

Final Draft Sustainability Report (Updated)

January 2018 Update

Sustainability Appraisal
(incorporating Strategic
Environmental Assessment)



1.0 Background

- 1.1 In May 2017 the Council consulted on the Barrow Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft. In response to this consultation, and in light of evidence updated since this time, the Council has subsequently prepared a Submission Draft Local Plan under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 The Submission Draft Plan includes amendments which have resulted in major modifications as follows:
- **Mod Ref MAJ1, Policy EC7 – Energy Uses Opportunity Area**
The boundary of the Energy Uses Opportunity Area is amended to include the decommissioned South Morecambe Bay Gas Terminal and the site of the former Roosecote Power Station.
 - **Mod Ref MAJ2, Policy GI4 – Green Spaces**
An addition area of open land is designated as a green space at Walker Street/James Street, Askam.
 - **Mod Refs MAJ3-MAJ27, Policy H1 – Housing Requirement**
The housing requirement has been amended in light of updated evidence, resulting in a number of textual amendments to the Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Final Draft Sustainability Report (Updated) of the Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft was published in March 2017. 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 has decided to review the sustainability appraisal to determine whether the major modifications to the Local Plan would likely give rise to additional significant effects. The findings of this review are set out below.

2.0 Assessment of Significant Effects

- 2.1 A review of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in light of the proposed major 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 MAJ1, Policy EC7: Energy Uses Opportunity Area

- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 It is considered that there is no need to amend the sustainability appraisal. 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 MAJ2, Policy GI4: Green Spaces

- 2.6 This modification is the identification of a small area of land as green space in Askam. The Local Plan identifies a number of green spaces which are linked to policy GI4. The SA acknowledges the benefits of green spaces, and the policy is considered to have significant positive effects on health and wellbeing; supporting habitats and species; and preserving landscape quality and character.
- 2.7 The identification of this additional small green space will contribute towards the positive effects already identified in the SA. The site is not considered to impact upon the results of the SA which acknowledges the positive effects of green infrastructure. No significant potential adverse effects have been identified for this policy.

Mod Refs MAJ3-MAJ27, Policy H1: Annual Housing Requirement

- 2.8 The annual housing requirement has been amended from 133 dwellings per annum over the period 2014-2031 to 119 dwellings per annum over the revised plan period of 2016-2031. This has resulted in a number of updates to the supporting text and policy H1 (modifications MAJ3 to MAJ27). The policy was originally assessed in the SA as having significant positive effects in terms of ensuring there are enough homes to meet identified need and that there is the right number of homes to support economic growth. No amendments to the sustainability appraisal are required as the revised housing requirement will continue support these sustainability objectives.
- 2.9 The policy was originally assessed as having potential significant adverse effects on land, habitats, biodiversity and local air quality. Mitigation and avoidance measures identified included locating new housing in areas with existing services and suitable infrastructure; and encouraging the use of renewables, sustainable construction methods and tree planting. The SA makes reference to the draft Local Plan policies which cover the identified issues.
- 2.10 The housing requirement has reduced by only a small amount and the requirement is a minimum rather than a ceiling. Therefore, the identified adverse impacts are still considered to be appropriate for this policy. Also, given that the requirement has reduced, no additional potential adverse significant effects have been identified.

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