The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Environmental Statement 3rd June 2016

Introduction

This Environmental Statement meets the requirements of Regulation 16(4) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme

The Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment throughout its production. The Policy AFH1 was subject to the consideration of the following:

- The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Reports undertaken for the Core Strategy in 2007 and 2009 together with the Scoping Report for the Strategic Sites Local Plan undertaken in 2011.
- The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan document in September 2014
- The Sustainability Appraisal of the Proposed Submission Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan document December 2014
- The Sustainability Appraisal of the Revised Proposed Submission Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan document February 2015
- The Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan document March 2015
- As a result of Main Modifications proposed from the examination, a Supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan document was produced in July 2015; and
- As a result of changes to government policy and subsequent revisions to the Plan, an update to the Sustainability Appraisal Report was produced in October 2015.

As part of the above process a number of iterations of policy options were considered against 22 Sustainability Objectives. These Objectives are contained and agreed in the relevant Scoping Reports and contain relevant environmental considerations, as required by The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Sustainability objectives and therefore environmental considerations have been integrated into the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan by assessing the most appropriate proportion of affordable housing and tenure, taking into account viability considerations against the 22 Sustainability Objectives. In addition thresholds, including site size, were also considered though the appraisal process. The analyses lead to the most sustainable reasonable

alternative being selected and therefore sustainability considerations outlined in the Sustainability Objectives have been integrated into the adopted Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan.

How the environmental report has been taken into account

The environmental report identified and assessed the most sustainable option, in light of all the reasonable alternatives dealt with. Therefore the environmental report has been fully taken into account in the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan.

How the opinions expressed in response to the invitations mentioned in regulation 12 have been taken into account

Regulation 12 relates to the preparation and consultation on a scoping report relevant to the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan. A specific scoping report for the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan was not produced as it was considered appropriate to use the Scoping Reports produced for the Core Strategy (in 2007 and updated in 2009) and the Strategic Sites Local Plan (in 2011). The data within those reports relating to affordable housing in particular was reviewed, together with the 22 Sustainability Objectives, and both were considered appropriate for the purposes of a Scoping Report for the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan.

Therefore, by reason of using the existing Scoping Reports, the responses received in 2007, 2009 and 2011 have been incorporated in the Sustainability Appraisal process of the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan and fully taken into account.

How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 13(4) have been taken into account

Regulation 13 relates to the consultation on the environmental report associated with a draft plan. There were 3 versions of a draft plan and 3 versions of an environmental report. All reports were subject of consultation. The responses received in relation to the plan can be found on the Council's website

http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning_and_Building_Control/Planning_Policy/Affordable_Housing_Delivery_Local_Plan/PPolicy_Affordable_Housing_Delivery_Local_Plan_Library_Evidence_Base.aspx .

No specific comments were made regarding the Environment Report. However, in terms of the plan consultation responses were taken into account where they related to site size, tenure and proportion.

The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with

There were 20 options initially considered for the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan. As a result of government policy changes during consultation on the Proposed Submission document, an additional two Options were assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Revised Proposed Submission Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan. The sustainability attributes are documented throughout the Sustainability Appraisal Report (Environmental Report). The reasonable alternative that was chosen was considered to be the most sustainable as it sought the greatest level of affordable housing possible taking into account viability and the need to deliver housing as well as meet the tenure requirements of the population in need of affordable housing. It also sought to create a mix of tenures in larger housing schemes and seek the integration of affordable housing into the design of developments to ensure social integrations.

The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme

Owing to the nature of the Local Plan Significant environmental effects were not identified and therefore are not monitored. However a monitoring programme has been identified as part of the Sustainability Appraisal and the Plan to ensure that social objectives are met.