

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK, TUNBRIDGE
WELLS BOROUGH

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK, TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH

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SA Scoping Report, Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF

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PART ONE: DEVELOPING THE SA FRAMEWORK FOR THE LDF

1. INTRODUCTION

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is part of the emerging development plan for Tunbridge Wells Borough. LDFs are the new form of spatial development plan introduced by the Government's planning reforms in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). Unlike the current development plan system, the preparation of the LDF will be a continual process, with new Local Development Documents (LDDs) adopted and included in the LDF at different stages.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) to be carried out on Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), Development Plan Documents (DPD), and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SAs help planning authorities to fulfil the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, by testing policy options considered for inclusion in the development plan against sustainability objectives.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) which implement European Directive 2001/42/EC, known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, require SEA of a wide range of plans and programmes, including LDFs, if they are likely to give rise to significant environmental effects. The objective of the SEA Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans, with a view to promoting sustainable development.

SEA and SA are very closely linked. SA aims to integrate sustainability issues into decision making by appraising the plan or strategy using environmental, social and economic objectives. SEA also aims to facilitate sustainable development but its emphasis is on integrating environmental considerations into decision making through a thorough analysis of environmental issues.

Although the requirement to carry out both an SA and SEA is mandatory, it is possible to satisfy the requirements of both pieces of legislation through a single appraisal process, and this is the approach advocated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). From hereon, SA is used to represent the combined SA/SEA process.

In order to fully comply with both sets of legislation detailed above, this report adheres to the most recent guidance produced by the ODPM 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks – Consultation Paper' (2004) and the subsequent 'Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions' (ODPM, 2005). The methodology used for the SA is described in detail in Section 2: Sustainability Appraisal Methodology.

This document describes the first stage of the SA; that is to set out the context and objectives, establish the environmental, social and economic baseline of the Borough and decide on the scope and structure of the SA Report. The scope has been determined through a review of planning and other relevant documentation, baseline information and key sustainability issues applicable to Tunbridge Wells Borough. This Scoping Report has been divided into two Parts to aid clarity. Part One addresses the SA of the LDF in its entirety. Part Two deals specifically with the SA of some of the earlier Local Development Documents (LDDs) contained within the LDF.

The Report is structured as follows:

PART ONE: DEVELOPING THE SA FRAMEWORK FOR THE LDF

Section 1 summarises the Sustainability Appraisal context and provides an introduction to the report;

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Section 2 summarises the Local Development Framework context and outlines the DPDs and SPDs within the Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF;

Section 3 provides an overview of the SA assessment process, explaining how this Scoping Report forms part of the assessment. It details the timescales of the SA process with specific regard to the preparation of the Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF;

Section 4 identifies links to other relevant plans, programmes and policies and their implications for the LDF and SA;

Section 5 provides an overview of baseline information, including current trends, relevant to the Borough and surrounding area. Where baseline information was not available the outstanding information is highlighted;

Section 6 outlines the key sustainability issues in the Borough that have been identified based upon the review of planning documentation and baseline information;

Section 7 sets out the proposed framework for the SA which sets out the sustainability objectives and indicators;

PART TWO: SPECIFIC INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS

Section 8 addresses the Core Strategy DPD. It provides an overview of the planning background and context, identifies the key sustainability issues, the objectives of the DPD and outlines the options for the document. It concludes with the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 9 Conservation Area Appraisal SPDs. It outlines the planning background and context relevant to the SPD, highlights the key sustainability issues, the objectives of and options for the document and the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 10 addresses the Benenden Primary School Allocation DPD. It provides an overview of the planning background and context, identifies the key sustainability issues, the objectives of the DPD and outlines the options for the document. It concludes with the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 11 addresses the Recreation and Open Space SPD. It outlines the planning background and context relevant to the SPD, highlights the key sustainability issues, the objectives of and options for the document and the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 12 addresses the Alterations and Extensions SPD. It provides an overview of the planning background and context, identifies the key sustainability issues, the objectives of the SPD, outlines the options for the document, and the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 13 addresses the Royal Victoria Place Development Brief SPD. It outlines the planning background and context relevant to the SPD, highlights the key sustainability issues, the objectives of and options for the document and the considerations for the SA Framework;

Section 14 addresses the Affordable/ Key Worker Housing SPD. It outlines the planning background and context relevant to the SPD, highlights the key sustainability issues, the objectives of and options for the document and the considerations for the SA Framework; and

Section 15 outlines the proposed structure of the SA Report.

Appendices are included as a separate document and will be sent to consultees.

2. OUTLINE OF THE NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN SYSTEM

2.1 WHAT IS THE LDF?

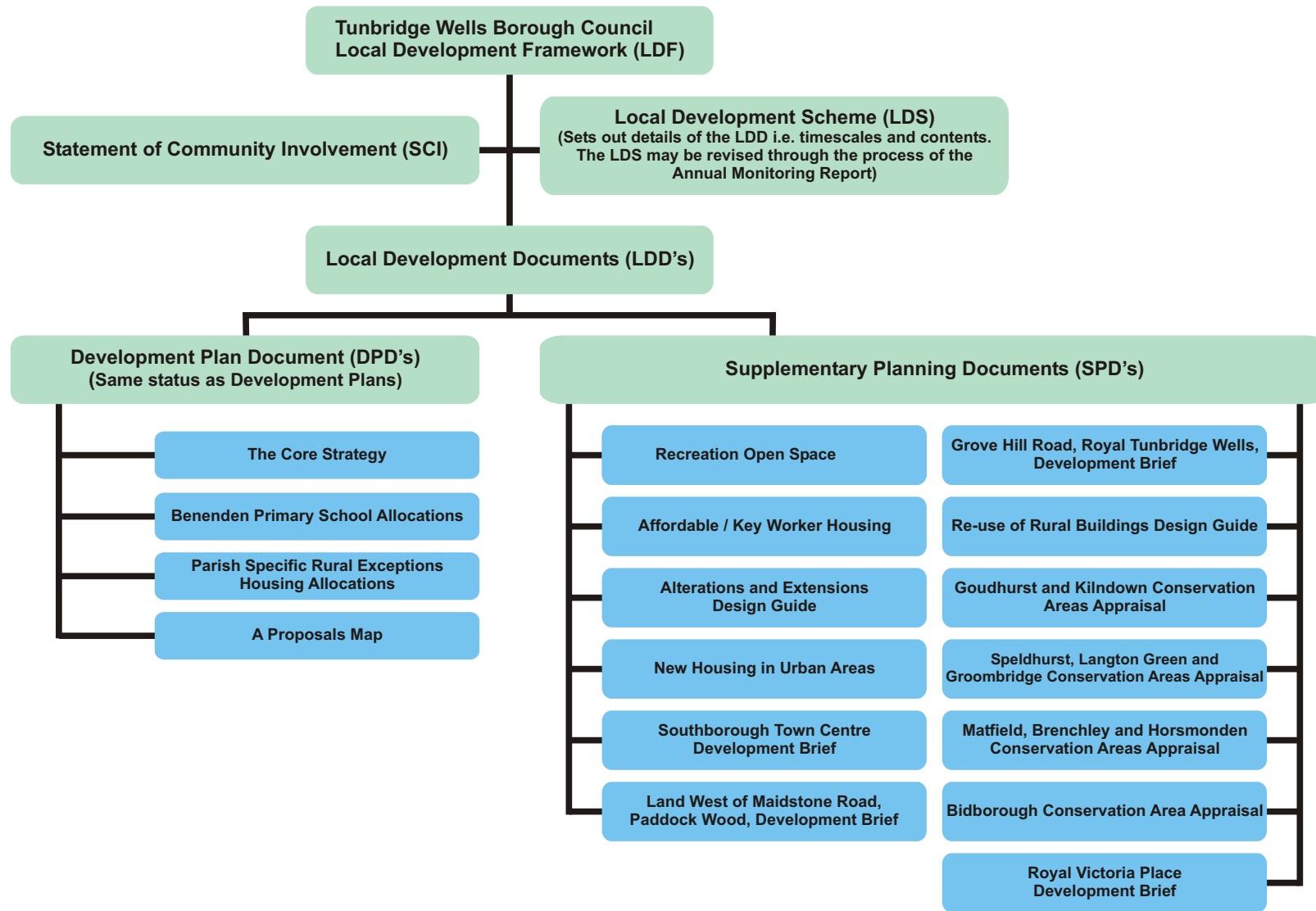
Under the new planning system, the development plan will consist of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) prepared by the regional planning body; and Development Plan Documents (DPD) prepared by Borough Councils such as Tunbridge Wells.

Regional Spatial Strategies are now being prepared to replace Regional Planning Guidance (RPG). RPG takes the development policies and principles outlined in National Planning Guidance and translates these on a regional level. The relevant RPG for Tunbridge Wells Borough is currently Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9) March 2001.

However, RPG 9 is being replaced by the new RSS called 'The South East Plan'. The South East Plan Consultation Draft was published in January 2005. The first stage of public consultation closed on 15 April 2005. Public consultation and further work on the Plan will take place from Summer 2005 until the end of the year. The final full draft of the South East Plan is to be submitted for Government approval in Spring 2006.

Informed by RPG 9 and the draft South East Plan, the Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF further refines policies and principles, to guide development on a Borough level.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) has produced a Local Development Scheme (LDS), available at http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/MASmedia_SB/viewSite?requestType=viewPage&siteId=232&pageId=4524, which sets out the Council's intended approach and content for the new LDF for the Borough. The Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF, as illustrated in Figure 1, overleaf, will consist of the following DPDs and SPDs prior to 2007.



SA of Tunbridge Wells LDF

Figure 1. Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF Structure - LDD's for preparation to 2007/2008

3. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 THE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO APPRAISAL - STANDARD METHODOLOGY

The core guidance document describing the methodology for undertaking SAs and integrating the requirements of SEA into SA is the ODPM draft guidance ‘Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks Consultation Paper’ published in September 2004. The final version of the guidance is expected to be published in September 2005. This provides detail on the process of implementing SA and has recently finished its consultation period. Figure 2, below, outlines the SA methodology and illustrates how SA fits into the DPD plan preparation process.

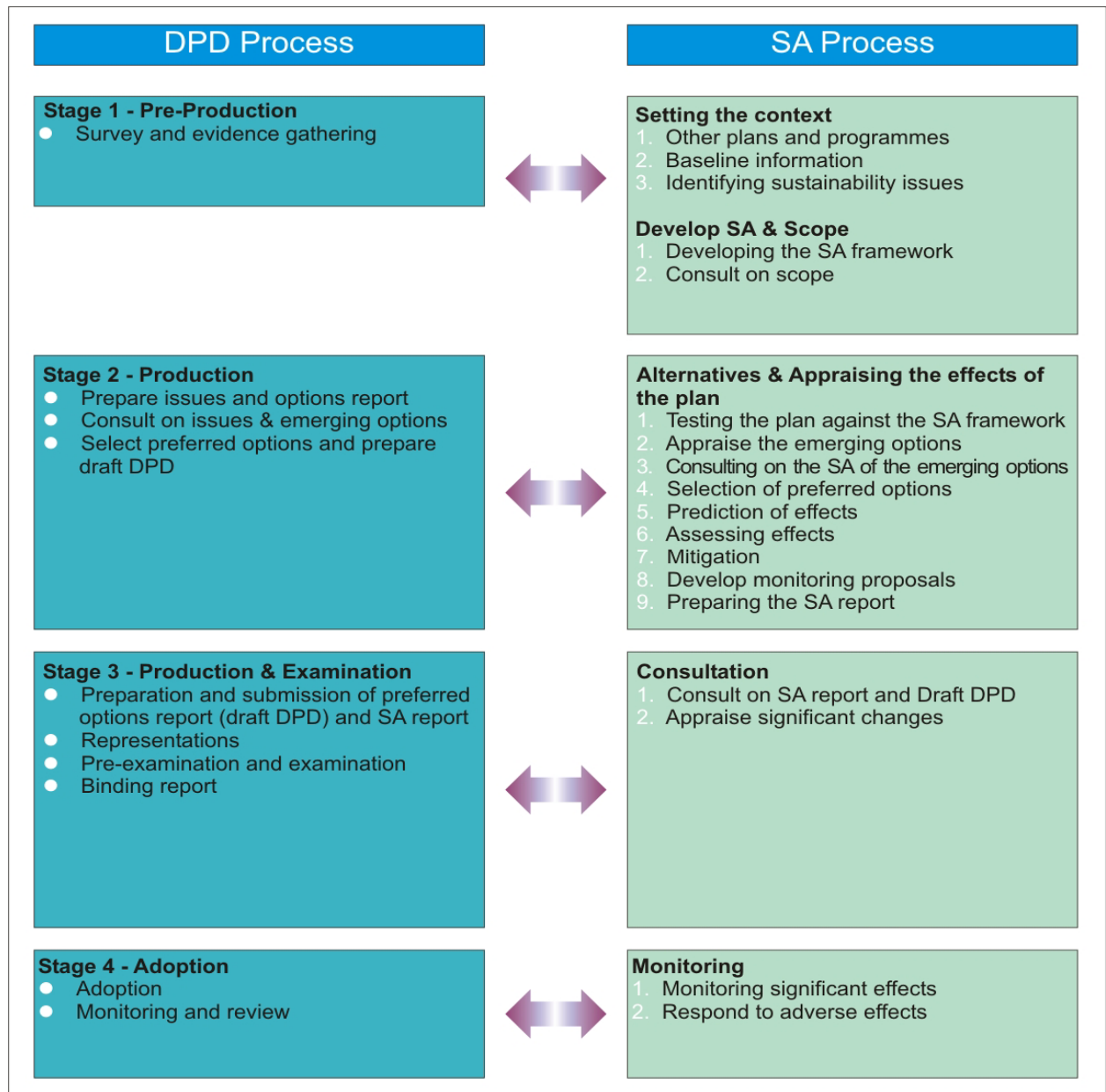


Figure 2: The DPD Preparation Process in Relation to the SA Process

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Figure 3, below, outlines the SA methodology and illustrates how SA fits into the SPD plan preparation process.

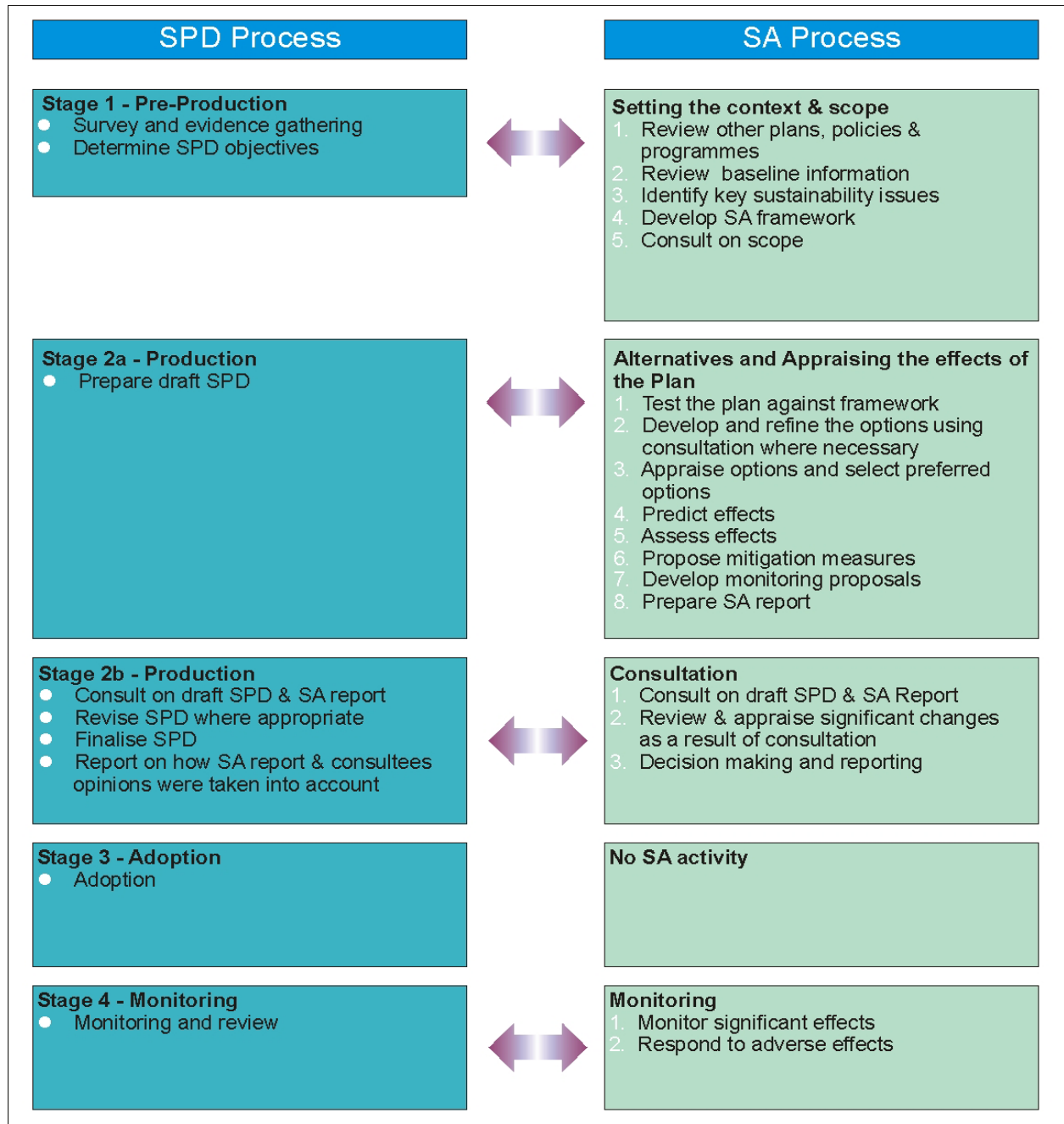


Figure 3: The SPD Preparation Process in Relation to the SA Process

An 'Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions' (ODPM, April 2005) was published in April, pending the revisions to the guidance based on consultation responses and workshops. This provides supplementary guidance and clarification to the September 2004 Paper and is to be used until it is formally revised. As such the guidance can be considered as in a transitory stage.

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3.2 SA SCOPING METHODOLOGY

The SA Scoping Study methodology which has been adopted for this study is presented below:

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

- Develop and agree appraisal methodology and programme;
- Ensure stakeholder involvement in the appraisal process has been included in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);
- Identify and review other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainable development objectives that will affect or influence the LDF;
- Collect relevant social, environmental and economic baseline information and produce a characterisation of the LDF area;
- Identify key sustainability issues for the SA to address;
- Develop the SA framework, consisting of the sustainability objectives and indicators; and
- *Produce a Scoping Report* for consultation with the four statutory consultees identified by the SEA Directive and additional consultees selected from PPS 12, for a statutory period of five weeks.

This approach is subject to review, with the final published ODPM guidance (Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks) expected in September 2005.

3.3 WHAT THE SEA DIRECTIVE REQUIRES

There is a legal obligation under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive. The requirements relevant to the SA Scoping Report are presented below:

Stage A - What the SEA Directive requires:

The Environmental Report should provide information on:

“the relationship [of the plan or programme] with other relevant plans and programmes” (Annex I(a))

“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, [European] Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme ... and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation” (Annex I (a), (e))

“relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme” and “the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be significantly affected” (Annex I (b), (c))

“any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC” (Annex I (c))

“Authorities which, by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes ... shall be consulted when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report” (Article 5.4).

Source: ODPM 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks – Consultation Paper [2004]

3.4 SPECIFIC APPROACH

This section outlines the approach taken by TWBC and their consultants, Waterman Environmental, to undertake the first part of the SA process; Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope. In accordance with current ODPM guidance ('Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions', ODPM April 2005) it is possible for Local Authorities to prepare a single SA Scoping Report when consulting on the scope of multiple LDD's. This SA Scoping Report has followed this guidance and it consists of two parts, as detailed below:

Part 1 details the context, reviews relevant plans, programmes and strategies, presents Borough-wide baseline information, details key sustainability issues and provides a draft SA Framework for consultation. These elements are seen as 'common' for all the LDDs to be appraised. LDF objectives have not been developed yet as evidence gathering is still ongoing in relation to the Core Strategy DPD.

Part 2 presents information relating to specific LDDs. For each LDD the following topic areas are addressed:

- Planning background and context;
- Key sustainability issues specific to the LDD;
- The objectives for each LDD;
- The broad options to be considered; and
- Considerations for the SA Framework.

Each time an LDD is assessed, it is recognised that there may be a requirement to change some of the sub-objectives, indicators and targets within the SA Framework, to enable a more focused and relevant assessment. Where there are no specific details available for the LDD at the time of scoping, this is clearly stated.

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3.5 NEXT STEPS

Once the SA Scoping Report has been agreed with the relevant consultees, the next stage will involve the assessment of each of the LDDs (refer to Figure 2 and Figure 3). This will happen independently for each LDD keeping to the LDS timetable subject to information and evidence gathering.

3.6 SA IN ADVANCE OF THE CORE STRATEGY

It is likely that some SPDs and DPDs will require assessment prior to the SA of the Core Strategy DPD. Where this is the case the following ODPM guidance is stated:

“Where a saved plan has not undergone SA, the SA of the SPD will first need to assess the significant effects of the saved policy or policies which the SPD is helping to implement. This will establish the baseline against which the effects of the SPD can be compared. However it is not necessary for a SA of a SPD to document the significant effects of the saved plan as a whole or of alternatives to the saved policy or policies.”

The SA of the Benenden Primary School Allocation DPD is only required to assess the sites that have been considered.

3.7 CONSULTATION

A copy of this SA Scoping Report has been sent out to the following organisations:

Statutory consultees

- Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- Environment Agency

Non-Statutory consultees

- South East England Regional Assembly
- South East England Development Agency
- Regional Health Authority
- South West Kent and Maidstone Weald Primary Care Trusts
- Kent County Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Parish and Town Councils within Tunbridge Wells Borough
- Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (Ashford, Maidstone, Rother, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, and Wealden)
- Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

The consultees selected above are in accordance with current Government guidance, but have been expanded to include for example Parish and Town Councils. All consultation methods will be fully compliant with the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which may be accessed through TWBC or on their website:

http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/MASmedia_SB/viewSite?requestType=viewPage&site%20ID=232&pageId=4553

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Consultees are invited to comment on all aspects of the SA Scoping Report, however information relating to the following key issues would be particularly useful:

- Identification of any reasonable “alternative policy options” relevant to individual LDDs. This would apply if the consultee considers that there may be more sustainable or simply different policy options which should be included for assessment (Part Two: Specific Information Relating to Individual LDDs);
- Any additional plans, programmes, strategies or initiatives (existing or under preparation) that are relevant to the LDF (Section 4);
- Further baseline information and sources (Section 5);
- Additional sustainability issues (Section 6); and
- Additional objectives/ sub-objectives or indicators (Section 7).

The consultation period will last five weeks, and run between October 3rd 2005 and November 7th 2005.

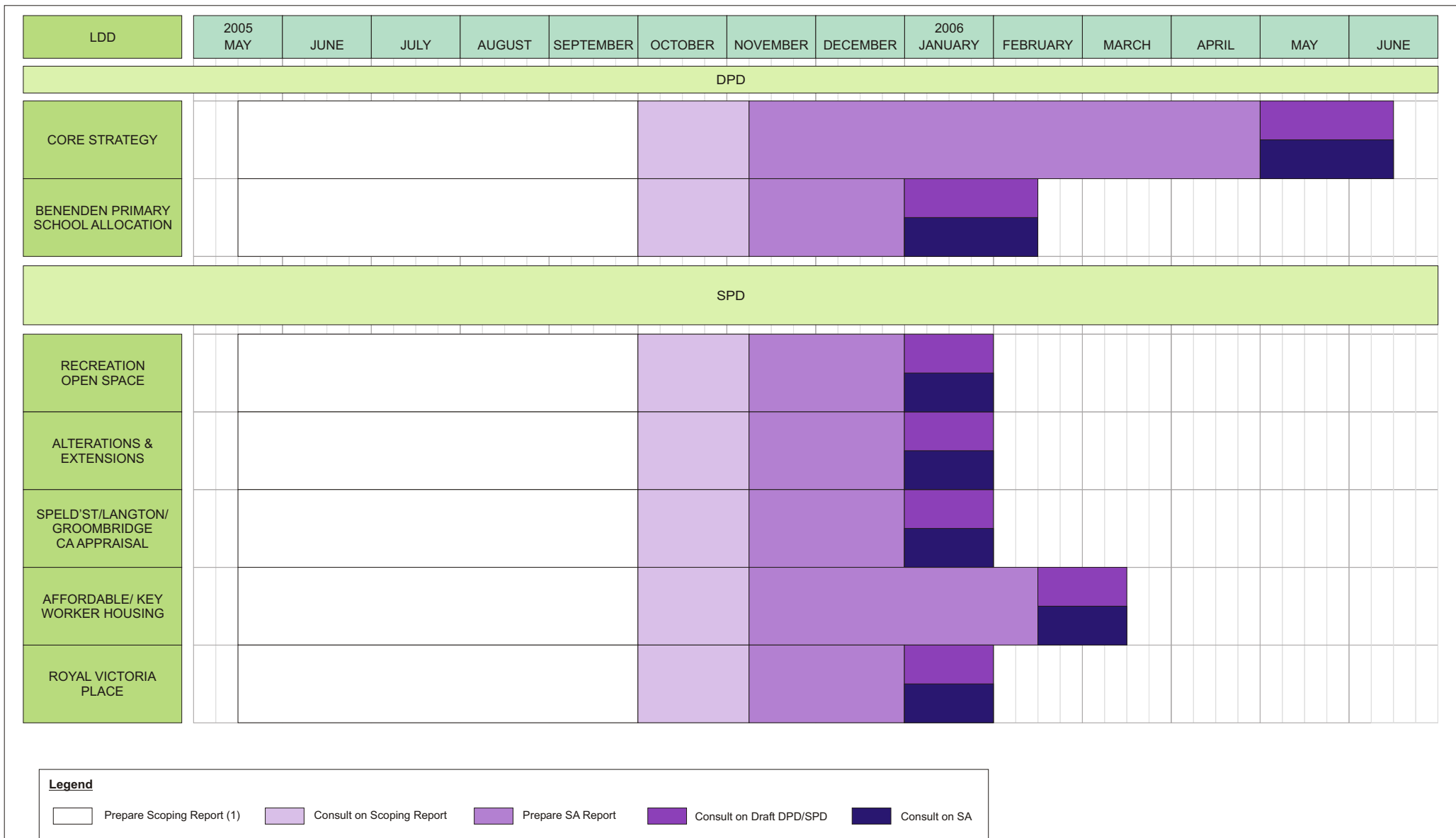
Written responses should be addressed to:

Strategy and Development Services
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Town Hall
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN1 1RS

Alternatively, consultation responses may be e-mailed to: john.spurling@tunbridgewells.gov.uk and should be clearly marked 'Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report'.

3.8 PLAN PREPARATION AND SA TIMETABLE

Figure 4, overleaf, shows the timetable of the SA process and how it relates to that of the LDF preparation. The timetable is based on the Tunbridge Wells Borough LDS, April 2005.



SA of Tunbridge Wells LDF
Figure 4. SA Timetable

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4. RELEVANT PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES

4.1 PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES REVIEW SUMMARY

The LDF may be influenced, in various ways, by other plans and programmes, and by external sustainability objectives, such as those laid down in policies or legislation. International, National, Regional and Local policies, plans, programmes and strategy documents have been reviewed as part of this SA Scoping Study to determine the objectives and targets relevant to the Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF, and to identify synergies and opportunities as well as conflicts and challenges. The full list of documents studied and the review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies are presented in Appendix A. Key themes are likely to relate to numerous relevant plans, programmes and strategies.

Following the review, the key issues for the preparation of the LDF and the SA have been summarised in Table 1, below:

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Table 1: Key issues for the LDF preparation and the SA

Topic	Key issues to be considered in the LDF preparation	Key issues for the SA Framework
General	Consider objectives and targets from the RSS, Integrated Regional Framework and the Regional SA when developing the LDF.	Utilise the targets and indicators in the SA where appropriate.
Economy	<p>Enhance the local economy (consistently maintain unemployment below national and county rates until 2011).</p> <p>Promote tourism to increase prosperity and employment.</p> <p>Promote small businesses in rural locations.</p> <p>Promote vitality and viability of town and village centres.</p> <p>Retain a portfolio of employment sites/ premises to provide a range of employment opportunities.</p>	Include objectives, indicators and targets to establish and monitor economic performance.
Social	<p>The LDF should make provision for an appropriate supply of housing.</p> <p>The LDF should seek to maximise housing density where appropriate.</p> <p>Maximise new dwellings to be developed on previously-developed land.</p> <p>Provide housing which meets the needs of the local population.</p> <p>Prioritise affordable / Key Worker housing.</p> <p>Ensure adequate provision of affordable housing in all new developments.</p> <p>Advocate the use of the SEEDA / BRE sustainability checklist for new housing.</p> <p>Enhance access to healthy lifestyle choices and to healthcare facilities.</p> <p>Create and sustain vibrant mixed communities, but also adapt to the needs of an ageing population.</p> <p>Provide sufficient local services to meet local needs. The LDF should provide policies which promote a wide range of high quality and enjoyable leisure opportunities.</p> <p>Increase the provision of recreation areas and open space and ensure policy proposals take account of the impact of developments on all open public space.</p> <p>Reduce crime and the fear of crime.</p>	<p>The SA should recognise and address social objectives identified in the Regional Housing Strategy.</p> <p>SA should recognise and include objectives to tackle social exclusion.</p>

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Topic	Key issues to be considered in the LDF preparation	Key issues for the SA Framework
<p>Environmental</p>	<p>Ensure all reasonable opportunities are taken forward to encourage development which is energy efficient.</p> <p>Prioritise policies that protect environmentally designated sites including SSSIs, Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest, the AONB, and Conservation Areas in relation to renewable energy developments and encourage development of renewable energy facilities.</p> <p>Promote and improve safe, convenient and sustainable transport options to work, school, health and leisure facilities. In doing so, the LDF would be contributing to the air quality, human health, climate change and social inclusion objectives of its SA.</p> <p>Ensure that the LDF is co-ordinated with rural transport service plans.</p> <p>LDF should avoid unnecessary development in the floodplains that might decrease storage/increase runoff, and compromise human safety.</p> <p>The LDF should consider whether proposed developments can be accommodated without causing harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests.</p> <p>Protect and enhance key open spaces and designated sites. Increase opportunities for education regarding key open spaces and designated sites.</p> <p>Protect and enhance the high quality landscape of the Borough.</p> <p>Expand existing woodland or create new woodland areas.</p> <p>The LDF could influence the historic environment. Heritage issues should be taken into account when considering proposals affecting buildings of special architectural or historic interest, or their settings.</p> <p>Policies should be developed that require remediation of contaminated sites.</p> <p>Maximise use of previously developed land, whilst minimising loss of greenfield sites.</p> <p>Certain land uses and development might hinder accessibility to open country and common land. The LDF should consider these issues which have relevance to SA objectives on human health, population, and severance.</p> <p>Improve air quality in locations where objectives have already been, or are likely to be exceeded in the future.</p>	<p>The SA should include objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Surface water run off from paved surfaces and built up areas can cumulatively pollute watercourses. SA should include objective on water quality/quantity.</p> <p>SA should consider the capacity of groundwater resources to support new development without harming connected ecological systems.</p> <p>SA should consider biodiversity impacts within its objectives. It should take a holistic view of ecosystems rather than a focusing on 'islands' of protected species.</p> <p>Objectives pertaining to the openness of landscape in greenbelt (no reduction of or development within the greenbelt, other than that as set out in the Local Plan) and the protection of biodiversity (habitat connectivity implications) will be included within the SA.</p> <p>Objectives regarding maximising use of brownfield, rather than greenfield sites should be included in the SA.</p> <p>New developments should take into account any emissions caused by new transport links (and new 'need' to travel), along with emissions from new industry. SA will include objectives for air quality.</p> <p>Archaeological sites can be potentially damaged through construction of new buildings. Archaeological and cultural objectives should be included within the SA.</p> <p>Protect (no loss of Scheduled Ancient Monuments by 2011) and enhance the historic environment. The SA should include objectives for Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Policies should be developed that assist in determining the location of potentially polluting development. Ensure that SA includes noise, air quality, and water quality objectives.</p> <p>The SA should include objectives relating to the protection and enhancement of key open spaces within built up areas.</p>

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Sources from which key issues have been established, are included in Appendix A.

4.2 LIMITATIONS AND OUTSTANDING DATA

Implementation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act has involved a wholesale review of the current planning system resulting in many updates to planning guidance, for example the gradual replacement of PPGs with PPSs. It will be important to keep track of changes in policy throughout the SA, keeping the process iterative and current.

5. BASELINE INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO THE BOROUGH

5.1 DOCUMENTS AND BODIES CONSULTED

An extensive search for baseline information has been undertaken, using a range of sources including web-based databases and publications, personal communications, published reports and stored information. A list of data sources is provided in Appendix B.

5.2 BASELINE INFORMATION

A summary of the baseline information currently available is presented in Table 2, below. The detailed baseline characterisation is included as Appendix C of this report. The information is representative of the current situation of Tunbridge Wells Borough.

The information included in Table 2 is not exhaustive. Research is an on-going process and will continue throughout the SA process. Where possible, more baseline information will be gathered to assist in the SA of the LDF. The source(s) of the baseline information are highlighted in bold text within Table 2.

It is important to note that baseline data is drawn from both current quantitative sources, where known, and also current qualitative data to provide a comprehensive baseline characterisation as detailed in ODPM guidance (September 2004).

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Table 2: Baseline Information Summary

Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
SOCIAL					
Demographics		Borough population (Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy Consultation Draft 2005):	Mid-2003 estimates based on adjusted 2001 Census/ 1991 Census/ 2001 Census, National Statistics and KCC data:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the Borough (<i>Census data 1991, 2001 and mid-2003 estimates</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 104,000 people live in the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-2003 population estimates based on the adjusted 2001 Census predicted 104,600 people residing in the Borough. • 99,538 people lived in the Borough in 1991. • The Borough population grew by 5.2% between 1982 and 2002. It is predicted to decline slightly between 2001 and 2021 (by 0.3%). • The population of the South East region grew by 10.5% between 1982 and 2002. Therefore, the population of the Borough has grown at approximately half the rate of growth experienced across the South East region as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the Borough has grown over the last 20 years but is predicted to decline slightly (0.3%) to 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF should ensure a sufficient mix of services to provide for the population. • The SA includes objectives for meeting local housing and service/ facility needs.

SA Scoping Report, Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF

Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic split of males and females (<i>Census data 1991, 2001 and mid-2003 estimates</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48.3% male / 51.7% female in Borough (2003). More females than males in the following age categories: up to 15 years; 16-24 years; 35-44 years; 45-59 years; and 65 and over. More males than females in the 25-34 years age category. Equal number of females and males aged between 60 and 64 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47.8% male / 52.8 % female in Borough (1991). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sustainability issue identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None – however demographics should continue being monitored.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic profile (<i>Census data 1991, 2001 and mid-2003 estimates</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age split in Borough (2003): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 15 years – 22,000 16 – 64 years – 65,600 65 years and over – 17,000 There are below average levels of young adults living in the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 1991 and 2003, the number of under 16 year olds grew by 1,900. The number of 16-64 year olds grew by 1,300. The number of people aged 65 and over decreased slightly. Overall, the population of the Borough grew by 3,100 over this period. Population projections to 2021 forecast a decline of 11.8% for under 16 year olds; a decline of 6.5% for 16-24 year olds; and a 20.5% decline in the number of 25-44 year olds. The number of 45-64 year olds is predicted to increase in this period by 16.1%; the number of 65-84 year olds is predicted to increase by 30.1% and people aged 85 and over are predicted to increase by 16.4%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of people aged 0-44 years is set to decline between 2001 and 2021. The number of people aged 45 and over is predicted to increase in this period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF will need to respond to changing demographics.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of males and females in retirement data (<i>Census data 1991, 2001 and mid-2003 estimates</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More females (10,000) living beyond retirement age than males (7,000) in Borough (2003) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1991, there were 13,193 females of retirement age and over; and 6,285 males of retirement age and over in the Borough. Between 1991 and 2003, the total number of people of retirement age and over rose from 17,000 to 19,478. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an increasing number of people of retirement age and over in the Borough. The number of females is higher and increasing when compared to males. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF will need to respond to the needs of an ageing population.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnic make up of the Borough (Census data 1991, 2001 and mid-2003 estimates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2001, with regard to ethnicity, 97.6% of the Borough's residents were White; 1% were of mixed origin; 0.7% were Asian; 0.2% were Black; 0.4% were Chinese and 0.3% were classed as belonging to another ethnic group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1991, 98.7% of the Borough's residents were White. No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sustainability issues identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None – however demographics should continue being monitored.
Deprivation		<p>Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy Consultation Draft 2005/ National Statistics:</p>	<p>National Statistics:</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people claiming income support (Audit Commission Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators and Census data 2001) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In February 2005, there were 2,400 people claiming Income Support. 2% of Income Support claimants were aged under 20 in 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1997, there were 5000 people claiming Income Support, in 1998 there were 5200; in 2000 there were 4600; in 2003 there were 4645 The number of 18 to 24 year olds claiming work-related benefits reduced by 40% between 1999 and 2004. The number of people who had been claiming work-related benefits for over 12 months fell by 11% between 1999 and 2004. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favourable situation – the number of people claiming income support has fallen since 1997. Favourable situation - Number of 18-24 year olds claiming benefits has fallen. Favourable situation - Number of people claiming benefits for over 12 months has fallen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF should continue to promote wide ranging and adequate employment opportunities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranking of deprivation and employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Borough was ranked 233 least deprived out of 354 local authorities on the Income scale in the Indices of Deprivation 2004. The Borough was ranked 268 least deprived on the employment scale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Borough ranking cannot be compared to the national scale as the methodology and data used in both the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2000 and the Indices of Deprivation 2004 studies were different. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Borough performs very well in terms of deprivation in the County Context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF should monitor performance and provide positive opportunities for the most deprived areas within the Borough.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Index of Local Deprivation (<i>Quality of Life Counts, DETR</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pockets of deprivation do exist and the ward of Sherwood was ranked just outside the top 25% most deprived wards in the Country in 2004. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ward of Sherwood and its performance in terms of deprivation cannot be compared to the figures supplied in the Indices of Deprivation 2000 as the ward boundaries have changed and Super Output Areas are demarked by different geographical boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ward of Sherwood has been identified as one of the most deprived parts of the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF should guide development within Sherwood to encourage vibrant communities and mixed use development, easy access to services and improved employment opportunities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indices of Multiple Deprivation (<i>ODPM, 2004</i>) Indices of Deprivation, (<i>ODPM, 2000</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, with regard to average score on the indices of deprivation in the Kent County Council area, the Borough was ranked 10th out of 12 local authorities. (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2000 (Index of Deprivation, 2000), Tunbridge Wells Borough was ranked 10th out of 12 local authorities. Therefore, there is no change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Education and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications at degree level or above (<i>National Statistics/ Census data 2001</i>) 	<p>National Statistics/ Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy Consultation Draft 2005:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2001, 24.3% of the population of the Borough had qualifications at degree level or higher. 	<p>National Statistics/ Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy Consultation Draft 2005:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national average for degree-level qualifications or higher for the same year was 19.8%. Past performance of the Borough cannot be established as this question was not asked in the 1991 Census. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favourable situation - The educational level of the Borough's residents is above average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should include policies to improve accessibility to a wide range of educational facilities

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people in the Borough with no qualifications (<i>National Statistics/ Census data 2001</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high proportion of residents have very high skill levels. This masks those with low skill levels. In 2005, 38% of the Borough's residents had no or low qualifications. In 2001, 22% of people in Tunbridge Wells Borough had no qualifications. This was lower than the 2001 national average of 29.1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001 and 2003 data are different and cannot be compared. A trend cannot be established between 1991 and 2001 as this question was not asked in the 1991 Census. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to identify situation. Due to lack of comparative data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown
<p>Crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of violence against the person, robbery offences, burglary and sexual offences (<i>Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS)/ National Statistics</i>) 	<p>National Statistics/ Neighbourhood Statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the Borough, from 2003 to 2004: 939 "Offences for Violence Against the Person"; 42 "Robbery Offences"; 329 "Burglary in a Dwelling Offences"; and 36 "Sexual Offences" recorded by the Police. 	<p>National Statistics/ Neighbourhood Statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of "Violence Against the Person" Offences has risen since 2000. Within the Borough, the number of "Violence Against the Person" Offences has more than doubled between 2001/02 and 2002/03. There was a slight reduction in the number of offences in 2003/04. However, the figure still doubled that of 2001/02. Violence against the person offences rose by approximately one third during the same period. <p>No comparative data for Kent can be identified at present.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfavourable situation – increasing violence (rate of increase greater than national average). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF policies should promote opportunities to design out crime. SA to include objectives to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of households (<i>Census data 2001</i>). 	<p>2001 Census:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42,700 households in the Borough (2001). 	<p>Housing Needs Survey 2000/ Kent County Council 2005/ 1991 Census:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 39,159 households in the Borough in 1991. Therefore the total number of households has risen. There were 42,700 households in the Borough in 2001. The number of households is predicted to continue to rise to 44,200 by 2006 and to 45,600 by 2011. The number of single person households has increased since 1991. The number of married couple households has fallen since 1991. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total number of households is rising. Increase in (single person) households and in the number of houses being built. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development should ensure new development reflects appropriate type of housing. The LDF should try to accommodate demand for housing where possible to maximise social and economic benefits. The LDF will need policies to maximise the density of housing whilst avoiding adverse environmental effect.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of housing completion figures (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 247 housing completions in 2001. There were 406 housing completions in 1991. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of housing completions has fluctuated between 1991 and 2001 with no observable trend, as housing completions are subject to market forces. However, there were less housing completions in 2001 (247) than in 1991 (406). 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average house prices (<i>House Price Index ODPM, 2005; Housing Needs Assessment, 2005</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average house price in the Borough in 2002 was £206,199. In 2004, it was £242,990 and in 2005, it is £276,830 (<i>Halifax House Price Index 2005</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average house price in the UK in June 2005 was £184,152 (<i>House Price Index – ODPM 2005</i>). The average house price in the South East in 2005 was £205,000 (<i>Halifax House Price Index 2005</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average house price in the Borough is high, relative to average wages. It is considerably higher than the national figure and the figure for the South East. This is a considerable constraint for first-time buyers and low income earners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF policies should provide adequate numbers of affordable and key-worker housing in new developments. SA to include objective relating to provision of affordable houses.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing tenure data (Census 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing tenure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -30.7% owned outright; -40.4% owned with a mortgage/ loan; -0.61% rented from the Council; -15.21% rented from housing association or a registered social landlord; -9.58% rented from a private landlord or letting agency; and -3.06% were rented from another individual/ body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High percentage of home owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. However, housing tenure should continue to be monitored.
Health		<p>Mid-2003 Census estimates based on adjusted 2001 Census / 2001 Census:</p>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people unfit for work (Benefits Agency, Department for Work and Pensions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1998, there were 2,300 people claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disability Allowance. 2003: 2,570 people aged 16 to 65 years claimed Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disability Allowance because they had been unable to work for at least 28 consecutive weeks because of illness or disability. Of these people, 13% were under the age of 30. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a gradual but continuous rise in numbers of people claiming Incapacity Benefit/ Severe Disablement Allowance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The situation appears unfavourable, however the reason for this rise cannot be attributed to any specific cause. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No apparent implications for the LDF.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of residents with good health (Census data 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001: 72.9% of residents described their general health as being 'good'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This cannot be compared to previous data as this question was not asked in the 1991 Census. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend cannot be identified but statistics look favourable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain provision of open space and leisure and recreation facilities.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of residents with long-term illnesses (Census data 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001: 14.5% of residents living with long-term illness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1991: 9.36% of residents living with long-term illness. The number of residents living with long-term illness has increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to identify situation as the cause of ill health is unknown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown.
ECONOMIC					
Employment		Economic Strategy Consultation Draft 2005/ Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough 2004/ Housing Needs Survey 2000/ National Statistics/ 2001 Census:	Annual Business Inquiry 2003 & 2005/ Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough 2004/ 2001 Census:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of economically active people in the Borough (Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough 2004). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77% (73,840 people) of the Borough's population is economically active. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 52,500 economically active people in the Borough in 2003. 55% (29,000) of these were male and 45% (23,500) were female. In 2001, there were 49,396 economically active people in the Borough. There was a decline of 2.2% in the number of employees in the Borough between 1995 and 2000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a rise in economically active people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and improve a wide range of employment opportunities and initiatives.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers by sector (<i>Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough 2004</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The largest employment sectors are retail, hotels and restaurant, with 15,400 jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment in primary industries declined between 1995 and 2003. Agricultural employment in the Borough declined by a third between 1995 and 2002. • 2.2% decline in employees between 1995 and 2003 in the Manufacturing, Transport & Communications and Public Administration & Health sectors. • Growth was experienced in the Distribution, Hotels & Restaurants sector and the Banking, Finance & Insurance sector between 1995 and 2003. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment patterns are changing by industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF to identify appropriate locations for a range of employment opportunities across different sectors.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average income (<i>National Statistics</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average gross household income in the Borough is £24,589. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average household income in Kent is £23, 946. • The national average household income of £20,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average household income in the Borough is greater than the county and national averages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although high, the average household income in the Borough is a constraint for purchasing houses. The LDF should provide for affordable housing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage unemployment (<i>National Statistics and Census data 2001</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1991, unemployment in the Borough was 4.1%. In 2002, unemployment in the Borough was 1.4%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment rates in the Borough rose from 4.1% in 1991 to 6.5% in 1993 and have since fallen (to 1.4% in 2003). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable situation – unemployment is falling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
Economic Performance		Economic Consultation Draft 2005/ Strategy 2005/ Economic Impact of Tourism in Tunbridge Wells 2003:	Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough, 2004:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of businesses (<i>Economic Overview of Tunbridge Wells Borough 2004</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 5,726 business establishments in the Borough. The largest numbers of businesses are within the 'banking and business services' and the 'retail, hotels and restaurants' sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2004, there were approximately 5,400 businesses in the Borough. VAT registrations and deregistrations have fluctuated between 1996 and 2003, with no identifiable trend. Between 1994 and 2003, there was a 15% increase in the stock of local businesses. The stock of agricultural businesses in the Borough reduced by 14% in this period. Net addition of 480 business services organisations (finance, surveyors, solicitors and consultancies etc), 225 wholesale and retail outlets and 60 hotels / restaurants to the business stock between 1994 and 2003. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favourable situation – number of businesses in the Borough is increasing. Loss of agricultural businesses could lead to a loss of low-skilled, local jobs, increasing pressure on travel and skills matching opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF to maintain opportunities by ensuring an appropriate portfolio of business sites. LDF to maintain and provide opportunities for local services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tourist industry generates significant investment. It contributed £153.9m to the Borough's economy in 2003. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2000, tourist expenditure for all visitors to the Borough was £124.8m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favourable situation – tourist expenditure in the Borough has increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA should contain an objective to protect tourist assets, whether they are historic, environmental, leisure or cultural.
ENVIRONMENTAL					
Cultural Heritage		Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of SAMs (<i>English Heritage/ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF + SA should protect and where possible, enhance this finite resource.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of Grade I + Grade II Listed Buildings (<i>English Heritage/ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 3,000 Listed Buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF and SA should protect and enhance cultural assets and their settings.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of Conservation Areas (<i>English Heritage/ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 Conservation Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF and SA should protect and enhance cultural assets and their settings.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of Historic parks and gardens (<i>English Heritage/ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 sites on English Heritage's 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF + SA should protect and enhance these designated sites and their settings.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	Transport Strategy 2003/ Census 2001:	Transport Strategy 2003:		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A21 trunk road is the major north-south road corridor for traffic accessing Royal Tunbridge Wells. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A21 has become very congested between Tonbridge and Royal Tunbridge Wells at peak periods. • Road traffic in Royal Tunbridge Wells in particular has risen. • Occupancy rates for off-street car-parks have reached approximately 90% of capacity in Royal Tunbridge Wells. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfavourable situation due to road traffic congestion at peak periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF should promote alternative modes of transport to the private car. • LDF should protect strategic transportation routes. • SA objectives developed to reduce road congestion levels by improving travel choice.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of households without a car (<i>Census data 2001</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2001, 18.7% of households in the Borough did not have a car. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national figure in 2001 for households without a car was 26.8%. The Borough figure is below the national figure. In 1991, 23.4% of households in the Borough did not have a car The number of households in the Borough without a car has decreased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car ownership in the Borough has increased since 1991 Residents in the Borough have a higher level of car ownership than the National average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should improve public transport facilities and cycling and walking facilities to encourage travel choice.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are good rail services from Royal Tunbridge Wells to Tonbridge and London. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities for cycling and public transport are poor and have resulted in the comparatively low usage of public transport services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfavourable situation – low level of public transport use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should improve public transport facilities and encourage travel choice.
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna		Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 70% of the Borough is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The High Weald AONB is a large environmental asset, located across much of the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should maintain, enhance and complement this area. SA will require objectives relating to countryside and biodiversity.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of SSSI (<i>English Nature</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are still 10 SSSIs, therefore no change/ trend. Area of designated land (SSSIs) has increased across the country, however, the percentage of sites in a favourable condition decreased from 59% in 2000 to 56% in 2002. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Government's Public Service Agreements to bring 95% of England's SSSIs into favourable or recovering condition by 2010. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA to protect, maintain and enhance SSSIs.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of designated sites (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest. 4 Local Nature Reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1996, there were 22 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a net reduction in both numbers and size of previously designated Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should seek to ensure no further loss and preserve and enhance existing designated sites. LDF should encourage further designations in the interests of nature conservation and biodiversity.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. and percentage of Ancient Woodland (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 25 known areas of Ancient Woodland in the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient woodland is irreplaceable and requires special protection and careful management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF and SA should monitor this area to seek to avoid any loss.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of tree Preservation Orders (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 410 Tree Preservation Orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF should contain a policy to avoid the loss of protected trees.
Recreation and Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of open space and recreational facilities (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) 	Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 44.9 hectares of gross play space within the Borough. There are 115 hectares of youth and adult space Deficiencies in open space and recreational facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 115 ha (1.1 ha per 1,000 pop) of youth and adult space within the Borough falls below National Playing Field Association Standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deficiencies of recreation open space within the Borough, when compared to National Playing Field Association standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF to promote quality, quantity and accessibility to open space and recreational facilities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topography and land ownership limit further provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.

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Subject	Indicator	Baseline Data (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Comparators, Targets and Trends	Issue Identified	Implications for LDF/ SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southborough has the lowest provision of open space at 0.6 hectares per 1000 of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure in 1996 plan for Southborough was 0.6 hectares per 1000 of the population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provision remains the same since 1996. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF should seek to improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, particularly in the worst affected areas across the Borough
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 residential areas within Royal Tunbridge Wells do not have reasonable access to equipped area of play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor access to equipped area of play and inadequate provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above.
Land and Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<p>Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:</p>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Land is predominantly arable and of Agricultural Land Classification Grade 3 quality. • Some areas of Grades 2 and 3a quality agricultural land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If agricultural land is required for potential development, lower quality agricultural land should be used.

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<p>Ground contamination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contaminated Land Register (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) BV216a - Number of 'sites of potential concern' [within the local authority area], with respect to land contamination (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>) <p>BV216b - Number of sites for which sufficient detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all 'sites of potential concern' (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>)</p>	<p>Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hectares of contaminated land (currently under research). Contamination may be present on sites such as redundant gas works, petrol stations, railway land and landfill sites. 1100 individual sites identified as requiring further investigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None at present. The BVPIs are new for this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sites have been formally declared as contaminated land under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The remediation of sites is being achieved via the development control process. There are a large number of sites that require further investigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDF to include policies that encourage the reuse and remediation of brown field sites.
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<p>Air Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of an Action Plan (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>). • Air quality monitoring and modelling data (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</i>). 	<p>Air Quality Archive/ Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Air Quality Management Area is to be designated in October 2005 covering the A26 through Southborough and in to Tunbridge Wells • Link to consultation executive summary http://212.24.85.91/AQ/executive%20summary.pdf • Link to air quality review and assessment home page http://212.24.85.90/MASmedia_SB/viewSite?requestType=viewPage&siteId=232&pageId=4217 • 2 further AQMA proposed by the Borough Council. 	<p>Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrogen Dioxide levels have increased and there is now the potential for the national annual mean air quality objective to be exceeded along the A26. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfavourable situation – potential for declining air quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA to include objective relating to air quality.
<p>Water Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of public water drawn from groundwater (<i>Environment Agency</i>) 	<p>Environment Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of Kent's public water supply is drawn each year from groundwater. 	<p>Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water abstraction has increased and has given rise to a progressive depletion in base flows and water tables in the County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfavourable situation – depletion of County's water resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF to consider how it can input into increasing efficiency of water usage and waste water.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River quality (<i>Environment Agency Southern Regional Office</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 94% of the Borough's watercourses can be regarded as good or fair quality. Between 2000 and 2002, Barden Mill Stream Tributary was classed as a grade B (good quality) water course. Between 2000 and 2002, Somerhill Stream was classed in chemical terms as a grade B (good quality) water course, however in biological terms it was assessed as being of grade F (very poor) quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to identify situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA objective to maintain and improve the water quality of the Borough's rivers. LDF should avoid locating heavily polluting industry near watercourses.
Flooding		Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Agency Southern Region Flood Risk Maps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal areas at high risk of flooding - Paddock Wood, Five Oak Green and Lamberhurst. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to identify situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SA Framework includes an objective on climate change, greenhouse gases and risk from flooding.
Waste		Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:	Local Plan Review Second Deposit Copy 2002:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of landfill sites (<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council/ Environment Agency</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no landfill sites, within the Borough, with waste being transported to Essex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No previous data available therefore not able to identify trend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transport of waste to Essex will result in indirect environmental impacts and is not sustainable over the long term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LDF should ensure include policies to maximise reduction, re-use and recycling, where possible. The SA Framework will need to include an objective relating to waste.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82a i% of household waste recycled <i>(Tunbridge Wells Borough Council).</i> • 82b i% % of household waste composted waste recycled <i>(Tunbridge Wells Borough Council).</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21% of household waste in the Borough was recycled / composted in 2002/03. The figure for 2003/04 was 24.5% and in 2004/05 it was 32.1%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of household waste recycled or composted within the Borough is rising. • This exceeds the statutory target set by Central Government of 20% recycled or composted household waste by 2003/ 04 and 30% by end of 2005/06. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable situation – amount of recycling/ composting is in the upper quartile but pressure to increase rates further and provide facilities for recycling wider range of materials, including plastics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDF policy should seek to ensure that new developments incorporate Neighbourhood recycling facilities and reflect the developing Regional and County waste strategies with regard to processing facilities for recycled materials.
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5.3 LIMITATIONS AND OUTSTANDING DATA

The baseline data collected at this stage is intended to provide an overview of the sustainability issues faced by Tunbridge Wells Borough. This data will be updated, where appropriate, as the production of LDDs including the Core Strategy, continues. Trends were not available in all cases due to lack of available data. In many cases studies are not repeated, and consequently provide only 'snapshot' information. In some cases, archiving, data storage and management have meant that the retrieval of data relevant to the baseline has not been possible at this stage. During the assessment process, if the baseline data needs to be expanded, further research and / or studies will be undertaken as relevant.

The requirement to monitor the sustainability of the LDF in the long-term (Section 3.1 – Standard Methodology) will provide further relevant and detailed baseline information suitable for use in subsequent SAs.

6. KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH

Key sustainability issues for the Borough have been identified following a review of the planning documentation and baseline information and are described below.

6.1 ECONOMIC

The economy of Tunbridge Wells Borough has been classed by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) as advanced, high cost, high income. It is supported by a strong workforce. The numbers of retired and permanently sick or disabled people in the Borough are below national averages. Employment rates are high and make a contribution to the labour market in London, also attracting in-migration. The average gross household income in Tunbridge Wells Borough in 2000 was £24,589 per year compared with a national household income, which averaged £20,500 in the same year. However the local average conceals wide differences: over 60% earn less than the average figure which is inflated by the smaller proportion of very high salary earners, and over 10% of households have no earned income at all. Future development needs to provide wide-ranging and adequate employment opportunities to meet the Borough's needs, and ensure that net out-migration does not increase as a result of a lack of suitable job opportunities.

A net loss of economic floor space ('employment land') occurred in the Borough between 1998 and 2003. The Borough's narrowing economic base is also of note, with an increasing amount of employment being service sector based. Loss of floor space; general economic change in the Borough, including the reduced profitability of agriculture and its subsequent decline; the major restructuring of the financial services sector, resulting in the loss of major employers in Royal Tunbridge Wells; and the conversion of employment land/ premises into housing, due to the greater investment return; have all been identified as contributors to the narrowing economic base of the Borough.

Growth has occurred in relatively low-paid service industry jobs, including in retail and restaurants, which has required people to travel into the Borough as residents of the Borough are generally highly skilled. There is the potential for the Borough to become a 'dormitory', with a limited range of local employment and where people live in the Borough but work elsewhere.

The tourist industry is significant in terms of the investment and employment that it generates. The area forms part of the 'Garden of England' and much of the countryside falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Future development needs to facilitate the provision of a wide range of leisure opportunities in accessible locations throughout the Borough to encourage the full use of leisure time and contribute to raising the standard of health of the Borough's residents. Both leisure tourism and business tourism are essential elements of the commercial infrastructure of the Borough, and any future development must be sustainable.

6.2 SOCIAL

Tunbridge Wells is a Borough of high housing demand, limited housing supply and high costs. This situation is likely to get worse if the regional economy in the South East continues to overheat. There is a limited supply of land, particularly in view of the fact that a high percentage is under some category of protective planning designation. The combination of higher salaries (particularly for those working in London) and limited land availability results in increased house prices, which are beyond the affordability, in terms of renting or purchase, for many people. Future development needs to concentrate on providing affordable housing and smaller dwellings.

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Within the Borough, Royal Tunbridge Wells shows the most significant deficiencies in open space and recreational facilities. 19 residential areas within Royal Tunbridge Wells do not have reasonable access to equipped area of play. This shortage of open space needs to be addressed if sustainable communities are to be achieved. Existing open space should be retained wherever possible despite the limited supply of land of the Borough.

The Borough's positive key social issues include low levels of crime and deprivation, high levels of educational achievement, and good level of health experienced by residents. These trends should be maintained and continued.

6.3 ENVIRONMENTAL

The Borough has a diverse and distinctive landscape. More than 70% of the Borough is covered by the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The skylines in the area are significant in establishing the character of the Borough and the relationship of buildings, roof lines, trees and related spaces play a key role in establishing the character of the built up area. A large proportion of the Borough remains as rural, undeveloped land, which constitutes a vast resource for agriculture, leisure, nature conservation and other countryside activities. Around 30% of this land is incorporated in the Green Belt. Future development should seek to protect the landscape and rural character of the Borough, whilst ensuring that the rural population is not marginalised in terms of employment and service provision.

Whilst limited in quantity, the archaeological remains in the Borough make an important contribution to the understanding of the area's history. Tunbridge Wells Borough has a rich architectural heritage. There are 25 Conservation Areas and more than 3,000 Listed Buildings in the Borough. As one of its most valuable assets, the direct and indirect impacts of development on cultural heritage within the Borough must be carefully considered. Similarly, opportunities to encourage and develop the educational, recreational or tourist potential of cultural assets through development should be encouraged.

With regard to biodiversity, there are currently 10 designated SSSIs within the Borough and 4 Local Nature Reserves. The Borough supports extensive areas of woodland, a large number of which are of ancient origin, together with numerous small woodlands, copses, hedgerows and individual trees. It is therefore important that future development looks after existing biodiversity and that every opportunity is taken for protection and enhancement.

About 80% of Kent's public water supply is drawn each year from groundwater. Whilst Kent is self-sufficient in water supply, increases in abstraction have given rise to a progressive depletion in base flows and water tables in the County. Over-abstraction threatens the sustainability of water supplies and can harm wetlands and surface water habitats. Development needs to take place within this context and should only be permitted in locations where an adequate water supply can be provided without harming groundwater resources. The Borough contains areas at high risk of flooding. This needs to be considered with regard to flood risk and the location of future development.

There are no landfill sites within the Borough and at present waste is transported to Essex. 21% of household waste in Tunbridge Wells Borough was recycled or composted in 2002/03. This figure rose to 24.5% in 2003/04. This exceeds the statutory target set for this Council by Central Government of 20% recycled or composted household waste by 2003/04. Future development must continue to support the minimisation of waste production.

An Air Quality Management Area is to be designated in October 2005 covering the A26 through Southborough and in to Tunbridge Wells. The more recent Detailed Assessment of air quality, undertaken in April 2004, has shown that there are some higher levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) in certain areas of the Borough. These raised levels are related to the high traffic levels and congestion along the A26 London Road in Southborough, Grosvenor Road and the A264 Mount Ephraim/A26 London Road junction.

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Future development should prevent any further increases in pollution levels in order to conserve the natural environment and the quality of life of residents. Where possible, it should seek to improve air quality in AQMAs.

The A21 forms the major north-south road corridor for traffic accessing Royal Tunbridge Wells and considerable congestion is experienced on the A21 between Tonbridge and Royal Tunbridge Wells at peak periods. There are reasonable rail services from Royal Tunbridge Wells to Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and London but in general there is a comparatively low provision and usage of public transport services and poor facilities for cycling and public transport. There is particular concern regarding the volume of traffic, forecast growth, peak hour congestion and delays, the impact of traffic on the local environment and limited parking opportunities in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. Occupancy rates for off-street car parks in Royal Tunbridge Wells have reached approximately 90% of capacity. Future development must aim to minimise the need to travel by private car by enhancing public transport provision and sustainable transport options'. Planning should reinforce reduced reliance on the private car through ensuring that housing, employment and public facilities/ services are located so as to encourage walking, cycling and public transport.

7. THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section presents the SA Framework, through which the LDF will be assessed. The SA Framework may be amended as a result of consultation and as the baseline information resource expands and the SA progresses.

In accordance with best practice, the objectives, sub-objectives and indicators are derived from the Integrated Regional Framework - A Better Quality of Life in the South East (SEERA, 2004) and the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report on the Consultation Draft of the South East Plan (ERM, 2005). There are some changes and these reflect the requirement to tailor regional SA objectives to the Borough level and in particular to address the key sustainability issues for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.

The economic, social and environmental SA objectives and indicators are presented in Table 3 below. The following notes are applicable:

- In some cases, the dates of the references supplied with indicators refer to the date of origin as opposed to the date the information was collected. For the majority of indicators, information is collected annually;
- Some themes have indicators that are potentially very accurate, such as unemployment figures. Other themes such as leisure and recreation may have considerably less quantitative indicators, due to their more subjective nature;
- When establishing monitoring programmes in the future, it may not be applicable to use all of the indicators listed, but rather selecting those which are of most relevance or accuracy; and
- Whilst the indicators provided will respond directly to the key objectives, they may not address all of the sub-objectives.

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Table 3: The Sustainability Appraisal Framework for Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF

Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
<p>1. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home</p> <p>1.1 Will it increase the amount of housing across the Borough to meet local needs?</p> <p>1.2 Will it increase the supply of affordable housing both in numbers and as a proportion of total housing stock?</p> <p>1.3 Will it reduce the percentage of unfit/non-decent homes in the Borough?</p> <p>1.4 Will it ensure the provision of housing to serve the needs of rural areas?</p> <p>1.5 Will it promote the adoption of sustainable design and construction practices in housing (e.g. energy/ water/ land/ materials efficiency, incorporation of biodiversity/natural assets etc)?</p> <p>1.6 Will it promote the development of mixed communities through a range of housing sizes, types, tenures and levels of affordability to reflect changes in population?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing (house price/ earnings affordability ratio) (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Housing completion figures (<i>TWBC</i>) • Number of unfit homes per 1,000 dwellings (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Availability of decent housing for all social groups including low-income households, lone parent households, ethnic minorities, disabled and young people (<i>Information should be collated from organisations listed on Tunbridge Wells Housing Register</i>) • EcoHomes ratings for all new residential development (<i>BRE and TWBC</i>)
<p>2. To improve the health and well-being of the population & reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>2.1 Will it promote healthy, active lifestyles through the protection and provision of facilities and locations of sporting/recreational activities (e.g. playing fields, sports facilities, cycleways, footpaths etc)?</p> <p>2.2 Will it promote informal recreation through access to the countryside?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a hospital (<i>Source unknown</i>) • Proportion of journeys on foot or by cycle (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Participation in sports and cultural activities (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Access to a GP (<i>DETR Indices of Deprivation, 2000</i>) • Access to the countryside (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>)
<p>3. To reduce poverty and social exclusion</p> <p>3.1 Will it promote or support employment opportunities across the Borough for the most deprived wards?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment rates by Ward (<i>KCC</i>) • Proportion of children under 16 who live in low-income households (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Percentage of population of working age who are claiming key benefits (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Deprivation indices by Ward (<i>KCC</i>)

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Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household income in rural areas (<i>Source unknown</i>)
<p>4. To raise educational achievement across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the lifetime skills needed to find and remain in work and support the long term competitiveness of the Borough</p> <p>4.1 Will it increase opportunities for education/ training for everyone?</p> <p>4.2 Will it increase opportunities to improve the level of basic skills and/ or information/ communication technology?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and quality of schools (<i>KCC</i>) Proportion of 19 year olds with Level 2 qualifications (5 GCSEs A*-C or NVQ equivalent) (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) Provision of further education (<i>KCC</i>) Percentage of population of working age (16 to 64/ 59) with qualifications to either NVQ Level 1/ 2 equivalent, NVQ Level 3 or 4 or a trade apprenticeship or with no formal qualifications (<i>DTI Business Competitiveness Indicators (Unitary/Local Authority/Learning and Skills Council areas/NUTS areas)</i>) Proportion of adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills (<i>Learning and Skills Council</i>)
<p>5. To reduce crime and the fear of crime</p> <p>5.1 Will it reduce crime or fear of crime through good urban design measures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of crime (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) Fear of crime (<i>Local Quality of Life Counts (DETR, July 2000)</i>) (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>)
<p>6. To improve accessibility to all services and facilities, including employment, education, health services, shopping, green space, culture, leisure, recreation (CLR) facilities and a sustainable tourism sector</p> <p>6.1 Will it offer opportunities for participation in CLR activities by tourists and local people?</p> <p>6.2 Will it provide support for CLR providers?</p> <p>6.3 Will it promote mixed-use development with good accessibility to local facilities and services (e.g. employment, education, health services, shopping, leisure, green spaces, culture etc), that reduce the need to travel?</p> <p>6.4 Will it ensure that facilities and services are accessible to all communities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number, quality and accessibility of leisure and recreation facilities (<i>TWBC</i>) Proximity of facilities to public transport nodes (<i>Kent County Council</i>) Numbers of tourists visiting the Borough (<i>TWBC</i>)

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Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
<p>7. To improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings, including re-use of materials from buildings, and encourage urban renaissance</p> <p>7.1 Will it ensure the provision of new development, including conversions on previously-developed land, as opposed to greenfield sites (in line with the sequential approach) and through conversion of existing buildings.</p> <p>7.2 Will it encourage the reuse of materials in construction?</p> <p>7.3 Will it require good design to create attractive, high quality environments where people will choose to live work and/or spend leisure time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of new housing development on previously developed land (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Housing density of new developments (<i>TWBC</i>) • Vacant land and properties and derelict land (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Number and amount of floorspace of rural buildings converted to employment per annum. (<i>Employment Land Survey KCC</i>)
<p>8. To reduce pollution (to land, air and soil) and maintain and improve the water quality of the Borough's rivers, and to achieve sustainable water resources management</p> <p>8.1 Will it promote more sustainable transport patterns in all areas, particular those of low air quality (e.g. AQMAs)?</p> <p>8.2 Will it try to ensure that national air quality strategy objectives are not breached?</p> <p>8.3 Will it promote compliance with river ecology standards needed to meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive?</p> <p>8.4 Will it stabilise per capita consumption (PCC) of water at current levels?</p> <p>8.5 Will it ensure water supply and demand are in balance to maintain security of supply, where appropriate by providing new water resource infrastructure?</p> <p>8.6 Will it separate polluting development away from sensitive receptors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of days of air pollution (Local Quality of Life Counts (<i>DETR, July 2000</i>)) • Number of days per year when air pollution is moderate or higher (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Concentrations of NO₂ in AQMAs (<i>TWBC</i>) • Concentrations of selected air pollutants (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Population living in AQMAs (<i>TWBC</i>) • Rivers of Good or Fair chemical and biological water quality (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Per capita consumption (PCC) of water (<i>South East Water/ Mid-Kent Water</i>) • Number of incidents of major and significant water pollution (<i>Environment Agency Southern Regional Office</i>) • Capacity during 'critical periods' to supply water without the need for restrictions (<i>IRF</i>)
<p>9. To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.</p> <p>9.1 Will it require that development proposals are guided by 'climate proofing' principles (to allow an increase in use of renewables energies in the future)?</p> <p>9.2 Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions from domestic, commercial or industrial sources?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emissions of greenhouse gases from energy consumption, transport and land use and waste management (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • CO₂ emissions by sector and per capita emissions (tonnes per year) (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>)

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Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
9.3 Will it prevent an increased risk of flooding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy use (gas and electricity) (<i>Local Quality of Life Counts (DETR, July 2000)</i>) • Energy use per household (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002 – 2003)</i>) • Areas of flood risk (<i>Environment Agency Southern Region Flood Risk Maps</i>)
<p>10. To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity</p> <p>10.1 Will it protect, enhance and restore the Borough's national and local designated sites?</p> <p>10.2 Will it protect, enhance and restore the Local Biodiversity Action Plan's priority habitats and species, and ensure the delivery of local biodiversity targets?</p> <p>10.3 Will it encourage the development of new biodiversity assets and linkage to existing habitats within/alongside developments?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent and management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Condition of SSSIs and designated sites (<i>English Nature</i>) • Extent of ancient woodlands in the Borough (<i>Kent Habitat Survey 2003</i>) • Net change in natural/ semi natural habitats (<i>Local Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) • Native species at risk (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>), especially protected species/ those listed in the Local BAP • Achievement of Local BAP targets (<i>KCC</i>) • Area of designated Local Nature Reserves (<i>TWBC</i>)
<p>11. To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside and historic environment</p> <p>11.1 Will it protect, enhance or restore the Borough's natural environmental assets and attractive countryside (e.g. the green belt, parks and green spaces, common land, woodland and forests, AONBs etc)</p> <p>11.2 Will it protect, enhance or restore the Borough's cultural and heritage assets (e.g. SAMs, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas etc)?</p> <p>11.3 Will it promote the accessibility of the Borough's countryside and historic environment in sustainable and well-managed ways?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition of the High Weald AONB (<i>Kent High Weald Project</i>) • Land covered by management schemes i.e. designated sites including AONB, SSSIs, Local Natures Reserves and Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest (<i>TWBC/ English Nature/ or appropriate management body</i>) • Number of Grade I and II Listed Buildings (<i>TWBC/ English Heritage</i>) • Percentage of Conservation Areas which have been subject to a character appraisal or its review within the last 5 years (<i>TWBC</i>). • Changes in areas covered by a Conservation Area as loss and gain (<i>TWBC</i>). • Loss or damage to scheduled ancient monuments or historic parks and gardens, and their settings (<i>TWBC/ English Heritage</i>) • Number of buildings at risk as a percentage of all Listed Buildings (<i>TWBC</i>)

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Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to and the use of the countryside (<i>Source unknown</i>)
<p>12. To improve travel choice and to reduce the need for travel, particularly by car/lorry to reduce road congestion.</p> <p>12.1 Will it promote more sustainable travel, particularly in areas with high congestion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of travel by mode (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>)
<p>13. To reduce the impact of resource consumption by using sustainably produced and local products and reducing waste generation and disposal.</p> <p>13.1 Will it promote the use of sustainably-sourced, and recycled, materials in construction and renovation?</p> <p>13.2 Will it increase efficiency in water (e.g. water meters), energy and raw materials use?</p> <p>13.3 Will it increase prevention, re-use, recovery and recycling of waste?</p> <p>13.4 Will it promote sustainable waste management practices through the provision of a range of appropriate waste management facilities?</p> <p>13.5 Will it reduce use of non-renewable resources?</p> <p>13.6 Will it increase use of renewable energies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of new house build and conversions meeting EcoHomes Very Good standard (<i>Building Research Establishment/ TWBC</i>) • Percentage of new commercial buildings meeting BREEAM 'Very Good' standard (<i>Building Research Establishment/ TWBC</i>) • Household waste recycling (<i>TWBC</i>) • Percentage of the total tonnage of all types of waste (municipal solid waste, construction and demolition and industrial) that has been recycled, composted, used to recover heat, power and other energy sources, and landfilled (<i>KCC/ TWBC</i>)
<p>14. To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Borough</p> <p>14.1 Will it increase efficiency in energy use?</p> <p>14.2 Will it provide for the establishment of renewable energy developments?</p> <p>14.3 Will it promote the incorporation of small-scale renewables (e.g. photovoltaic cells and Combined Heat and Power Plants) in developments?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy use per capita (<i>Kent Energy Centre/ Kent Renewable Energy Network</i>) • Average energy efficiency of housing stock (<i>TWBC</i>) • For new development, Installed capacity for energy production from renewable sources (<i>TWBC</i>)
<p>15. To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can benefit from the economic growth of the Borough</p> <p>15.1 Will it provide employment opportunities that match the skills of the local workforce?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people of working age who are in work (<i>Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>) (<i>Audit Commission, Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators (Definitions Handbook, Audit Commission, 2002-2003)</i>) • Number of jobs in the Borough (<i>KCC</i>) • Unemployment rates (<i>Census data</i>) • Socio-economic profile of the resident economically active population (<i>under investigation</i>) • Proportion of young people (18-24 year olds) in the most deprived areas in full time education (<i>Index of Local Deprivation (Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999)</i>)

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Key Objective / Sub-Objective	Indicators and source where known
<p>16. To stimulate and sustain economic growth and competitiveness across the Borough</p> <p>16.1 Will it maintain / increase the opportunities for local employment across the Borough?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GVA per capita (<i>Office for National Statistics</i>) • Percentage increase or decrease in the total number of VAT registered businesses in the area (<i>VAT Registrations, Office for National Statistics</i>) • Proportion of people, in the most deprived area, of working age unemployed (<i>Index of Local Deprivation (Quality of Life Counts (DETR, December 1999))</i>) • Net changes in B1/A2/B2 and B8 Floorspaces (<i>annual decisions monitoring TWBC</i>)

PART TWO: SPECIFIC INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS

This part of the Scoping Report consists of sections 8 to 14, which detail for each of the first tranche of LDDs:

- Further specific information regarding planning background and the LDD context;
- Key sustainability issues specific to the LDD;
- Key objectives for each specific LDD;
- An outline of the options to be considered; and
- Considerations for the SA Framework.

Where there are no specific details available or limitations in information regarding the LDDs, this is clearly stated. Finally, section 15 outlines the proposed SA Report structure.

8. CORE STRATEGY DPD

8.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Core Strategy will set out the vision and spatial strategy for the Borough, with regard to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan 2003 – 2011 and any new issues arising from the review of the Community Plan, which will take place during 2006.

The Core Strategy will have to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, national Planning Policy Guidance/Planning Policy Statements and, when adopted, the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, which is saved for three years from adoption (or until such time as the South East Plan is adopted - whichever is the earlier).

All other DPDs and SPDs will conform with the Core Strategy.

Various studies are being undertaken, which will provide an evidence base to help inform the objectives that should be in the Core Strategy. These studies include: -

- Local Housing Needs Assessment;
- Open Space, Sports Needs and Recreational Assessment, and Playing Pitch Assessment;
- Retail Study Update;
- Urban Capacity Study Review;
- Employment Land Study; and
- Hotel Needs Study Update.

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8.2 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

Due to the nature of the Core Strategy, there are unlikely to be any additional sustainability issues, to those identified in Part 1 of the Scoping Report, specific to this DPD.

8.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE DPD

Many of the strategic policies in the Core Strategy will be spatial policies, rather than land-use policies, because they will be influenced by the RSS, Community Strategy and other local strategies and initiatives. However, most of the major long-term commitments and initiatives underpinning the current development plan will remain in place.

The Core Strategy will set out the long-term spatial vision for the Borough up to 2017 and the strategic policies and proposals required to deliver this vision. There are a number of objectives for the DPD: -

- Identify broad locations for housing and other strategic development needs such as employment and retail;
- Include long-standing strategic land-use policies such as Green Belt;
- Protect the unique high-quality built and natural environmental character of the area from inappropriate development;
- To ensure that all types of development are well designed;
- Protect or enhance the vitality and viability of town, neighbourhood and village centres;
- Protect or enhance community facilities;
- Ensuring sufficient infrastructure to support development;
- To locate development where it will provide the opportunities for people to satisfy their day-to-day needs for employment, shopping, recreation and other services in locations which minimise the need to travel or are accessible or could be made accessible by a range of travel options; and
- To conserve finite non-renewable resources such as land, energy, water, soil and air quality.

8.4 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

Options cannot be outlined until further information has been obtained from data gathering and consultation. Options for the DPD will become apparent as the process develops.

8.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

The Core Strategy will be assessed against the entire SA Framework as presented in Part One, Section 7.

9. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL SPDs

9.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The need for Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs) is set out in statute, planning policy guidance and best practice. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out key duties – e.g. the need to review area for Conservation Areas and bring forward enhancement proposals.

PPG15 and English Heritage guidance advises that this is best practice and Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 219 measures the percentage of conservation areas with an up-to date character appraisal. CAAs will provide local planning authorities with a useful planning tool against which planning applications can be assessed.

9.2 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

A generic approach to the SA scoping report has been taken, although it is recognised that individual conservation areas may have more specific local issues, which will be identified as part of each CAA. By its very nature a CAA focuses on the historic built environment and associated landscape.

9.2.1 Economic

In rural Conservation Areas, the issue is often one of maintaining local shops and services whereas in urban areas the issue is often more to do with protecting environmental capital and maintaining a balance.

The image of the area could be improved through enhancement. Through the Conservation Area Appraisal itself, this should improve the perception of the area as a business location and for tourism potential.

9.2.2 Social

It will be important to maintain a range of local facilities to meet the needs of the community. CAAs can help to renew interest in heritage by promoting civic pride and helping to strengthen identify.

9.2.3 Environmental

There is often pressure for development and erosion of character as well as a need to address neglect in some areas. CAAs will help to highlight key issues and promote actions for enhancement.

9.3 OBJECTIVES OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL SPDs

There are a number of objectives for the CAA SPDs:-

- To define key elements and features that contribute to the special character or appearance and which should be conserved;
- To record those principal elements that detract from the character or appearance and opportunities for enhancement;

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- To review boundaries of the conservation area;
- To provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future through planning decisions and through management plans; and
- To inform other key agencies, residents etc. whose activities impact on the conservation areas.

9.4 OPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

This section sets the context for CAAs generically. The following options derived from the Goudhurst and Kilndown CAA will be considered. In this instance the 'do-nothing' scenario is not relevant as the Council are required to carry out a CAA under current legislation.

Option 1 – Appraisal to minimum requirements.

An assessment is carried out of the special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Areas merely to comply with the minimum requirements of the legislation (i.e. no detractors identified and CAA not adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) to the Local Plan or upcoming LDF).

Option 2 – Detailed Appraisal Adopted as SPD

Prepare a detailed CAA (including detractors and opportunities) that is adopted as SPD to the Local Plan/upcoming LDF after public consultation. The CAAs add value to planning policies and become material considerations in development control decisions and can influence other detailed policies and actions including enhancements.

Option 3 – Detailed Appraisal Adopted as SPD with Enhancement Action Plan.

Prepare a detailed CAA (including detractors, opportunities and targeted enhancements to the CAs) that is adopted as SPD to the Local Plan/upcoming LDF after public consultation. In addition to Option 2 the CAA would include a programme of targeted enhancements and direct actions.

The most relevant SA objectives for all CAAs are likely to be SA objectives 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 16.

10. BENENDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL ALLOCATION DPD

10.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

A case is acknowledged by Kent County Council (KCC) for the replacement of Benenden Church of England Primary School. Currently, the school functions on a split site and the main building is substandard. KCC has confirmed their support for funding the new school in the period from 2006/7 to 2007/8. As a result, TWBC is now charged with preparing a DPD to deliver a site specific allocation within the LDF, and on the Proposals Map, which will denote the preferred location of the new school site. In addition, TWBC is responsible for site selection and evidence gathering to support such a choice. It is the role of the SA process to assess the options (i.e. the sites) that have, and are going to be, considered. The SA will assess each site using the SA Framework and look to identify potential social, economic and environmental effects associated with each site. This information will assist in making the final decision.

For further information, there are certain parameters which must be met in order to put a site forward as an option and they are summarised below:

- It must satisfy the standards set out in Department of Education and Skills (DfES) and KCC Guidance and should seek to address any specific site needs that achieve consensus through the community engagement during the preparation of the DPD and can be funded;
- The site must meet modest future expansion needs to allow for a 7-class one-form entry school;
- As a Church of England Primary School, any redevelopment should enable strong links with the Church to be maintained; and
- It must satisfy TWBC planning requirements.

10.2 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

10.2.1 Social

If the school is converted, there should be the potential to enhance the rural community by the provision of additional housing in the vacated premises. To strengthen the potential for community cohesion, the shared use of facilities should be pursued in principle, either through new provision in the school being made available for community use or the school using existing facilities that would otherwise be under-utilised, where suitable and appropriate. As a Church of England Primary School, any redevelopment should enable the strong links with the Church should be maintained.

10.2.2 Economic

Any new school provision should meet the educational needs of the catchment population of Benenden in a way that maintains the vitality of the rural community, including the villages in the catchment area. The location of the school, if linked closely to other facilities including shops will give the opportunity to support existing provision.

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10.2.3 Environmental

The local area has significant and important characteristics that should be conserved and enhanced by any development. The existing school comprises two Listed Buildings.

Any potential negative impacts from development should be minimised and any identified impacts on recognised environmental assets should be mitigated or compensated for.

10.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE DPD

Subject to confirmation of that need, there are a number of objectives for the DPD are to:

- Conserve and enhances the character or appearance of the local environment;
- Minimise impacts on, and mitigates or compensates for any impacts on, recognised environmental assets;
- Maintain the vitality and viability of the rural community; and
- Achieve sustainable, high quality building(s) that enhance(s) local character and respect(s) their context.

10.4 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

For the purposes of this DPD, the options will be sites identified through preparation and early engagement with stakeholders. In addition, and in accordance with ODPM Guidance, the do-nothing scenario will be tested and has been added to the list below:

- Do Nothing – i.e. do not allocate a site for a new school;
- Allocate a site for a new school.

10.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

The most relevant SA objectives will be numbers 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17. In particular, the development on the preferred site should conserve and enhance biodiversity, improve travel choice, be built to a high level of sustainable design and increase energy efficiency.

11. RECREATION OPEN SPACE SPD

11.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This SPD will address the provision of recreation and open space in the Borough, arising from new residential development. It will refer to space allocated for sport, active recreation and children's play. Recreation open space should be large enough in size to support these activities. It should be easily and safely accessed by users.

The SPD is primarily intended to supplement policies R2, R3 and R4 in the Local Plan Review. As part of the SA process, baseline information was collected on recreation open space and used to identify the key sustainability issues described below.

11.2 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

11.2.1 Economic

The deficiency of recreation and open space in many parts of the Borough may have implications for the economy. Incoming residents will place a burden on the existing recreation open space provision in the Borough, which is deficient in many areas. This could lead to a reduction in the quality of life. New housing development will need to ensure that an adequate supply of high quality accessible recreation open space is provided if the Borough is to maintain its competitiveness and remain a desirable location.

11.2.2 Social

There is a recognition that open space and opportunities for sport and recreation are fundamental in delivering the government's wider objectives for social inclusion and healthy lifestyles, including provision for children and younger people. Sport and recreation have a valuable social as well as an economic role. It is important that existing deficiencies in recreation open space provision are not exacerbated, particularly with regards to the quality of recreation open space.

11.2.3 Environmental

There is a recognition that high quality recreation open space will contribute to the landscape and townscape quality. The careful location of recreation open space, that does not infringe on environmental assets such as designated sites, will allow the overall provision to be increased without any detrimental effects.

It will, however, be important to ensure that sustainable access by all will be provided to ensure use by a broad spectrum of the public and to avoid further traffic-related problems.

11.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE SPD

There are a number of objectives for the SPD: -

- 1) To ensure that a consistent approach is taken towards the provision of recreation open space;
- 2) To ensure recreation open space is integrated into, or in close proximity to, residential areas.

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11.4 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

The broad options that have been considered so far are:

- To 'do-nothing'; or
- To increase the committed sum sought to help manage and improve recreation open space.

11.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

The most relevant SA objectives will be numbers 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 12. As a result, the key issues that will need to be explored and assessed in detail will relate to improving the health of the population, improving accessibility, conserving biodiversity and avoiding adverse traffic-related effects due to inappropriate siting.

12. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS SPD

12.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The document will aid clarity on a number of policies in the Local Plan Review 2005, particularly Policy EN1 on the Control of Development. It will include guidance on amenity and design issues. Key Sustainability Issues

12.1.1 Economic:

The built environment plays a key role in the economic success of the Borough by making it an attractive place to live, work and visit.

12.1.2 Social:

Housing need in the Borough is changing. The SPD will need to allow dwellings to adapt to changing needs.

12.1.3 Environment:

The SPD will promote quality and sustainable design and conservation. Adaptation of the existing dwelling stock may protect the countryside including the green belt

12.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE SPD

There are a number of objectives for the SPD:

1. To preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the local environment and maintain local distinctiveness;
2. To encourage design quality which minimises impact on the environment, particularly in sensitive areas;
3. To facilitate the best use of land;
4. To encourage sustainable construction practices;
5. To protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties; and
6. To maintain a safe and secure environment.

12.3 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

Options cannot be outlined until further information has been obtained from data gathering and consultation. Options for the SPD will be developed and assessed in the next stage of the SA process.

12.4 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

It is too early in the process to ascertain the implications for the SA Framework. However, on-going evidence gathering and consultation will assist in this. It is likely that SA objective numbers 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 16 will be of most importance in developing the most sustainable option to take forward.

13. ROYAL VICTORIA PLACE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF SPD

13.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The SPD will set out the planning principles for the expansion of the Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre and the policy framework for bringing forward a planning application for the development of the site. Policies in the Local Plan Review that are relevant to the area to be covered by the SPD, and which will be saved following adoption of the Plan in 2006, are set out below:

Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan Review – Second Deposit Copy:

- Policy CR5 (a) – Mixed Use Allocation, Royal Victoria Place
- Policy TP1 – Large Scale Non-residential Development
- Policy TP4 – Access to the Road Network
- Policy TP7 – Tunbridge Wells Central Parking Zone (Commercial)
- Policy CS6 – Retention of Community Buildings
- Policy EN1 – Design and Other Development Control Criteria
- Policy EN4 – Demolition in Conservation Areas
- Policy EN5 – Development in Conservation Areas

The Royal Victoria Place shopping centre opened in 1992 and is situated in the northern part of the Primary Shopping Area, in the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells. Shops are situated on two floors, together with a food-court at basement level. Expansion of the shopping centre, as envisaged by Local Plan Review Policy CR5 (a), is likely to involve the redevelopment of existing buildings at the corner of Calverley Precinct and Camden Road and at Ely Court. Also, the Market Square, within which a small open market operates on two days of the week, is likely to be redeveloped. There may also be scope to rationalise or redevelop the existing Community Centre and Church at the north-eastern end of the centre.

According to the Shopping Study Update of 2003, Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre contains approximately 100,225 square metres of retail floorspace. 82% of this comprises premises providing 'comparison goods'; 18%, comprises food i.e. 'convenience goods'. Within 'comparison goods', the centre contains a diverse retail sector.

13.2 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

13.2.1 Economic

The range, scale and quality of retail, leisure, cultural and tourist facilities provided at Royal Tunbridge Wells makes it an important sub-regional centre and destination. A substantial need for additional comparison retail floorspace exists within Royal Tunbridge Borough, which should be located in Royal Tunbridge Wells, to protect the town's position as a sub regional shopping centre for the community, and

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to ensure the continued success of the local economy. New development should be located within the town centre in preference to edge of centre or out-of-centre locations.

Royal Victoria Place opened during the economic recession of the early 1990s. It contributed to the initial fall, and the subsequent stabilisation, of rent levels in Royal Tunbridge Wells. The centre is one of the main locations for non-food related i.e. 'comparison goods' shopping. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has identified scope for new retail floorspace in the vicinity of Royal Victoria Place, as well as in other parts of Royal Tunbridge Wells, including land on, or in the vicinity of, Mount Pleasant Road.

13.2.2 Social

The town centre acts as a social focal point for a wide area. In order to ensure that it continues to fulfil this role, it is necessary for needs to be identified and, where possible, shortfalls in facilities to be addressed.

As well as retail and ancillary uses, there is a community centre and church within the area covered by the Local Plan Review mixed use allocation. These facilities contribute to the social function of the town centre.

13.2.3 Environmental

Road congestion is a key issue in Royal Tunbridge Wells. This has implications on the environment including the reduction of air quality. TWBC has proposed an Air Quality Management Area along the A26. This will need to be taken into consideration in the SPD as expansion/ development of Royal Victoria Place should avoid contributing to this problem through traffic generation.

Development of the shopping centre will also need to consider the Royal Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area. It is important that any expansion does not adversely impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.

13.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE SPD

There are a number of objectives for the SPD:

- 1) Ensure that significant and appropriately configured retail floorspace is provided, within a mixed-use development, to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, thereby retaining its role as a sub-regional centre and reducing pressure for out of centre development;
- 2) Provide an alternative location for the outdoor market and either retain the existing community buildings or secure alternative provision at a suitable location;
- 3) Integrate the development with the surrounding townscape, through appropriate scale, massing, design, materials and pedestrian movement;
- 4) Secure a high quality of design, befitting the Royal Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area, and encouraging sustainable design and construction methods; and
- 5) Ensure safe and sustainable transport provision is made to serve the site.

13.4 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

Acceptable development of this allocation may take various forms – there will not be a single design solution. In order to avoid being over-prescriptive, the purpose of the Development Brief will be to interpret the planning policy background to assist achievement of the broad planning objectives.

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Broad options have been identified for a number of key issues as follows:

- **Amount of retail floorspace** – options are:
 - 1) To secure the minimum requirement of 13,000 sq m (as envisaged would be provided in the Local Plan Review) but no more than this;
 - 2) To exceed this marginally; or
 - 3) To exceed this significantly (but not by more than total provision required from town centre sites to meet Borough wide need of 23,500 sq. m – i.e. this figure minus out of town commitments).
- **Amount of on-site non-operational parking** – options are:
 - 1) No on-site parking but provision for off-site parking and improved links to other transport modes;
 - 2) Some on-site parking and provision for off-site parking and improved links to other transport modes; or
 - 3) On-site parking to meet all requirements of the new development.
- **Scale and massing** – options are:
 - 1) A tight building envelope, which does not exceed height/depth of existing buildings on this site;
 - 2) A medium building envelope which allows some increase in height/depth over existing built form; or
 - 3) A loose building envelope, which allows significant increase in height/depth over existing, built form.
- **Community Centre and Church** – options are:
 - 1) Retainment in-situ;
 - 2) Relocation within RVP development envelope; or
 - 3) Relocation outside the allocation.
- **'Do Nothing' option** – please note: the Development Brief is about the delivery of an allocation in a soon-to-be-adopted Local Plan and therefore is not perceived as a 'practical' alternative.

13.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

Due to the scale, proposed location and objectives of the development brief, it will be important to assess the options carefully against the SA Framework. In particular, SA objective numbers 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. The scope of the SA is widened with the Royal Victoria Place SPD due to numerous economic and social issues that need to be assessed along with town centre environmental constraints such as traffic, the conservation area and setting.

14. AFFORDABLE/ KEY WORKER HOUSING SPD

14.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This SPD will provide guidance on requirements for affordable housing on general market sites throughout the Borough and guidance on bringing forward rural exceptions housing schemes adjacent to the small rural towns and villages in the Borough.

Affordable housing is defined as low cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenures, ownership or financial arrangements) that will be available to local people who cannot afford to meet their housing needs on the open market.

The SPD is intended to supplement Policies H3 and H9 in the Local Plan Review.

14.2 BASELINE INFORMATION

Baseline information is available on local affordable housing need from the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Housing Needs Survey (2000) on the extent, general location and type of household in need. This survey is being updated and will be available from September 2005 to inform the SPD. The Borough wide survey will be supplemented by local Parish based needs surveys, where the provision of a rural exceptions scheme is being considered.

14.3 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

14.3.1 Social

The deficiency of affordable housing in the Borough, would, if allowed to continue, mean that a significant proportion of local people would not be able to access a decent and affordable home to meet their needs. Insufficient affordable housing could lead to communities becoming unbalanced, as younger people are forced to move away in search of accommodation. Villages in particular would be likely to become homogenous commuter or retirement settlements, lacking in vitality and variety of social activity. Key workers needed to perform essential jobs such as in teaching, healthcare and other public services would not be attracted to the area.

14.3.2 Economic

The high cost of housing in the Borough is a problem for the recruitment and retention of key workers in public services. However, other local employers also have problems recruiting staff. Since their presence is central to the health and well being and future prosperity of the community, provision of affordable housing is essential to prevent future skills shortages.

14.3.3 Environment

Provision of an element of affordable housing on market sites is unlikely to have any additional environmental consequences over and above general housing development.

An adequate supply of affordable housing for those in local employment will reduce the need for workers to undertake long commuting journeys, with resulting benefits in reducing congestion on roads and public transport; air quality and sustainable development patterns. In the case of rural exceptions housing, there may be some impact on landscape, biodiversity and habitats, but this offers the possibility of reduced

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travel for those employed locally. Affordable housing can be used as examples of good practice in good quality and sustainable design and construction.

14.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE SPD

There are a number of specific additional objectives for the SPD:

1. To encourage provision of affordable housing for local people and key workers on rural exception sites; and
2. To provide advice to developers and affordable housing providers on how affordable housing will be negotiated and provided on eligible sites.

14.5 OUTLINE OF OPTIONS

There are a number of options for the SPD:

- To do nothing;
- To provide SPD as a guide to procedures and facilitate the provision of affordable housing; or
- To provide guidance on preferred mix of tenure types and types of affordable dwelling to be achieved on all eligible sites and which best reflect needs identified in the current local housing needs assessment.

14.6 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SA FRAMEWORK

The provision of affordable/ key worker housing is essential from a sustainable development perspective. The options above that will be tested will need to demonstrate that they need to perform well in achieving SA objective numbers 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

15. SA REPORT STRUCTURE

A provisional SA Report structure has been developed and is outlined in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Provisional SA Report Structure

Section of SA Report	Contents
Summary and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Technical Summary • How to comment on the report
Appraisal Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA approach • When the SA was carried out and by whom • List of who was consulted and how they were approached
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale behind the SA • The purpose of the SA Report • Report contents • Compliance with the SEA Directive/ Regulations
Sustainability objectives, baseline description and context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to other plans, programmes and strategies and sustainability objectives • Baseline context • Difficulties and limitations in obtaining baseline data • The SA Framework including objectives, targets and indicators • Key economic, social and environmental issues identified through the review of relevant documents and baseline information
DPD / SPD issues and options / Plan policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main strategic options considered and how they were identified; • Comparison of the social, environmental and economic effects of the options; • How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in choosing the preferred options; • Other options considered, and why these were rejected; • Significant social, environmental and economic effects of the preferred policies • Proposed mitigation measures
Implementation - Proposals for monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to other level plans and programmes and the implications at the project level (including Environmental Impact Assessment) • Proposals for monitoring.

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GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

For the purpose of this report the following terms and definitions apply:

Affordable Housing	Housing that is available to those whose housing needs are not met through the normal operation of the housing market by reason of cost. It may include housing for sale or rent.
AONB	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949), and along with National Parks they represent the finest examples of countryside in England and Wales.
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area - An area identified by Local Authorities where statutory UK air quality standards are being, or are expected to be breached up to the end of 2005.
Aquifer	A below ground, water bearing layer of soil or rock. Major aquifers tend to yield large quantities of water and are often used for public water supplies. Minor aquifers yield relatively high quantities of water which can be used for local and industrial supplies. Non-aquifers do not yield significant quantities of water and are rarely used for water supply.
BRE	Building Research Establishment.
Brownfield Site	A piece of previously developed land or buildings that is abandoned or underused and often environmentally contaminated, especially one considered as a potential site for redevelopment. Such redevelopment reduces pressure for the development of green field sites.
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator – a national measure of performance set by Central Government.
CLR	Culture, leisure, recreation.
Conservation Area	An area designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of special architectural or historic interest, the character and interest of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
CRoW	The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
DETR	Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions.
DPD	Development Plan Document – A Local Development Document which forms part of the statutory development plan, including the Core Strategy, Proposals Map and Area Action Plans
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
Green Belt	Green Belt is undeveloped land which has been specifically designated for long-term protection. It is a nationally important designation. Green Belt land exists to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land free from development.
LDD	Local Development Document – comprising two types, Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, which together form the Local Development Framework.
LDF	Local Development Framework – the portfolio of Local Development Documents which sets out the planning policy framework for the district.
LDS	Local Development Scheme - a three year project plan setting out the Council's programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents, reviewed annually in the light of the Annual Monitoring Report
Listed Building	A building included on a list of buildings of architectural or historic interest, compiled by the Secretary of State, under the Planning (Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LTP	Local Transport Plan
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PCC	Per capita consumption (of water)
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance - Guidance documents which set out national planning policy.
PPS	Planning Policy Statement – Guidance documents which set out national planning policy. They are being reviewed and updated and are replacing PPGs.

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RPG	Regional Planning Guidance – Guidance prepared by the Government Office for the South East in March 2001. This will be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy.
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategies – Guidance documents which set out regional planning policy. They are being reviewed and updated and are replacing RPGs.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal - A process by which the economic, social and environmental impacts of a project, strategy or plan are assessed.
Scheduled Ancient Monument	A nationally important archaeological site included in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments maintained by the Secretary of State for the Environment under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement – sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the standards to be achieved in involving the community and stakeholders in the preparation of all Local development Documents and in decisions on planning applications.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment - systematic method of considering the likely effects on the environment of policies, plans and programmes.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document – a Local Development Document which is part of the Local development Framework but does not form part of the statutory development plan. SPDs elaborate upon policies and proposals in a Development Plan Document or 'saved' policies and include development briefs and guidance documents.
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance – guidance which elaborates upon policies and proposals in the Local Plan.
SNCI	Sites of Nature Conservation Interest are small and isolated pockets of undisturbed habitat, which can link fragmented Sites of Special Scientific Interest – see below.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest - The best sites for wildlife and geological features in England as designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
TWBC	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council