
Head of Planning Services

Summary: The Gypsy and Traveller LDD Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report reviews sustainability issues to be considered throughout LDD creation, culminating in an Appraisal Framework matrix that guides the writing of LDD options as they emerge and provides a commentary of their sustainability effects. The Scoping Report’s consultation (January 2007) generated comments from various stakeholders, listed overleaf; most comments considered that the Scoping exercise had raised awareness of the issues and only minor amendments were necessary. We received complimentary feedback on the Appraisal Framework, which uses the same structure as the original LDF Sustainability Appraisal process. Though some additional baseline indicators or decision-making criteria were offered, this is considered a vital aspect that offers value in both writing policy and helping people to understand its effects.

The main aspects brought to our attention are discussed in detail within the report, but issues cover Gypsy and Traveller education, the environment (landscape, flood risk, biodiversity), highways, and community welfare. These changes were made in conjunction with Members of the Local Development Framework Steering Group held on February 9th 2007.

Conclusions: We received many helpful comments in response to the consultation, the majority of which were concerned with adding some strategies to the Scoping Report literature review and expanding upon certain issues, both for drawing-up the issues and options exercise and for selecting specific sites. The appraisal framework for assessing policy as it develops was, for the most part, approved and so would appear fit for purpose.

Recommendations: Members are requested to note the proposed amendments and approve the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report’s adoption.

Cabinet member(s): Philip Waltham
Ward(s) affected: All
Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Robert Parkinson 01508 533971 rparkinson@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. **Background to the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report**

1.1. Producing a Scoping Report is the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal process, which proceeds alongside the creation of all the forthcoming Local Development Framework (LDF) Local Development Documents (LDDs). The Scoping Report sets out four main aspects that must be considered as part of preparing the Issues and Options stage of a LDD, which the Gypsy and Traveller LDD has recently been able to benefit from. The four stages comprise:

- A Literature Review that considers all the plans and programmes which must be taken into account, including their relevant objectives and implications;
- Baseline information that identifies the context of the LDD, describing the situation and particular circumstances of the G&T strategy in South Norfolk;
- Sustainability Issues to take into account when producing the LDD, and which give rise to a number of sustainability appraisal objectives which are subsequently used to assess the LDD policies as they come forward; and,
- The Sustainability Appraisal Framework, which is the culmination of the scoping exercise, comprising the appraisal objectives and an assessment matrix that considers how each policy option will perform against the sustainability criteria previously identified throughout the scoping exercise.

1.2. The structure of this Gypsy and Traveller LDD Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report follows that of the earlier LDF Scoping Report, which was adopted for use by Cabinet in June 2006. The wealth of information contained within that report enabled this version to be produced as a concise Addendum to the original. Consequently this report focuses on specific Gypsy and Traveller issues in South Norfolk; predominantly social aspects such as health and education, the shortage of sites in areas of need, site tenure, and access to the workplace. More detailed information regarding social, environmental and economic characteristics and issues to be tackled through the LDF are in the original LDF Scoping Report.

1.3. Members considered the first draft of the Scoping Report at Cabinet (4.12.06) before it's consultation period (December 2006 - January 2007). Consultation included the statutory stakeholders Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England, neighbouring authorities, Gypsy and Traveller interest groups and parish councils.

1.4. Consultation feedback was received from the following bodies:

- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Children’s Services, Norfolk County Council
- Landscape department, Norfolk County Council
- Highways and Transport, Norfolk County Council
- Traveller Liaison, Norfolk County Council
- Thorpe St. Andrew Parish Council
1.5. Members are now asked to consider the feedback that was received from the various stakeholders. Initial suggestions for amendments were considered by the LDF Steering Group (9.02.07) before being sought for Cabinet approval.

1.6. The changes proposed, and the reasons for accepting or declining suggestions, have been detailed in Appendix 1 of this report, attached.

1.7. Feedback suggestions included reviewing various strategies, in particular relating to meeting children’s needs, considering the likelihood of flood risk when selecting sites, and ensuring that landscape and biodiversity received due attention. It is felt that more attention should be given to immediate biodiversity and flood risk concerns when selecting sites and that highway safety should feature as a significant issue given its prominence in recent site applications.

1.8. In general the Appraisal Framework was considered an adequate method for assessing the LDD policy options as they come forward, which will provide a good platform for understanding the implications of the Gypsy and Traveller LDD.

2. Conclusion

2.1. There have been many helpful comments received in response to the Gypsy and Traveller Scoping Report consultation exercise, both for drawing-up the issues and options exercise and for selecting specific sites. The appraisal framework for assessing policy as it develops was, for the most part, approved and consequently should be fit for purpose for assessing LDD policy options.

2.2. It is considered that the proposed changes to the Scoping Report should enable it to be adopted and its appraisal process to be used throughout the preparation of the South Norfolk Gypsy and Traveller Local Development Document.