



Basingstoke
and Deane

Overton Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2029

**Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic
Environmental Assessment Report: Adoption
Statement**

July 2016

Contents

1. This Statement	2
2. Introduction	2
3. How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the Neighbourhood Plan.....	3
4. How the SA has been taken into account	3
5. How the results of public consultation have been taken into account.....	5
6. The reasons for choosing the made Neighbourhood Plan	5
7. How any significant sustainability effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored.....	6
8. Further information	6

1. This Statement

1.1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) involves a series of procedural steps which are designed to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations¹. The final step in the process involves preparing a 'statement' at the time a neighbourhood plan is 'made'. The SA (inc. SEA) Adoption Statement addresses the requirement to prepare a post-adoption 'statement' under Part 4 of the SEA Regulations.

1.2 The SA (inc. SEA) Adoption Statement includes information on:

- how environmental and sustainability considerations have been integrated into the Neighbourhood Plan
- how the SA/SEA has been taken into account
- how the results of public consultation have been taken into account
- the reasons for choosing the made Neighbourhood Plan, in light of the other reasonable alternatives, and
- how any significant sustainability/environmental effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Overton Neighbourhood Plan (ONP) sets out the planning policy framework for the Overton Neighbourhood Area over the period 2016 - 2029. The ONP was prepared so as to accord with the then emerging Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011 - 2029, and it sets out a vision, objectives and a range of policies for the Parish/Overton Neighbourhood Area (which follows the parish boundaries). Policies relate to a range of topics, including housing, landscape, built environment, sustainable design principles and community facilities.

2.2 The vision for the ONP is as follows:

- For Overton to remain a village, set in its open landscape. The goal therefore is to ensure that new housing has the least possible adverse impact on the features valued most by local residents, whilst also welcoming new residents to the community.
- For Overton to continue to be a place where people of all ages and abilities can thrive, feel safe and be healthy, with opportunities to learn, work, be part of the community, take exercise, enjoy the rural landscape and heritage, and lead fulfilling lives.
- Enhance the village environment and contribute to protecting the global environment.

2.3 Following extensive work and community involvement on the ONP by the Overton Neighbourhood Planning Group (ONPG), Overton Parish Council (OPC) submitted the ONP (2016-2029) and supporting documents to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) in August 2015.

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

- 2.4 BDBC subsequently published the ONP for formal public consultation on 18 September 2015 for 6 weeks (Regulation 16 stage) and all representations received were forwarded to an Independent Examiner who was appointed by BDBC, with the agreement of OPC, to examine the ONP.
- 2.5 In December 2015, the Independent Examiner provided his Report to BDBC and OPC which concluded that, subject to a number of modifications, the ONP meets the basic conditions. The Independent Examiner also recommended that, subject to the modifications proposed, the ONP should proceed to a referendum.
- 2.6 Following a positive outcome at the neighbourhood plan referendum on 23 June 2016, the ONP was 'made' by BDBC on 21 July 2016.
- 2.7 The stages of the neighbourhood plan and SA (Inc. SEA) processes are discussed below.

3. How environmental/sustainability considerations have been integrated into the Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 In parallel with the development of the ONP, an SA process has been undertaken. This incorporated SEA, as required by the SEA Regulations. OPC commissioned consultants (AECOM) to undertake the SA (inc. SEA) of the ONP.
- 3.2 SA/SEA are used to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the appraisal is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the neighbourhood planning area, and the quality of life of residents through the neighbourhood planning process.
- 3.3 The SA was integral to and has informed the plan making process at each stage. More specifically, the ONP states the following:

“Sustainability is the key to the whole planning process and has guided our thinking from the start. Sustainability is the central theme of our vision statement, our objectives and policies. Our Plan describes how proposed developments will bring sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits to the whole community.” (p.8)

4. How the SA has been taken into account

Consultation on the Scope for the SA (inc. SEA)

- 4.1 In October 2014 BDBC determined that the ONP required an SEA. Therefore an SA (inc. SEA) Scoping Report for the ONP, which presented the proposed scope of the SA, was prepared and provided to the three statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural

England) for a five week period of consultation in December 2014. The SA states that the Scoping Report was agreed by the consultation bodies as providing an appropriate 'basis' for the appraisal.

Regulation 14 Consultation

- 4.2 During the preparation of the draft version of the ONP, in late January 2015, a public exhibition was undertaken, which, building on extensive public consultation already carried out, presented revised strategic options for housing sites. Summary findings of the SA process were also presented at this stage. The site allocations and policies for the Neighbourhood Plan were then further refined with additional policies incorporated in response to recommendations made through the SA process (see p.11, p.13 and Appendix D of the Consultation Statement submitted at Regulation 15 stage). This work culminated in the publication of the draft version of the ONP for formal public consultation (Regulation 14) from 16 February to 31 March 2015. The SA was published alongside the ONP during the course of this consultation, as required by the SEA Regulations. The SA assessed the likely significant effects associated with the housing allocations and policies which made up the ONP and also involved consideration of reasonable alternatives.

Submission version of the ONP

- 4.3 Following the Regulation 14 consultation on the ONP, the allocations and policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan were revised in order to take into account responses received during the six week period of consultation.
- 4.4 An SA of the revised version of the ONP was then undertaken. A submission version of the SA Report (July 2015) was subsequently prepared to accompany the submission/Regulation 15 version of the ONP. This updated version also addressed relevant representations made during the public consultation process at Regulation 14 stage. The purpose of SA Report was to:
- identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the current ONP and alternatives, and
 - provide an opportunity for statutory consultees, interested parties and the public to offer views on any aspect of the SA process.
- 4.5 The SA Report contains:
- an outline of the contents and main objectives of the ONP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes
 - relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and key sustainability issues
 - the SA Framework of objectives and appraisal questions against which the ONP has been assessed
 - the appraisal of alternative approaches for the ONP

- the likely significant effects of the ONP in environmental terms
- the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the ONP, and
- the next steps for the ONP and accompanying SA process.

Independent Examination and Referendum

- 4.6 Following submission to BDBC, the ONP and accompanying SA Report underwent Regulation 16 public consultation from 18 September 2015 for 6 weeks.
- 4.7 Independent Examination was subsequently undertaken, with the Examiner's Report received at the end of December 2015. Subject to a number of modifications being made, the Independent Examiner recommended that the ONP would meet the basic conditions and did not breach and was otherwise compatible with EU obligations and with Convention Rights.
- 4.8 The recommended modifications to the ONP were evaluated in relation to the findings of the SA Report accompanying the submission version of the ONP. It was considered that the proposed modifications would not affect the overall SA findings presented in the SA Report and would not have significant environmental effects.
- 4.9 The updated ONP was subject to a referendum on 23 June 2016, organised by BDBC. To the question "do you want Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Overton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?", 53% of votes cast said yes.
- 4.10 Reflecting the favourable outcome of the referendum, the ONP was subsequently 'made' by BDBC on 21 July 2016.

5. How the results of public consultation have been taken into account

- 5.1 Each version of the SA (inc. SEA) has been subject to public consultation. Comments from the statutory consultation bodies at all stages of the SA (inc. SEA) process were taken into account. The SA Report was revised in response to comments made during the Regulation 14 public consultation.
- 5.2 Representations received on the SA (inc. SEA) consultation at Regulation 14 stage and the ONPG's response, have been provided on the parish council website for public viewing².

6. The reasons for choosing the made Neighbourhood Plan

- 6.1 The SA (inc. SEA) has considered reasonable alternatives and, for each iteration of the SA, a clear audit trail has been provided of the preferred options taken forward within the ONP. The SA (inc. SEA) concludes that the ONP is likely to lead to some significant positive effects and also some

² http://www.overtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Residents-responses-tabulated20_07_15.pdf

residual significant negative effects. To help address residual significant negative effects, the submission version of the ONP includes a number of policy interventions to help limit potential effects and achieve enhancements where possible.

- 6.2 A number of alternative approaches were considered in the SA (inc. SEA) in relation to the provision of new housing development to be taken forward through the Neighbourhood Plan. These were designed to deliver the 150 houses which Policy SS5 (Neighbourhood Planning) of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029) specifies should be delivered in and around Overton over the Plan period. The alternatives analysed related to both the overall site allocation strategy, as well as different combinations of sites.
- 6.3 The development management policies in the ONP have also been incorporated into the SA as set out in the SA Report (inc. SEA). The SA explains how the policies help to mitigate the environmental effects associated with the ONP.

7. How any significant environmental/sustainability effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored

- 7.1 The ONP will be subject to on-going monitoring as part of BDBC's Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR). This will demonstrate the on-going suitability of the ONP's policies/allocations and enable any unforeseen effects arising from their implementation to be identified. Monitoring will also provide information as to whether the predicted effects of the SA were accurate.
- 7.2 Monitoring plays an important role in assessing the actual effects of any plans, including the ONP. This can feed into more accurate future predictions of effects and can also help identify where changes need to be made to promote more sustainable development within the Overton Neighbourhood Area.
- 7.3 The SA (inc. SEA) process has continually assessed and identified predicted significant positive and negative effects from the ONP with mitigation and/or enhancement measures being integrated at appropriate stages in the evolution of the ONP. This has ensured that BDBC and OPC are able to appropriately address these effects and monitor the potential for unforeseen adverse impacts.

8. Further information

- 8.1 A hard copy of the 'made' ONP and the SA (inc. SEA) documents, including this SA (inc. SEA) Adoption Statement can be inspected at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, RG21 4AH (8:30am – 17:00 pm Mon – Thurs, 8:30am – 16:30pm Fri)
- 8.2 In addition, all of the documents can be viewed online on the council's website at: <http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/ONP>