

Sustainability Appraisal of the Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan

Adoption Statement



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Appraisal of the Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan

Adoption Statement

| | |
|---------------|--|
| LC-267 | Document Control Box |
| Client | Wolverhampton City Council (Michele Ross & Simon Latham) |
| Report Title | Sustainability Appraisal of the Wolverhampton City Centre AAP: Adoption Statement |
| Status | Final |
| Filename | LC-267_Wolves_City_Centre_AAP_Adoption_2_200916ND.docx |
| Date | 20 th September 2016 |
| Author | ND |
| Reviewed | FG |
| Approved | ND |

Front cover: St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton

Contents

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1 | Introduction..... | 2 |
| 1.1 | Purpose of this Adoption Statement..... | 2 |
| 1.2 | Background to the Plan..... | 2 |
| 1.3 | Future Growth and Uses..... | 4 |
| 1.4 | Car Parking..... | 4 |
| 1.5 | Environmental Infrastructure..... | 4 |
| 1.6 | Content of this SA Adoption Statement..... | 5 |
| 2 | How the SA has informed the AAP..... | 7 |
| 2.1 | The SA Process and the Plan..... | 7 |
| 2.2 | Consultation..... | 7 |
| 2.3 | Scoping..... | 8 |
| 2.4 | Issues and Options (2013)..... | 8 |
| 2.5 | Reasonable Alternatives in the Draft Plan (2014)..... | 10 |
| 2.6 | Draft Plan..... | 13 |
| 2.7 | How did the AAP incorporate SA findings?..... | 15 |
| 2.8 | Accessing the documents linked to the Plan and SA process..... | 15 |
| 3 | Integrating findings from the SA process into the Plan..... | 16 |
| 3.1 | Sustainability considerations and the Plan..... | 16 |
| 3.2 | Recommendations..... | 16 |
| 4 | Monitoring the effects of the Plan..... | 17 |
| 4.1 | Monitoring proposals..... | 17 |
| 4.2 | Links with the Annual Monitoring Report..... | 18 |
| | References..... | 19 |

Figures

Figure 1.1 City Centre AAP location map

Tables

Table 2.1 Main outputs
Table 2.2 SA framework
Table 2.3 Results of the assessment of reasonable alternatives
Table 2.4 SA results at preferred options stage

Acronyms

AAP Area Action Plan
DCLG Department of Communities and Local Government
EC European Commission
PPP Plans, Policies and Programmes
SA Sustainability Appraisal
SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
WCC Wolverhampton City Council

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Adoption Statement

1.1.1 This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Adoption Statement has been prepared for the Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council (WCC).

1.1.2 SA is required during the preparation of an Area Action Plan. The local planning authority must carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals. This helps the authority to assess how the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

1.1.3 According to European Directive 2001/42/EC, all plans, programmes and strategies with an impact on the environment require a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA). In order to follow UK best practice, the approach to the SA has integrated the requirements of the SEA Directive.

1.1.4 An SEA involves the systematic identification and subsequent evaluation of the environmental impacts of strategic actions. An SA is an assessment considering the social, environmental and economic effects of implementing a plan or programme.

1.1.5 This SA Adoption Statement is the final stage of the integrated SA process for the AAP.

1.2 Background to the Plan

1.2.1 The Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan has been produced by WCC and its public, private and voluntary sector partners as part of the new planning strategy for the City, called the Local Plan. The Local Plan is the main consideration when guiding future development in the City. It is also key to the delivery of Wolverhampton's City Strategy.

- 1.2.2 The City Centre is now an important shopping centre serving the Black Country with a range of high street shops and independent retailers. This retail offer is supported by civic, commercial, business, educational, cultural, religious, leisure and residential functions, including the University of Wolverhampton, art galleries, theatres, places of worship, concert venues, parks, sports facilities, swimming baths and Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club. The City Centre also has a crucial role as a focus for business and commerce, including supporting Wolverhampton's strong, modern manufacturing base and small and medium enterprises which drive the Wolverhampton economy. The area within the ring road alone provides around 12,000 jobs - this is the single largest concentration of employment in Wolverhampton.
- 1.2.3 The City Centre has excellent public transport links. Phase one of the Wolverhampton Interchange, a new bus station, opened in 2011 and plans for phase two include a new railway station and an extension to the Metro tram line. Coupled with existing access to motorway, tram and bus networks, this will provide excellent accessibility from the surrounding area and cities.

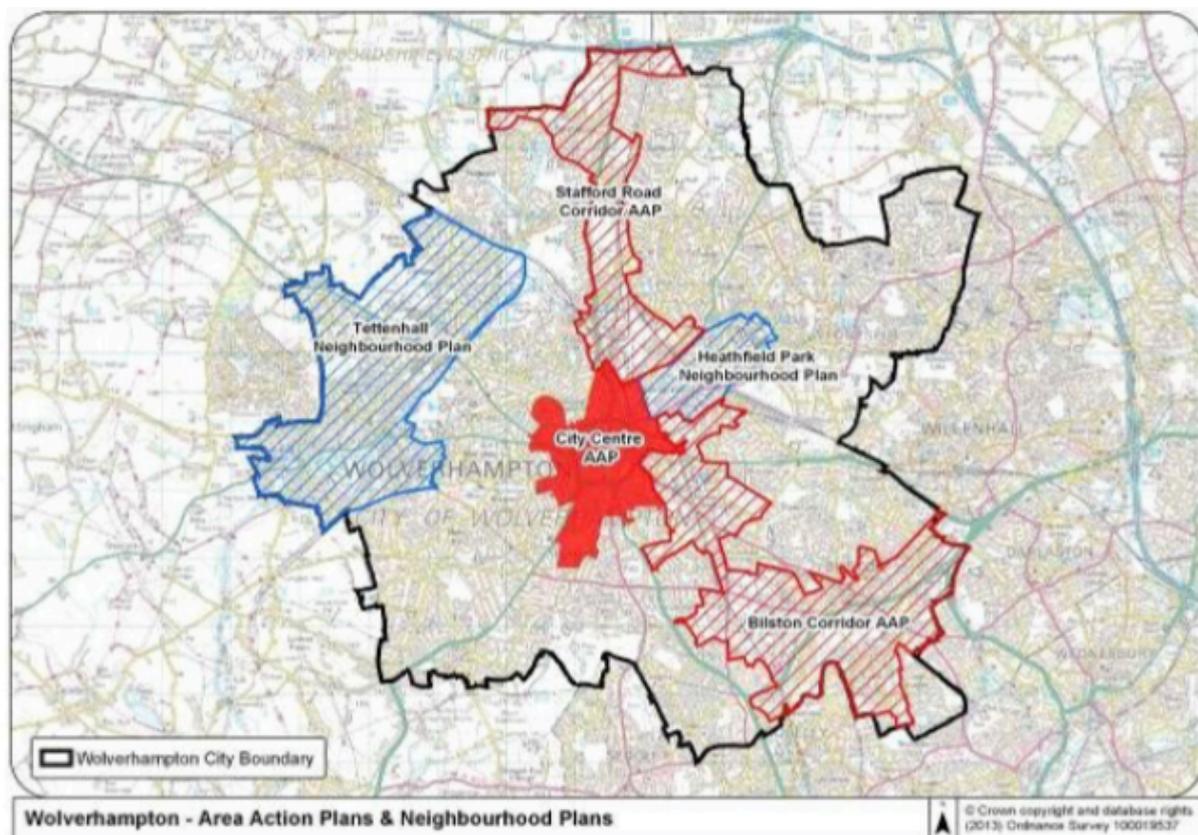


Figure 1.1: City Centre AAP location map

1.3 Future Growth and Uses

- 1.3.1 The City Centre has strong potential for growth in the short to medium term, with a wide range of development opportunities to deliver regeneration.
- 1.3.2 The Plan should respond to changing shopping patterns and the impact of the 2008 recession by encouraging a wider range of activity including a far stronger leisure offer, additional Grade A office accommodation and a significant quantity of new housing. For shopping uses, the priority should be to consolidate and reconfigure the existing retail core of the Mander Centre, Wulfrun Centre, Dudley St and Victoria St and then plan for limited growth later in the plan period in the Southside area.
- 1.3.3 The overall approach should be one of promoting mixed-use development and provide flexibility to respond to changing market conditions, but some areas should be prioritised for particular uses to ensure that key outputs are delivered – for example ensuring a minimum level of new housing and offices.

1.4 Car Parking

- 1.4.1 Whilst currently the City Centre has broadly the right quantity and balance of car parking spaces, the location, type, accessibility, signage and quality of parking spaces need to be improved, linked to future regeneration projects.
- 1.4.2 Therefore, current levels of car parking should be maintained, with a focus on short stay parking within the ring road, comprising accessible, well-signed, higher density and better quality parking befitting of a City Centre. A Car Parking Strategy is currently being undertaken.

1.5 Environmental Infrastructure

- 1.5.1 The City Centre has a rich and distinctive character but peripheral areas are in need of regeneration, including bringing key listed buildings back into use.
- 1.5.2 A number of sites with local character and distinctiveness need to be designated to protect local character in All Saints, Blakenhall and Graiseley.
- 1.5.3 Existing environmental infrastructure is fragmented and under-used.

1.6 Content of this SA Adoption Statement

- 1.6.1 SEA Regulations' 16.3c)(iii) and 16.4 require that a 'statement' be made available to accompany the plan, as soon as possible after the adoption of the plan or programme.
- 1.6.2 The SEA Regulations highlight that the statement should contain the following information:
- The reasons for choosing the preferred strategy for the Plan as adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with;
 - How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
 - How consultation responses have been taken into account; and
 - Measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the Plan.
- 1.6.3 The Town and Country Planning Regulations (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 36a)(ii) similarly require that a SA Statement be produced at Adoption. This serves a very similar purpose to the SEA Adoption Statement. This document, the Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement, refers to both processes and addresses the requirements of both.
- 1.6.4 The SA Adoption Statement should incorporate:
- Sustainability considerations - how these have been integrated into the development plan document;
 - Options and consultation responses - how any received on the development plan document and sustainability appraisal reports (at all stages) have been taken into account;
 - Reasons for the choice of alternatives in light of other reasonable alternatives considered; and
 - A programme for monitoring sustainability effects - measures to be taken to monitor the significant sustainability effects of implementing the development plan document.
- 1.6.5 In this context, the purpose of the SA Adoption Statement is to outline how the SA process has influenced and informed the Plan's development process and demonstrate how consultation on the SA has been taken into account.

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (No.1633)

- 1.6.6 **Chapter 2** of this SA Adoption Statement summarises how the SA has informed and influenced the AAP, including in light of the other alternatives dealt with. **Chapter 3** highlights how sustainability considerations (including environmental considerations) have been integrated into the Plan. The final chapter, **Chapter 4**, sets out the proposed monitoring regime for the SA, which it is proposed will be carried out alongside monitoring for the Plan.

2 How the SA has informed the AAP

2.1 The SA Process and the Plan

2.1.1 The main aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan making process to maximise the Plan's sustainability value. In this context the SA process has fed into the AAP through providing information at each stage of its development process.

2.1.2 **Table 2.1** highlights the main outputs of the SA process in conjunction with those of the AAP. A more detailed description of how the respective stages of the Plan and SA have interlinked is presented in **sections 2.2 to 2.6**.

Table 2.1: Main outputs

| Stage of the City Centre AAP | Stage of the SA process |
|--|---|
| Initial evidence gathering WCC | SA Scoping Report (February 2013) |
| Issues and Options (December 2013) | Issues and SA Report (November 2013) |
| Draft Plan (December 2014) | Reasonable Alternatives SA Report (October 2014) & SA Report (December 2014) |
| Publication Version of AAP (June 2015) | Technical Note to assess small number of changes made between the draft plan and publication version (May 2015) |
| Submission Version of the AAP (September 2015) | SA Technical Note (September 2015) |
| Inspector's comments and Main Modifications | SA Technical Note (March 2016) |

2.2 Consultation

2.2.1 The SEA Directive requires consultation responses to be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to a legislative procedure. Transparency of plan making is a corner stone of the SEA Directive.

2.2.2 Consultation has been an integral part of the SA of the AAP. In addition to enabling the opinions of the statutory environmental bodies and other stakeholders to be taken into account, it has provided an opportunity for the public to be informed as to how decisions are made

2.2.3 All stages outlined in **Table 2.1** were the subject of public consultation for six weeks with the exception of the scoping report, which was sent only to the statutory consultees for five weeks: the Environment Agency, English Heritage (now Historic England) and Natural England.

2.2.4 Comments were managed by WCC and distributed to the SA team as necessary. The SA team received no SA specific comments but discussed consultation findings that affected any of the SA topics listed in Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive.

2.3 Scoping

2.3.1 The Scoping Report was prepared in 2013 and published for consultation with the statutory consultees. It included information about:

- Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes,
- Collecting baseline information;
- Identifying sustainability issues and problems; and
- A framework of sustainability appraisal objectives.

2.3.2 The SA Framework is the key instrument for preparing the assessment of the AAP. A summary of the SA objectives is presented in **Table 2.2**.

2.4 Issues and Options (2013)

2.4.1 It is a requirement of the SEA Directive that plan makers should identify, describe and evaluate reasonable alternatives to the plan. Consequently the integrated SA/SEA process has undertaken this exercise as part of the appraisal of the City Centre AAP. The assessment of reasonable alternatives took place at the Draft Plan Stage (October 2014) in the AAP preparation process. This facilitated iteration between the plan making and appraisal process.

2.4.2 Before the Draft Plan Stage, the plan makers undertook a stage referred to as Issues and Options (see **Table 2.1**). The purpose of the Issues and Options stage for the AAP was to set out the broad issues which it was considered should be addressed through the preparation of the AAP, and to highlight the vision for the City Centre. It also outlined the types of changes that were likely to be required to achieve this vision. Prior to consultation on the Issues and Options Version of the AAP, which took place in December 2013, the SA team prepared an SA Report (November 2013) to contribute to the development of Issues for the City Centre. Despite the name of this stage there were no reasonable alternatives, or options, to assess.

2.4.3 The purpose of the Issues and Options SA report (November 2013) was to inform the development of the AAP at this early stage of preparation and to highlight where potential sustainability issues may arise. This exercise served to usefully identify key issues for the plan making process.

Table 2.2: SA Framework

| SA Objective | Sustainability theme |
|--|---|
| 1 To safeguard and improve community health, safety and well being. | Health |
| 2 To reduce traffic congestion and promote sustainable modes of transport. | Accessibility and transportation |
| 3 To reduce waste and maximise opportunities for innovative environmental technologies in waste management. | Material assets |
| 4 To plan for the anticipated levels of climate change. | Climate change |
| 5 To minimise Wolverhaption's contribution to climate change. | Climate change |
| 6 To provide environmentally sound, good quality affordable housing for all. | Housing |
| 7 To encourage opportunities for investment in order to grow the local and sub-regional economy. | Economic factors |
| 8 To reduce poverty, crime and social deprivation and secure economic inclusion. | Quality of life, population |
| 9 To ensure easy and equitable access to services, facilities and opportunities. | Transportation and accessibility, quality of life |
| 10 To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings. | Historic environment |
| 11 To protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. | Historic environment |
| 12 To use and manage land, energy, soil, mineral and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewables. | Material assets, water and soil |
| 13 To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity. | Biodiversity and geodiversity |
| 14 To maintain, and where necessary, improve, the overall quality of the natural and built environment. | Air, water and soil |

2.4.4 The AAP Issues and Options Document contained 20 Policy Areas. These were structured around three “Key Drivers”, as follows:

- Delivering a more prosperous and cohesive City Centre;
- Creating Sustainable Communities; and

- Transforming the Environment and addressing Climate Change.

2.4.5 The Issues and Options SA Report (November 2013) concluded that *‘the descriptions of the policy areas, tend to already have positive connotations for the sustainability of the plan. Where the document states that a policy area should emphasise a certain topic this has been identified as likely to cause positive effects on the plans sustainability. The descriptive text has aimed to highlight the positives already present, whilst identifying where additional topics could be included or emphasised in order to maximise the sustainability potential of the AAP.*

2.4.6 *Currently the assessment is based on broad policy areas and their aims which has meant that the assessment cannot definitely refer to what effect the plan will have as it stands. In order to rigorously assess the plan, clearer options and policies will have to be drafted and refined’.*

2.5 Reasonable Alternatives in the Draft Plan (2014)

2.5.1 The second stage of preparing and appraising reasonable alternatives took place during 2014 when reasonable alternatives (known as options) for the Draft Plan version of the AAP were identified and assessed. The appraisal findings were presented in the SA Report dated October 2014.

2.5.2 The Draft Plan AAP report contained eleven Policy Areas. These were structured around the original three “Key Drivers” identified during the Issues and Options stage, as follows:

- Delivering a more prosperous and cohesive City Centre;
- Creating Sustainable Communities; and
- Transforming the Environment and addressing Climate Change.

2.5.3 Some 19 alternative options were proposed for the Policy Areas. These represented a range of reasonable alternatives for guiding new development and change in the City Centre. Under circumstances whereby constraints limited the scope of creation of alternatives for a particular policy area e.g. education and learning ‘reasonable alternatives’ were not put forward.

2.5.4 Assessment findings (see **Table 2.3**) from the Reasonable Alternatives stage (October 2014) revealed that several of the 19 policy options performed well or had no effect in sustainability terms. The following seven policy areas were considered to have uncertain or negative sustainability effects in some way:

- Policy CC1-B: Identify alternative locations to be the focus for future retail provision.
- Policy CC2-B: Focus office provision in locations other than the Interchange and Commercial Gateway.
- Policy CC3-B: Increase leisure provision at locations other than Westside, Interchange and Commercial Gateway and Shopping Core Character Areas.
- Policy CC4: Maintain an adequate supply of local quality employment land.
- Policy CC5: Enhance the role of the City Centre as a focus for education and learning.
- Policy CC6: Improve the transport infrastructure to accommodate growth and change in line with other aspects of the plan.
- Policy CC7: Build a minimum of 2053 additional homes on existing commitments, allocated housing sites and upper floors of commercial buildings.

2.5.5 In the case of these seven policy options, recommendations for improving their sustainability performance are made in the Options SA Report (October 2014). The Options SA Report includes suggestions for strengthening particular policy influences rather than introducing new ones. The report also contains recommendations to help reduce adverse effects within a particular policy option if appropriate.

2.5.6 The full assessment results including narrative assessment detail for these policies can be accessed in the Options SA Report (October 2014).

Table 2.3: SA findings of the reasonable alternatives identified to inform the Draft Plan. These identified adverse or uncertain findings (SA Report, October 2014)

| Key driver 1 - Delivering a more prosperous and cohesive City Centre | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|---|---|---|---|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| SA Objectives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| Policy CC1 - Meeting Shopping Needs | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC1-A | 0 | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CC1-B | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | +/- | 0 | +/- | 0 | +/- | 0 | 0 | - |
| Policy CC2 - Offices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC2-A | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | + | + | 0 | + | + | 0 | + |
| CC2-B | 0 | -- | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | + | + | - | 0 | +/- | +/- | 0 | +/- |
| Policy CC3 - Leisure and Cultural Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC3-A | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CC3-B | + | - | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | + | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Policy CC4 - Providing Sufficient Employment Land | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | 0 | +/- | +/- | + | 0 | 0 |
| Policy CC5 - Education and learning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|---|
| CC5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | ++ | + | +/- | +/- | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Policy CC6 - Transport | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC6 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | +/- | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|----|--|
| Key driver 2 - Creating Sustainable Communities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SA Objectives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | |
| Policy CC7 - Delivering a Sustainable Mix of Housing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC7 | + | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | + | +/- | 0 | +/- | + | 0 | 0 | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| Key driver 3 - Transforming the Environment and Addressing Climate Change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SA Objectives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | |
| Policy CC8 - High quality design and public realm | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC8-A | + | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | ++ | + | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | |
| CC8-B | + | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | + | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | |
| Policy CC9 - Protecting and enhancing historic character and local distinctiveness | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC9-A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| CC9-B | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Policy CC10 - Delivering environmental infrastructure in the City Centre | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC10-A | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | ++ | |
| CC10-B | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | ++ | |
| Policy CC11 - City centre renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC11-A | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | |
| CC11-B | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | |
| CC11-C | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Key: | |
| Likely strong positive effect | ++ |
| Likely positive effect | + |
| Neutral/no effect | 0 |
| Likely adverse effect | - |
| Likely strong adverse effect | -- |
| Uncertain effects | +/- |

- 2.5.7 The council's planning policy team used the information from the SA report along with other evidence including consultation responses to prepare a preferred suite of options for the AAP.
- 2.5.8 In summary, the identification of options was a thorough and inclusive approach which lead to a good range of policy variations. For full details and individual assessment of policy options, please see the SA Report on Options (2014).
- 2.5.9 The findings from the options process did not recommend that any policy option be abandoned; rather the SA process sought to provide plan makers with information about how each policy option performed and made recommendations about enhancing the policy where appropriate. No new policies were suggested as a result of the options process during the options phase.

2.6 Draft Plan

- 2.6.1 The Draft Plan version of the AAP (December, 2014) included eleven preferred policy options each of which were assessed by the SA process. A number of character areas and development opportunities were also included in the plan at this stage. The results of the SA process are presented in **Table 2.4**.

Table 2.4: SA results at preferred options stage

| SA Objectives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|--|----|----|-----|---|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|
| Key driver 1 - Delivering a more prosperous and cohesive City Centre | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC1 | 0 | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CC2 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | + | + | 0 | + | + | 0 | + |
| CC3 | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CC4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | 0 | +/- | +/- | + | 0 | 0 |
| CC5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | ++ | + | +/- | +/- | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CC6 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | +/- | 0 | 0 | 0 | + |
| Key driver 2 - Creating Sustainable Communities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC7 | + | 0 | +/- | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | + | +/- | 0 | +/- | + | 0 | 0 |
| Key driver 3 - Transforming the Environment and Addressing Climate Change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC8 | + | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | ++ | ++ | + | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | + |
| CC9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| CC10 | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | ++ |
| CC11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | + |
| Character Areas (CAs) and Development Opportunities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CA1 | 0 | + | +/- | 0 | + | + | ++ | 0 | + | 0 | + | + | 0 | + |
| CA2 | + | + | +/- | 0 | + | + | ++ | + | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CA3 | + | ++ | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | + | + | + | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CA4 | + | + | +/- | + | + | ++ | ++ | + | + | ++ | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CA5 | + | 0 | +/- | + | 0 | + | + | + | + | + | + | 0 | + | + |
| CA6 | + | + | +/- | + | + | + | + | ++ | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| CA7 | + | ++ | 0 | ++ | ++ | + | + | + | + | 0 | ++ | + | 0 | + |
| CA8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | 0 | 0 | ++ | + | + | 0 | 0 |
| CA9 | + | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | + | + | ++ | + | + | 0 | + |
| CA10 | ++ | ++ | +/- | + | + | ++ | + | 0 | + | + | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| CA11 | + | 0 | +/- | + | 0 | + | + | 0 | + | ++ | + | + | 0 | 0 |
| Infrastructure, Delivery and Monitoring | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CC12 | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Key: | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Likely strong positive effect | ++ |
| Likely positive effect | + |
| Neutral/no effect | 0 |
| Likely adverse effect | - |
| Likely strong adverse effect | -- |
| Uncertain effects | +/- |

2.6.2

Four SA Objectives (see **Table 2.1**) were associated with uncertainty of effect: number 3 (waste), 9 (transport), 10 (historic environment) and 11 (townscape). Recommendations to help address this uncertainty were provided in the SA report.

2.7 How did the AAP incorporate SA findings?

- 2.7.1 The AAP was subsequently published for consultation with various amendments that had been prepared in response to the SA findings. The new consultation on the Publication Stage of the Plan was again subject to appraisal through the SA process. Assessment at this stage, presented as an addendum to the previous round of assessment (May, 2015) revealed that, *'the extent of changes is small and, in general [the Plan], performs well in terms of sustainability. In conclusion, the sustainability performance of the AAP has changed for the better'*.
- 2.7.2 Following consultation on the publication version of the AAP, another addendum was prepared (September 2015) to appraise changes, known as modifications, made before submission, which were minor. Findings at this stage of appraisal were as follows: *'The extent of changes is small and MMs have been assessed as performing either well or neutrally in terms of sustainability'*.
- 2.7.3 As part of the examination process, the Inspector recommended modifications to the submission version of the AAP. These were assessed and the findings presented in a technical note (March 2016). The findings revealed that all main modifications were assessed as having no, or negligible, effects with regards to sustainability performance.

2.8 Accessing the documents linked to the Plan and SA process

- 2.8.1 All documents and background information associated with the AAP, including those linked to the SA process, can be accessed on the Wolverhampton City Council website at: www.wolverhampton.gov.uk.

3 Integrating findings from the SA process into the Plan

3.1 Sustainability considerations and the Plan

3.1.1 As discussed in **Chapter 2**, the SA process has informed and influenced the AAP throughout its preparation process. The SA has highlighted at different stages the sustainability issues which had the potential to arise as a result of the implementation of earlier and later versions of the Plan's policies and proposals.

3.1.2 The AAP has addressed these potential sustainability issues by taking the findings of the SA process into account. Besides the various SA Reports that were prepared as part of the SA process, the SA team attended regular project meetings with the Plan making team. This served to keep abreast of proposals and provide direct input to the plan making process.

3.2 Recommendations

3.2.1 The SA suggested measures to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effects of implementing the AAP throughout Chapter 7 of the SA Report (December, 2014). These measures were collectively referred to as 'mitigation measures'.

3.2.2 The SA Report recommended that those opportunities identified as uncertain should be monitored in order to establish early on in the process whether they will become negative, as well as provide time to compensate for and mitigate these potential negative effects. Together they represent opportunities to help address any potential adverse effects and simultaneously serve to maximise sustainability performance of the policy.

4 Monitoring the effects of the Plan

4.1 Monitoring proposals

4.1.1 The SEA Directive states that 'member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes...in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action' (Article 10.1). In addition, the Environmental Report (or SA Report) should provide information on a 'description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring' (Annex I (i)).

4.1.2 The monitoring requirements typically associated with the SA process are recognised as placing heavy demands on authorities with SA responsibilities. For this reason, the proposed monitoring framework should focus on those aspects of the environment that are likely to be negatively impacted upon, where the impact is uncertain or where particular opportunities for improvement might arise.

4.1.3 The SA process has identified some areas which would benefit from being monitored due to their uncertain effects. The areas specified for monitoring include:

- Private car use;
- Accessibility of services and facilities;
- Capacity of services and facilities;
- Whether the character setting of an area or historic feature, such as a listed building, is affected by development; and
- Waste production.

4.1.4 Monitoring is particularly useful in answering the following questions:

- Were the assessment's predictions of sustainability effects accurate?
- Does the AAP contribute to the achievement of desired sustainability objectives?
- Are mitigation measures performing as well as expected?
- Are there any unforeseen adverse effects? Are these within acceptable limits, or is remedial action required?

4.1.5 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the environmental effects of a plan, as well as to measure success against the plan's objectives. It is beneficial if the monitoring strategy builds on monitoring systems which are already in place. It should also be noted that monitoring could provide useful information for future plans and programmes.

4.2 Links with the Annual Monitoring Report

4.2.1 The SA guidance suggests that SA monitoring and reporting activities can be integrated into the regular forward planning cycle. As part of the monitoring process for their Local Plan, WCC will be required to prepare monitoring reports. It is anticipated that elements of the SA monitoring programme for the Management Plan could be incorporated into these processes.

4.2.2 The monitoring of individual schemes/proposals should also be addressed at project level.

References

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) National Planning Practice Guidance web-based resource, 12 September 2014. Available at:
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/what-is-a-sustainability-appraisal-and-how-does-it-relate-to-strategic-environmental-assessment/>

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Statutory Instruments 2004 No. 1633

Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, Statutory Instruments 2004 No. 2204



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

1 Bath Street Cheltenham GL50 1YE

T: 01242 525222

E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

CHELtenham



Lepus Consulting
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1YE

t: 01242 525222
w: www.lepusconsulting.com
e: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com