

**Town and Country Planning, England
Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)
(England) Regulations 2012**

**West Berkshire District Council Housing Site Allocations Development
Plan Document**

Adoption Statement: May 2017

Notice is hereby given that West Berkshire District Council resolved to adopt its Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) on Tuesday 9 May 2017. The Housing Site Allocations DPD will implement the framework set by the Core Strategy by allocating non-strategic housing sites across the District in accordance with the spatial strategy of the Core Strategy. The Housing Site Allocations DPD also allocates sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, sets out residential parking standards and policies to guide housing development in the countryside.

The Housing Site Allocations DPD has been subject to examination by an independent inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector's Report was published on 6 April 2017. The report and background documents can be viewed on the Council's website: www.westberks.gov.uk/hsa. The adopted Housing Site Allocations DPD incorporates the recommendations set out in the Inspector's Report and accompanying appendices.

Any person aggrieved by the Housing Site Allocations DPD may make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 on the grounds that the document is not within the appropriate power of the local authority, or that a procedural requirement has not been complied with. Any such application must be made promptly, and in any event, no later than six weeks after the date on which the Housing Site Allocations DPD was adopted, before Tuesday 20 June 2017.

Copies of the Housing Site Allocations DPD, and its supporting documents, are available for public inspection on West Berkshire District Council's website: www.westberks.gov.uk/hsa and at West Berkshire District Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD free of charge between the hours of 8:30am, and 5:00pm on Mondays to Thursdays, and 8:30am to 4:30pm on Fridays. They will also be available for inspection at Newbury library during their normal opening hours.

Further information is available by contacting the Planning Policy Team at the Council Offices on 01635 519 111 or via email at planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk.

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Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Post Adoption Statement

May 2017

Introduction

The West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (HSA DPD) was adopted by West Berkshire District Council on 9 May 2017. The DPD is a daughter document of the Council's adopted Core Strategy (July 2012), and forms part of the Local Plan for the District. The Core Strategy sets out the overall planning strategy for the District, explaining the vision for the area and how it will be delivered. The Housing Site Allocations DPD identifies specific sites for housing and Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, as well as setting including updated residential parking standards and a set of policies to guide housing in the countryside.

In accordance with European¹ and national² legislation, development plans must be subject to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) aims to predict and assess the economic, social and environmental effects that are likely to arise from implementing development plans. It is a process for understanding whether policies, strategies or plans promote sustainable development, and for improving them to deliver more sustainable outcomes.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aims to predict and assess the environmental effects that are likely to arise from plans, policies and strategies, such as a Core Strategy. It is a process for assessing and mitigating the negative environmental impacts of specific plans and programmes. For the purposes of the Core Strategy, the SEA process was incorporated into the SA process.

Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (from hereon in referred to as the SEA Regulations) sets out the requirements with regard to the post adoption procedures of the SA/SEA. This statement has been prepared in accordance with this regulation.

In accordance with the SEA Regulations, this statement sets out the following:

- (a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;*
- (b) how the environmental report has been taken into account;*
- (c) how opinions expressed in response to public consultation have been taken into account;*

¹ SEA Directive and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

² Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

- (d) *the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and*
- (e) *the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan*

The SA/SEA Environmental Report for Submission (including Proposed Main Modifications) is available to view on the Council's website: www.westberks.gov.uk/hsaexamination. The HSA DPD can be viewed at: www.westberks.gov.uk/hsa.

(a) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the HSA DPD

The SA/SEA process has been fully integrated into the plan-making process, with its findings being a key influence on the policy decisions made. When work on the HSA DPD began, it was decided that the SEA process would be incorporated into the SA process to fully assess the environmental, economic and social effects that are likely to arise from the options and subsequent policies being developed for the HSA DPD.

Stages of the SA/SEA

SA/SEA is made up of a series of stages. The first stage (Stage A) was the production of the Scoping Report which was published in September 2013 and then revised in July 2014. The Scoping Report sets out the sustainability objectives and Core Strategy objectives (which are also being used for the HSA DPD) and these were then used to assess the preferred options of the Housing Site Allocations DPD.

The second stage, Stage B, is the development and refinement of options and policies and an assessment of the effects. This stage incorporates the development of the options and policies, the prediction and evaluation of the effects of the options and subsequent policies that make up the Preferred Options Housing Site Allocations DPD, along with the consideration of any mitigation measures and ways to maximise beneficial effects along the way.

The findings of this second stage were pulled together to create the SA/SEA Environmental Report which was published at the preferred options consultation stage in 2014, which is known as Stage C.

Following the preferred options consultation, changes were made and the options reassessed or updated where appropriate. The SA/SEA Environmental Report was then updated for the Proposed Submission consultation of the HSA DPD, which is known as Stage D. No significant changes were proposed as a result of the proposed submission consultation, therefore there was no need for reassessment.

Following the examination hearing sessions, a number of Main Modifications were proposed to the HSA DPD. These were reviewed and updates to the DPD were made where required. The Main Modifications did not result in any significant changes, so reassessment was not required.

Monitoring of the HSA DPD will take place now that it has been adopted, and this is Stage E.

(b) How the SA/SEA has been taken into account

As demonstrated in part (a) above, the SA/SEA is an iterative process that has been fully integrated into the plan-making process and has ensured that sustainability has been at the heart of the HSA DPD. At each stage, the findings of the SA/SEA have been considered by officers in developing the HSA DPD.

The SA/SEA Environmental Report has been written so that it is clearly demonstrated how the sustainability objectives have been taken into account at each stage, and integrated into the development of the HSA DPD.

In July 2014 the Council published its Preferred Options HSA DPD. This set out the sites the Council considered to be the best sites for allocation at that stage. In some areas options were suggested, with final decisions to be made following the consultation. The SA/SEA process was used to identify the sites and policy options to be taken forward as preferred options, and all proposed policies were also subject to SA. The Housing Site Allocations DPD and the SA Report were then updated following the Preferred Options consultation and now forms part of the Proposed Submission documents. Modifications to policies or sites since the preferred options stage have been reassessed.

The SA is an iterative process and so the comments received from the consultation on the Preferred Options and proposed submission version of the DPD fed into the development of the Submission DPD, so that the process of drafting policies, allocating sites and appraising the potential impacts could continue. As a result of the proposed submission consultation no major changes, requiring reassessment, are proposed.

Following the examination hearing sessions a number of Main Modifications were proposed in addition to several minor changes. These were reviewed and the SA/SEA updated where required, nonetheless, these did not result in any significant changes to the outcome of the HSA DPD.

In his report on the HSA DPD, the Inspector clarified his satisfaction with the Plan as modified. Furthermore the Inspector also confirmed that all of the legal requirements had been met, including an adequate SA/SEA.

(c) How the SA/SEA and consultation responses have been taken into account

Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the sustainability appraisal. During the development of the SA there are several formal stages of consultation. Informal comments received can also be taken into consideration.

The Scoping Report was published in September 2013 and went out to consultation to the statutory environmental bodies for 5 weeks. The consultation responses

received were taken account in the production a revised Scoping Report which was published in July 2014 and again subject to a 5 week consultation.

Consultation on the SA/SEA Scoping report took place in September 2013 and July 2014 for five weeks. A summary of the comments made during the consultation are set out in Appendix 5 of the SA/SEA Environmental Report for Submission (including Proposed Main Modifications).

Following the Regulation 18 consultation on the change to approach to produce a Housing Site Allocations DPD, rather than a Site Allocation and Delivery DPD, the Scoping Report was updated and the three statutory consultees given a further opportunity to comment. This consultation took place in July 2014.

A Preferred Options version of the Housing Site Allocations DPD was subject to a seven week consultation between 25 July and the 12 September 2014. A version of the SA/SEA was published alongside the Preferred Options DPD. Results from the consultation are published in the Statement of Consultation, and a summary of the key issues raised and how these have been taken into account in the production of the final SA/SEA are set out in section 6 (Appraisal) of the SA/SEA Environmental Report for Submission (including Proposed Main Modifications).

A Proposed Submission version of the Housing Site Allocations DPD was subject to a six week consultation between 9 November and 24 December 2015. A version of the SA/SEA was published alongside the Proposed Submission DPD. Results from the consultation are published in the [Statement of Consultation](#), and a summary of the key issues raised and how these have been taken into account in the production of the final DPD are set out in appendices FF to NN.

Following the examination hearing sessions a number of Main Modifications were proposed to the DPD. These were assessed and the SA/SEA updated where appropriate (see Appendix 14 of the SA/SEA Environmental Report for Submission (including Proposed Main Modifications)). The changes proposed do not have an impact on the overall sustainability of the plan, and in some cases may have a positive impact. Consultation on the proposed Main Modifications took place between 12 December 2016 and 30 January 2017, and no further updates were required to the SA/SEA Environmental Report.

(d) The reason for choosing the HSA DPD as adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives

The SEA Regulations require environmental reports (SA/SEA) to consider reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the Plan.

Section 6 of the SA/SEA Environmental Report for Submission (including Proposed Main Modifications) sets out the reasonable alternative considered. Four options were considered for progressing site allocations, and all of these options were considered to be reasonable alternatives as they are all approaches that could be taken to producing a new plan for the future development in the district.

Furthermore, the independent examiner of the HSA DPD concluded that the HSA DPD provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the area.

(e) The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the HSA DPD

As aforementioned, the HSA DPD is a daughter document of the Core Strategy, and therefore, the Monitoring Framework of the Core Strategy will be used to monitor the impact of the DPD. The key indicators fed into the Monitoring Framework which will be monitored and relevant conclusions will be included in the Annual Monitoring Report which is produced in December each year. The Monitoring framework is set out in Appendix 6 of the [Core Strategy](#), and contains more detail on the monitoring indicators and how they will be measured.

Monitoring should involve measuring indicators which enable a link to be established between implementation of the Core Strategy and HSA DPD and the likely significant effect being monitored. Potential indicators have been proposed in the [Scoping Report](#) context and baseline (see table 6) for each of the SA sub-objectives, drawing from existing sources to ensure the recording of data for the indicator is already established (at Unitary, Regional or National level). The effectiveness of policies should be assessed against measurable targets. Some policies aim to deliver a qualitative rather than quantitative outcome and in such instances it is appropriate to monitor whether the policy is delivering the intended trend or direction of travel.

In many cases information used in monitoring will be provided by outside bodies. This has already been evidenced by the additional baseline information provided by the statutory environmental consultees during the Core Strategy SA/SEA process.

Each of the policy sections within the HSA DPD includes a statement on the delivery of the policy and what monitoring will be undertaken. Furthermore, chapter 6 of the HSA DPD contains more detail on the monitoring indicators and how they will be measured.