

Non-Technical Summary

- I. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process is a way of ensuring that all the plans and programmes that relate to land use issues are compatible with the aims of sustainable development. This includes the evidence base documents that will inform the new Melton Local Plan.
- II. The SA process lies within the European Union's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, which acts to ensure that all plans /policies with land use implications take into account environmental issues and impacts. The UK's SA process widens the scope, to include the consideration of both social and economic issues, when assessing specific plans and programmes relating to land use issues. Melton Borough Council has decided to prepare an integrated impact assessment to include an Equalities Impact Assessment to the overall Sustainability Appraisal process. Each of the assessment type has aspects in common with the others. In the interest of efficiency and the desire to avoid duplication, the two assessment types have been integrated under the umbrella of Sustainability Appraisal.
- III. The SA process comprises a number of stages, beginning with production of this scoping report, which includes an assessment of other relevant policies, plans and programmes, an assessment of baseline information and subsequent sustainability issues and problems in the Borough. This Scoping Report Covers stages A1-A5 below.

Stage A	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope	A1	Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives
		A2	Collecting baseline information
		A3	Identifying sustainability issues and problems
		A4	Developing the SA framework
		A5	Consulting on the scope of the SA
Stage B	Developing and refining options and assessing effects	B1	Testing the Development Plan Document (DPD) objectives against the SA framework
		B2	Developing the DPD options
		B3	Predicting the effects of the DPD
		B4	Evaluating the effects of the DPD
		B5	Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
		B6	Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPDs
Stage C	Preparing the SA report	C1	Preparing the SA report
Stage D	Consultation on the DPD and SA report	D1	Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and the SA report
		D2 (i)	Appraising significant changes
		D2 (ii)	Appraising significant changes resulting from representations
		D3	Making decisions and providing information
Stage E	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD	E1	Finalising aims and methods for monitoring
		E2	Responding to adverse effects

The Scoping Report

- IV. The Scoping report sets out the source of the requirements to carry out SA and other associated environmental assessments, and explains how the SA will be carried out. It includes a review of the other relevant plans, policies and programmes. This stage of the SA also includes the collation of baseline information which provides the evidence for identifying key sustainability issues and the basis for predicting and monitoring the effects of the new Melton Local Plan.

- V. This information feeds into the sustainability appraisal framework which will be used to assess the different options and alternatives that will need to be considered when preparing the new Melton Local Plan.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- VI. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework consists of a series of objectives and indicators. These have been developed with regard to national, regional, county- wide and local sustainability objective and indicators.

Sustainability Issues

- VII. In order to assess the most sustainable options moving forward as part of the preparation of the new Melton Local Plan, the key issues facing the Borough have been identified.

Sustainability Objectives

- VIII. A series of sustainability objectives have been drafted by reflecting information in the context review and collection of baseline data, in order to assess the sustainability issues facing the Borough.

SA Objective

1. To ensure that the housing stock meets the housing needs of the present and future residents of the Borough
2. To make efficient use of transport infrastructure, improve accessibility to employment and services to ensure that people can make sustainable transport choices
3. To develop a strong culture of learning, enterprise and innovation
4. To encourage opportunities for investment in order to promote tourism.
5. To diversify the local economy and encourage new business formation
6. To promote high quality employment opportunities that meet the needs of the community
7. To protect the natural environment, increase biodiversity levels and enhance multifunctional green infrastructure across the Borough
8. To enhance and improve the built and historic environment
9. To use land, energy, soil, mineral and water resources prudently and efficiently.
10. To promote social cohesion and support the development of community facilities across the Borough
11. To reduce poverty, crime and social deprivation and secure economic inclusion.
12. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime
13. To minimise waste and increase the re-use and recycling of waste materials
14. To provide the necessary physical conditions and infrastructure to enable economic growth.
15. To reduce health inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles and prolong life.
16. To adapt to and plan for climate change and increase energy generated from renewable

- IX. A series of indicators have been prepared in order to assess if the objectives are being achieved. These indicators will be used to monitor the effect of the new Melton Plan once it is adopted and will be included within the Local Plans monitoring framework and monitored through Annual Monitoring Report once the Local Plan is in place.

Next Steps

- X. The Scoping Report provides an initial opportunity for interested parties to comment, and ensure that the final SA report is robust enough to achieve its sustainable development objectives when appraising the new Melton Local Plan. Copies of the SA Scoping Report will be provided to the three statutory consultation bodies, Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency.
- XI. Following the consultation, feedback along with any other additional findings and updates will be incorporated into the report. The Council will then move onto to consult on the new Melton Local Plan Issues and Options document for 12 weeks beginning in September 2014. This Scoping Report will be used to assess the impact of the different policy and site allocations during the preparation of the new Melton Local Plan.