on the remaining environmental objectives will depend on how the policy will be implemented. It is therefore considered that the amendments to the policy will not impact upon the results of the SA.

Mod Ref MAM19, Policy EC7 – Energy Uses Opportunity Area

- 2.5 The changes to the boundary of the Energy Uses Opportunity Area on the Proposals Map was a Main Modification at the Local Plan Submission Draft stage. Mod Ref MAM19 above is one of the subsequent changes to Policy EC7, which links to the Energy Uses Opportunity Area.
- 2.6 The modification extends the Energy Uses Opportunity Area so that it is adjacent to the boundary of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Natura 2000 site and Ramsar Site.
- 2.7 The SA originally acknowledged that the policy directs development to within close proximity of the above sites and stated that there may be potential for significant negative effects upon habitats and biodiversity. Specifically, the following potential significant adverse effects were identified:
- The policy could result in the loss of land and habitats and could affect species movement/migration patterns. The loss of biodiversity can also have an adverse effect on resident's health and well-being.
 - Increased recreational/visitor pressure could cause noise and disturbance which may harm biodiversity.
 - The policy could have a negative effect upon the amenity of existing residents in terms of loss of privacy, disturbance from traffic and loss of sunlighting. This can have an adverse effect upon health and wellbeing.
- 2.8 In terms of avoidance and mitigation, the SA makes reference to Draft Local Plan policies which protect natural habitats and species, and which require mitigation where harm is unavoidable. It also refers to managing potential disturbance during the construction phases through appropriate Environmental Management Plans.

- 2.9 It is considered that there is no need to amend the SA. Additional effects are expected to be limited given that the extension to the area mainly incorporates existing industrial development. The main issue is that the site is now adjacent to the European conservation sites rather than within “close proximity”. However, the original assessment satisfactorily identifies the key sustainability issues and potential adverse effects, namely the potential loss of habitats and species.

Mod Ref MAM22, Policy EC11 – Self-catering Holiday Accommodation

- 2.10 This policy deletes the term “urban boundaries” and changes it to “built up area”, therefore making the policy less restrictive. This change could have a negative impact on the environmental objectives by potentially allowing more development on greenfield land on the edge of settlements, with the potential for negative effects on the natural environment. It is expected that new self-catering holiday accommodation will comprise existing buildings, therefore impacts would more likely be related to an increase in vehicle movements in peripheral areas rather than new-build. Nevertheless, it is still considered that the effect on the environmental objectives would depend on the existing use of the building and its location. It is therefore considered that the amendments will not impact upon the results of the SA.

Mod Ref MAM30, Policy H7 – Housing Development

- 2.11 This policy previously only applied to windfall developments, however the title has now been amended so that it applies to all housing developments, including allocated sites. Nevertheless, the purpose of the policy continues to be to ensure that new housing development is sustainable. Therefore, the effect on the sustainability objectives is not expected to change.
- 2.12 The policy also deletes the term “urban boundaries” and changes it to “built up area”, therefore making the policy less restrictive. This change could have a negative impact on the environmental objectives by potentially allowing more development on greenfield land on the edge of settlements, with the potential for negative effects on the natural environment. However, it is not considered that the modifications will have any further impacts on the environmental objectives as the policy contains criteria which protects the built environment and local landscape, and encourages sustainable energy use, waste management and promotes access by sustainable forms of travel. The policy also directs development to the most sustainable settlements, which reduces travel distances. It is therefore considered that the amendments will not impact upon the results of the SA.

Mod Ref MAM33, New Policy H10 – Empty Homes

2.13 See the Appendix for an assessment of this new policy.

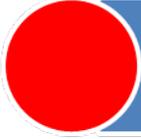
Mod Ref MAM68, Appendices A-C: Proposals Map (linked to Policy C6)

2.14 The boundaries to the Areas Suitable for Wind Energy have been amended so that they now cover larger areas of the Borough. Nevertheless, wind energy proposals will still be required to consider the issues set out in the Suitable Areas for Wind Energy Technical Document. The Final Draft Sustainability Report took account of how renewable energy developments can harm the natural environment where they are poorly sited, and can have a negative impact on the landscape and built and historic environment. In consideration of the criteria set out in Policy C6, it is considered that the amendments will not impact upon the results of the SA.

Appendices

Policy Assessments: New Policies P1 and H10

Key: Assessment Codes

	<p>Positive Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The option would help in achieving the objective-Consider whether the positive effect can be further enhanced
	<p>Neutral Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The option would neither help nor hinder the achievement of the objective-The option is likely to be acceptable-Consider whether intervention/amendment could result in positive effects
	<p>Negative Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The policy would be in conflict with the objective-Consider mitigation, such as delete/amend option
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Effect depends on how the policy will be implemented
	<p>Uncertain-need more information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Consider where this may come from-who has it? What will be done about collecting it?

A significant positive effect is identified with a + symbol and a significant negative effect with a – symbol. Where a positive effect can be further enhanced, this is listed in the results tables below.

Policy Number	Social Objectives						Environmental Objectives								Economic Objectives			
	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	SP6	EN1	EN2	EN3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	EC1	EC2	EC3	EC4	
New Policy P1: The Port of Barrow				+			-			-				+	+	+		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This policy supports the continued operation of the port, therefore supporting employment opportunities at the port for years into the future. • By supporting development at the port, the policy also supports the development of brownfield and derelict land, and could provide significant improvements to the landscape in this area. • Employment development at the port will likely provide new opportunities for apprenticeships and other work-based training and skills development. • The port is within close proximity to European designated biodiversity sites and there are surface water flooding issues in some areas. 																		
New Policy H10: Empty Homes			+		+				+									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This policy will help to improve housing choice in the Borough by bringing empty homes back into use. • Empty homes can blight a neighbourhood, but bringing such properties back into use can improve the urban landscape and the quality of the built environment. This can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of existing residents. • Bringing empty homes back into use will create job opportunities so as to make such properties habitable. 																		

Significance of Adverse Effects of Policies: Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

The following table assesses those policies where a negative effect is considered likely and determines whether the effect is significant, taking into account Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The Regulations require consideration of measures to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment. This stage is known as Stage B4 of the SA process and potential avoidance and mitigation measures are listed in the table.

Key	
Soc/env/eco	Policy would have an adverse effect on a social/environmental/economic objective
ST	Effect is likely to be short term i.e. 0-5 years of adoption of the Plan
MT	Effect is likely to be medium term i.e.6-10 years of adoption of the Plan
LT	Effect is likely to be long term i.e.11 years plus of adoption of the Plan
F/LF	Effect is likely to be frequent/low frequency
D/ID	Direct/indirect effect
R/IR	Reversible/irreversible effect
H/M/L	High, medium, low certainty of prediction
SS/SE/BW/W	The effect is site specific, settlement specific, borough wide or will have a wider impact
V	Vulnerable features (i.e. listed buildings, protected species) or populations are likely to be affected
C	Potential to have a cumulative effect with other proposals or plans
?	Unknown at this stage/dependent upon several factors

Policy P1 The Port of Barrow												
Potential Adverse Effects	Type	Duration	Frequency	Direct/ Indirect	Reversible/ Irreversible	Probability	Spatial Extent of Effect	Vulnerability	Cumulative Effect	Significant Effect	Avoidance & Potential Mitigation	
This policy could result in temporary disturbance to habitats and biodiversity during construction phases. The loss of biodiversity can also have an adverse effect on residents' health and well-being.	Env, Soc	ST	?	D	R	H	SS	V	C	-		The site is set within an existing residential and industrial area therefore the effects of construction are likely to be low, however any effects could be managed through appropriate Environmental Management Plans.
This policy could result in the loss of land and habitats (land take) and could affect species movement/migration patterns	Env, Soc	LT	?	D	IR	H	W	V	C			<p>New development should conserve and enhance biodiversity features and habitats. The Local Plan Submission Draft contains a policy that requires such protection and enhancement.</p> <p>In considering how a development might affect protected species on or near to a proposed development site when reviewing a planning application, Natural England has produced standing advice for protected species which local planning authorities need to take account when making planning decisions. This will help the authority to agree appropriate risk reduction and compensation measures to avoid harming a protected species.</p>
<p>This policy could have an adverse effect upon air quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> during construction phases, through greater energy demands 	Env	ST LT	F	D	R	H	W	V	C	-		<p>The effects can be reduced as the Draft Local Plan contains policies which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage sustainable construction

<p>from the commercial/industrial uses located on the site,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> through increased commuting into and out of the area 		<p>practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the use of renewable energy in new developments, reducing the reliance upon carbon heavy industries Encourage developments which are accessible by public transport, cycling and walking. In order to improve accessibility developer contributions may be required Promote tree planting which can help offset any decline in air quality. <p>Travel Plans are required under the BPAAP for all new developments in this area which generate large volumes of employees. This can help reduce reliance upon private vehicles and improve air quality</p>
<p>This policy could lead to the hardsurfacing of green spaces which is likely to increase surface water run-off and potentially flooding. This could have an adverse effect on water quality.</p>	<p>Env LT ? D R H W V C -</p>	<p>The Local Plan contains policies which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the use of permeable surfacing and sustainable drainage Direct development to areas at low risk of flooding. Where a site is at risk of flooding, a flood risk assessment will be required along with appropriate mitigation measures.

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Working together to support sustainable development within the Borough of Barrow-in-Furness

