

Appendix 7: Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

1. The Council has commissioned independent consultants (LUC) to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process as the Local Plan is prepared. As part of this process, they produced an appraisal of the principle of residential development on green field sites (July 2017)¹.
2. At this stage in the Sustainability Appraisal, the assessment did not consider any policy mitigation but instead highlighted potential issues, some of which may be addressed through mitigation. Where sites are currently allocated in the emerging Local Plan, Council officers are therefore considering whether the SA identifies any additional issues which should be incorporated into the policy for the site (see Appendix 8).
3. This stage in the overall assessment also considers whether or not the Sustainability Appraisal and the Council's assessment (as set out in the background paper) are indicating that the same sites should be allocated in the first place. This ensures that the SA process continues to form an integral part of the plan making process moving forward.
4. There are 40 green field sites which are being assessed². The Council's assessment examines five composite topics (and a total of at least 30 indicators within these). The Sustainability Appraisal identifies 13 Sustainability Objectives and examines 48 indicators. Clearly this presents the scope for a wide number of detailed variations between the assessments, which might affect a theoretical order of preference of sites.
5. Most of these green field sites will be required to meet the overall need for homes. Therefore the comparison between the SA and comparative assessments undertaken by EBC officers has focussed on the sites which score at either end of the scale. These are the sites where any significant differences between the EBC and SA assessments might affect the overall outcome as to whether a site should be allocated (as opposed to the theoretical order of preference of sites). Therefore the comparison has focussed on sites which the SA has scored well but which have not been allocated in the emerging Local Plan; and conversely sites which the SA has scored poorly but which have been allocated in the emerging Plan.
6. EBC officers have added up the 'scores' in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Table 2.1 to indicate a total score for each site. This process is set out in table C at the end of this Appendix. On this basis, of the top 10 sites as scored by

¹ Available at <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/289684/Eastleigh-SA-Greenfield-site-assessments.pdf>

² The SA also assessed an additional site 'Land off Cunningham Gardens' which should have been deleted at stage 1

the SA across the 48 indicators, five have not been initially allocated in the emerging Local Plan. These are set out in Table A overleaf.

Table A. Highest scoring sites not proposed to be allocated – selected scores

Site name	SA score for criterion 12.1: 'Affect separation of neighbouring settlements'	Total score	
		SA Quartile *	EBC Quartile *
36. West and east of Hamble Lane	-2	1	3
38. North of Satchell Lane	-2	1	1
29. Providence Hill and Oakhill	0	2	1
24. Broad Oak	0	2	2
11. South of Moorgreen Road	-2	2	3 or 4

*Specific examples:

1 = total score of site falls within the highest 25% of total scores i.e. most suitable sites

4 = total score for site falls within the lowest 25% of total scores i.e. least suitable sites

Highest scoring sites - countryside gaps

7. The first point, in terms of impact on countryside gaps / separation of settlements, is that the Sustainability Appraisal gives three of these sites the lowest score; 'significant negative' (-2). EBC's appraisal gave all these sites the lowest score; 'poor'. In actual fact the SA assessment is based on EBC's assessment, and therefore these scores are inevitably consistent. Based on EBC's approach, which gives priority to protecting countryside gaps, these sites are therefore excluded following the stage 2 comparative assessment.

8. The remaining two sites are not classed as 'poor' for their impact on countryside gaps in either the SA or the EBC assessment. In EBC's assessment they therefore make it through the stage 2 comparative assessment and are only discounted at the stage 3 development capacity assessments. Site 24 is ruled out on flood risk grounds. The SA records a 'significant negative' (-2) effect on these grounds too. Site 29 is ruled out because a buffer is required around a water course to protect biodiversity designations, meaning that the resultant development area is too small to allocate. The SA also records a 'negative' (-1) or 'significant negative' (-2) effect against various biodiversity criteria too. Therefore it is considered that the SA and EBC assessments are consistent on these points.

Highest scoring sites - comparison of total scores

9. The second and more secondary point, to fully complete the picture, is to look at the quartile of total scores that a site falls in. (Based on EBC's approach, as

all remaining sites are needed, this does not affect whether or not a site is selected, simply the order in which it is scored). Three of the sites fall in the same or at least adjacent quartile under both assessments, suggesting a broadly consistent conclusion. Nevertheless, the other two sites (sites 11 and 36) fall within significantly different quartiles, with the SA scoring them higher and therefore more suitable sites. It is therefore useful to understand where the SA has scored these sites particularly well. It gave them a 'significant positive' (+2) score as follows:

Site 11 – close to major employment centre (x2); close to primary school.

Site 36 – on a frequent bus route (x2).

10. It is considered that two issues arise from this. The first is that the Sustainability Appraisal is based on a rounded assessment flagging up areas of concern. The SA scored two of the above indicators twice over, once for economic aims and once for transport aims. It is EBC officers who have added up the total scores from the SA and in doing so have therefore effectively double weighted these factors. The second is that the EBC assessment does not include proximity to major employment centres, on the basis that employment patterns across the general area are diverse and most people will not work in their local employment area simply because it is there. This is not to deny a slight advantage to site 11 which has not been picked up by the EBC assessment, but it is not considered significant in terms of the overall assessment. These points will go some way to explaining the difference between the SA and EBC assessments.
11. Returning to the total SA scores, of the 10 lowest scoring sites, 5 have been initially allocated by the emerging Local Plan. These are set out in the table below.

Table B. Lowest scoring sites not proposed to be allocated – selected scores

Site name	SA score for criterion 12.1: 'Affect separation of neighbouring settlements'	Total score	
		SA Quartile*	EBC Quartile*
7. West of Durley Road	-1	3	2
4. East of Knowle Lane	0	4	1
2. East of Allbrook	-1	4	3
19. South of Maddoxford Lane	0	4	2
15. North of Peewit Hill Close	0	4	2

*Specific examples:

1 = total score of site falls within the highest 25% of total scores i.e. most suitable sites

4 = total score for site falls within the lowest 25% of total scores i.e. least suitable sites

Lowest scoring sites - countryside gaps

12. The first point, in terms of impact on countryside gaps / separation of settlements, is that the EBC assessment does not assess any of these sites as poor (enabling them to proceed to the next stage). However the Sustainability Appraisal assesses two of them as having a negative effect (-1). The SA is drawn from EBC's assessment for this topic and on closer examination this simply reflects the SA's scoring system, which gives an EBC 'average' site a -1 score. Therefore the assessments are consistent on this point.

Lowest scoring sites - comparison of total scores

13. The second and more secondary point, to fully complete the picture, is to look at the quartile of total scores that a site falls in. (Based on EBC's approach, as all remaining sites are needed, this does not affect whether or not a site is selected, simply the order in which it is scored). Two of the sites fall in the same quartile under both assessments, suggesting a broadly consistent conclusion. Nevertheless, the other three sites (sites 4, 15 and 19) fall within significantly different quartiles, with the EBC assessment scoring them higher. It is therefore useful to understand where the SA has scored these sites particularly poorly. It gave them a 'significant negative' (-2) score as follows:

Site 4 – (not) close to health;

Sites 4, 15, 19 – (not) close to major / minor rail stations and frequent / semi-frequent bus services (four indicators x2);

Sites 4, 15, 19 – (not) close to shopping;

Site 19 – (not) close to employment;

Site 4 – (not) close to secondary school;

Sites 4 and 15 – increased pollution;

Sites 4 and 15 – some biodiversity indicators;

Site 19 – loss of higher grade agricultural land.

14. The issues that arise from this are similar to those from the first set of sites. First by adding up all the SA scores, EBC officers have in effect double weighted four indicators relating to rail and bus services. In any case the EBC assessment scores sites 4 and 19 as 'poor' for transport / accessibility as well. Second the SA is scoring a site as poor with respect to employment, an issue which EBC officers consider is less significant. An additional point is that the EBC assessment does take account of pollution issues at the next stage (stage 3, development capacity). It should be noted that the EBC assessment scores sites 4 and 15 as good or average for biodiversity.

Conclusion

15. However the 40 sites shortlisted by the EBC approach are assessed, most are required in any case in-order that overall housing needs are met. Therefore the analysis above has focussed on sites which score at either end of the scale, where any significant differences between the EBC and SA assessments might affect the overall outcome. Specifically it has focussed on sites which the SA has scored well but which have not been allocated in the emerging Local Plan; and sites which the SA has scored poorly but which have been allocated in the emerging Plan. The analysis has revealed there is usually a reason for these apparently different outcomes. These usually either reflect nuances in the scoring system, or the priority the Council is giving to protecting countryside gaps.
16. The SA does not seek to weight different factors, and this paper sets out elsewhere why the Council considers it is appropriate to prioritise the protection of countryside gaps. Any remaining disparities generally relate to issues which will affect the detailed design and capacity of the site (not assessed by the SA which only looked at the principle of residential development), which the EBC process goes on to assess in any case. Therefore in overall terms, EBC officers consider that the above analysis suggests that the SA and EBC assessments of green field sites are broadly consistent in terms of outcome, and that any differences are justifiable.
17. The total scores have been calculated by EBC staff on the following basis:

Table C: Summary of total SA Scores for each site.

Impact	Score
Significant negative	-2
Negative	-1
No, negligible, mixed or uncertain	0
Positive	+1
Significant positive	+2

(The SA includes separate criteria for 'uncertain' effects and a 'mixture of positive and negative' effects which are scored 0 above. Using the precautionary principle, where the SA has a score with an 'uncertain' caveat, the score is unchanged. Therefore an 'uncertain significant negative' is – 2).

Table D: Summary of Scores: Highest Site to Lowest Site by SA score

EBC Site Ref	Site Name	SA Site Ref	Total SA Score	SA Score Quartile	Allocated in emerging Local Plan?
TOP 10 SITES:					
36	West and east of Hamble Lane, Bursledon	37	-5	1	No
35c	South of Pound Road, Bursledon	36	-10	1	Yes
13	West of Woodhouse Lane, Hedge End	13	-11	1	Yes
38	North of Satchell Lane, Bursledon	39	-11	1	No
8	East of Allington Lane, Fair Oak	8	-12	1	Yes
30	North of Providence Hill, Bursledon	30	-14	1	Yes
20	North east of Winchester Street, Botley	20	-17	2	Yes
29	Providence Hill and Oakhill, Bursledon	29	-17	2	No
24	Broad Oak Garage, Botley	24	-18	2	No
11	South of Moorgreen Road, West End	11	-19	2	No
SITES 'IN THE MIDDLE'					
1	West of Allbrook Way, Allbrook	1	-20	2	No
18	North of Hedge End railway station, Hedge End	18	-20	2	No
28	North of Bridge Road, Bursledon	28	-21	2	No
12	North of Barbe Baker Avenue, West End	12	-22	2	Yes ³
37	East of Shop Lane, Bursledon	38	-22	2	No
39	North and south of Kings Avenue, Hamble	40	-22	2	No
35a and 35b	South of Pound Road, Bursledon	35	-24	3	No

³ Site has resolution to permit – not allocated as an individual site but identified in DM23 'Housing sites with planning permission'

EBC Site Ref	Site Name	SA Site Ref	Total SA Score	SA Score Quartile	Allocated in emerging Local Plan?
3	Church Road, Bishopstoke	3	-25	3	Yes ⁴
16	North of Grange Road, Hedge End	16	-25	3	No
33	South east of Windmill Lane, Bursledon	33	-25	3	Yes
27	North of Blundell Lane, Bursledon	27	-27	3	Special Policy Area
9	Firtree Farm, Horton Heath	9	-28	3	Now permitted
32	Heath House Farm, Hedge End	32	-28	3	Yes
14	Rickwood Farm, Hedge End	14	-29	3	No
23	North of Broad Oak, Botley	23	-29	3	No
40a, b and c	Satchell Lane, Hamble	41	-29	3	No
10	Lechlade, Horton Heath	10	-30	3	Yes
26	Braxells Farm, Hedge End	26	-30	3	Yes
34	West and east of Shop Lane, Bursledon	34	-30	3	No
5	North of Knowle Lane, Horton Heath	5	-31	3	No
21	East of Kings Copse Avenue, Hedge End	21	-31	3	Yes
BOTTOM 10 SITES:					
7	West of Durley Road, Horton Heath	7	-32	3	Yes
17	North of Bubb Lane, Horton Heath	17	-32	3	No
22	East of Precosa Road, Hedge End	22	-32	3	No
4	East of Knowle Lane, Fair Oak	4	-33	4	Yes
2	East of Allbrook Way, Allbrook	2	-34	4	Yes

⁴ Site has resolution to permit – not allocated as an individual site but identified in DM23 ‘Housing sites with planning permission’

EBC Site Ref	Site Name	SA Site Ref	Total SA Score	SA Score Quartile	Allocated in emerging Local Plan?
19	South of Maddoxford Lane, Boorley Green	19	-34	4	Yes
6	Cockpit Farm, Horton Heath	6	-35	4	No
15	North of Peewit Hill Close, Hedge End	15	-41	4	Yes
25	East of Denham's Corner, Horton Heath	25	-42	4	No
31	South of Peewit Hill, Hedge End	31	-42	4	No